



Halal Certification Policies in OIC and Non-OIC Countries: A Comparative Analysis of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, And Singapore

Nailun Najla¹, Nur Fatwa²

^{1,2} Halal Industry-Middle East and Islamic Studies, School of Strategic and Global, Universitas Indonesia.
Email: nailunnajla11@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This paper seeks to explore and compare the policies and regulatory frameworks of halal certification in both OIC member and non-member countries—specifically Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. It aims to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) related to the implementation of halal certification systems and their implications for positioning within the global halal market.

Methodology/approach – A qualitative approach was adopted using secondary data sourced from scientific literature. The analysis focused on institutional structures, certification procedures, and policy frameworks, comparing how each country governs and implements halal certification.

Findings – The study reveals significant differences in the institutional and regulatory approaches to halal certification. Indonesia operates through BPJPH under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Malaysia through JAKIM, Thailand through CICOT, and Singapore through MUIS. Each system presents distinct advantages and challenges, influencing the countries' ability to compete as global halal hubs.

Novelty/value – This study contributes a comparative perspective on halal certification between OIC and non-OIC member countries and applies a SWOT analysis framework to highlight strategic opportunities and challenges. It offers insights useful for policymakers and stakeholders aiming to enhance halal governance and competitiveness in the global halal industry.

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INTRODUCTION

The global population reached 8.01 billion in 2023, as reported by the World Population Data Sheet, and is projected to grow to 9.8 billion by 2050 (The 2023 World Population Data Sheet). According to Pew Research Center, the global population is expected to rise to 8.3 billion by 2030, with the Muslim population reaching 2.2 billion, or 26.4% of the total population, by that time. This demographic growth highlights the increasing influence of the Muslim population on global markets, particularly in sectors aligned with Islamic values, such as halal food, finance, and lifestyle products.

In tandem with the increasing growth of the Muslim population, halal industry has significantly expanded in Muslim and non-Muslim countries (Azam & Abdullah, 2020). The establishment of the halal industry across various nations has created new markets within the global business landscape (Izberk-Bilgin & Nakata, 2016). Many Muslim-majority countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, and the Gulf nations, are experiencing rising income levels and a growing middle class that is eager to spend on quality goods and services. Importantly, Muslim consumers seek products that align with their religious values—particularly halal-certified products—not only in food but also in areas like cosmetics, fashion, finance, and tourism. The global halal market alone is valued at over \$2.1 trillion annually, offering vast opportunities for businesses. The World Halal Forum estimates that the global halal trade will reach USD 2.2 billion by 2030 (Hamid et al., 2019). According to the SGIE Reports 2023, around 2 billion Muslim consumers have spent approximately USD 2.29 trillion in the year of 2022 across sectors including food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, fashion, travel, and media/recreation—all of which are core products and services shaped by ethical consumption needs influenced by Islamic beliefs.

The implementation of halal certification policies plays a critical role in the growth of the halal industry, particularly in the food and consumer goods sectors (Ridwan, 2020). These policies have been adopted in Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority countries, ensuring that certified products meet sharia standards and are safe for Muslim consumers. Halal certification not only guarantees compliance with Islamic principles but also enhances consumer trust and confidence in the quality and safety of certified products. It serves as a critical tool for businesses to access and compete in the rapidly growing halal market, both locally and internationally.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore are active promoters of halal standards in Southeast Asia (ASEAN). These countries aim to become global halal hubs, although not all are Muslim-majority nations. Each of these countries has established bodies, regulations, standards, management systems, and processes for implementing halal certification. This is part of their effort to achieve their shared objective, though differences exist in their policies and implementation methods (Ridwan, 2020).

As a member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Indonesia has developed a comprehensive framework for halal certification. The country began its halal journey in 1976 with labeling requirements for products containing pork, followed by the issuance of the first halal certificate by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) in 1994. With the enactment of Law No. 33 of 2014, halal certification became mandatory, and authority was officially transferred to the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Other countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore also take different approaches to halal regulation, shaped by their respective religious demographics, legal frameworks, and institutional development. The table below compares these four countries in terms of Muslim population, certification authorities, and policy milestones.

Table 1. Comparative Overview of Halal Certification Frameworks in Southeast Asia

Country	% Muslim Population	Approx. Number of Muslims	Certification Body		Notes
Indonesia	87.2%	237,000,000+	Halal Assurance (BPJPH); MUI	Product Agency formerly	First halal certificate in 1994; halal mandatory since Law No. 33/2014

Malaysia	61.3%	20,063,500	Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM)	Began halal policies in 1965; internationally recognized certification hub
Thailand	5.2%	3,640,000	Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT)	Government-supported halal body
Singapore	15.6%	915,118	Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS)	National-level halal authority

(Othman et al., 2016).

Previous research by Yakub & Zein (2022) provides a general comparison of halal certification under governmental and non-governmental organizations in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Meanwhile, the study by Ridwan (2020) describes the respective halal authorities in these countries and outlines their responsibilities. Asa (2019) examines the development of halal certification regulations in ASEAN countries, focusing particularly on Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and Indonesia. Halal has expanded beyond its religious origins to become an important concept in global trade, acting as a symbol of product quality and consumer trust—especially among Muslim consumers. This growing halal market has prompted both Muslim-majority and minority countries to develop their own halal certification systems, which reflect a variety of legal and institutional frameworks.

Furthermore, the study by Faiqoh and Fatwa (2024), compares the halal certification regulations of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Mexico. The result indicate that while there are similarities in the halal certification mechanisms—such as government involvement in Indonesia and Malaysia—there are notable differences, particularly in Mexico, where the Muslim minority status creates challenges like a shortage of qualified human resources. Despite the growing interest in halal certification and its critical role in the global halal economy, few researchers have focused on comparative regulatory analysis across countries with differing Muslim population demographics (Yakub & Zein, 2022; Ridwan, 2020; Asa, 2019). There have been limited studies concerned with systematically categorizing halal certification frameworks based on OIC membership or the distinction between Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority contexts within ASEAN (Faiqoh & Fatwa, 2024). Moreover, existing research has not yet applied a SWOT analysis to explore the strategic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within these certification systems. Therefore, this research intends to fill these gaps by examining and comparing the halal certification policies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. The objectives of this research are to evaluate the regulatory frameworks, assess institutional practices, and identify strategic factors influencing each country’s potential as a global halal hub.

METHOD

This study employs the SWOT analysis method (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to evaluate and understand the dynamics of halal bodies, regulations, and certifications in Indonesia,

Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. The SWOT method was chosen because it allows researchers to explore components that may strengthen (Strengths) or weaken (Weaknesses) each country's position in developing and implementing halal product assurance systems. As a strategic tool, SWOT analysis is widely recognized for its effectiveness in systematically evaluating both internal and external factors affecting an entity or policy (Gürel, 2017). In this context, the analysis also aims to identify Opportunities that may be harnessed to improve the halal certification process, as well as potential future Threats that may hinder the achievement of global halal hub ambitions (Al-Nahdi & Islam, 2011). The data used in this study are collected from secondary sources, including scholarly books, national laws, government regulations, official reports, and updated statistics, as well as peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to halal certification and policy implementation. These sources are critically reviewed and synthesized to construct a comprehensive comparative analysis across the selected ASEAN countries.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Halal Authority, Regulations, and Certification in Indonesia

Indonesia's halal certification system benefits from its position as the country with the largest Muslim population globally, which provides a substantial internal market for halal products and services (Tayob, 2020). The establishment of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs marks a significant institutional advancement in the implementation of Law No. 33 of 2014, making halal certification mandatory and centralized (Nuraini, 2021). This legal framework strengthens the credibility and uniformity of halal assurance nationally, supported by collaboration with the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and Halal Examination Agencies (LPH) for fatwa issuance and product inspection respectively (Azizah, 2022; Izzudin & Adinugraha, 2021). The integration of digital platforms such as SIHALAL improves accessibility and streamlines certification processes, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which represent a crucial segment of Indonesia's halal industry (Perdani et al., 2018; Faiqoh & Fatwa, 2024).

Nonetheless, Indonesia faces notable challenges. The transition from voluntary to mandatory halal certification is still maturing, and uneven regional implementation remains a constraint, limiting uniform access to certification services across the archipelago (Wibowo et al., 2021). Additionally, many MSMEs struggle with compliance due to limited awareness and resource capacity, and the multi-agency structure, while comprehensive, risks bureaucratic inefficiencies that could slow certification timelines (Faridah, 2019). Indonesia's halal assurance system could be strengthened by adopting best practices from countries like Malaysia, where the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) has long established an internationally respected, centralized halal certification authority supported by robust legal and technological frameworks (Noordin et al., 2019; Zailani et al., 2015). Malaysia's approach, characterized by rigorous standards and extensive global recognition, enables effective harmonization with international halal standards, enhancing export competitiveness.

Thailand's halal certification system, primarily managed by non-governmental bodies such as the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), illustrates an alternative model but suffers from limited governmental authority and resource constraints (Tieman, 2020). The voluntary certification nature reduces market penetration, and political and funding instability further impede sustainable halal governance. Thailand's experience suggests that halal certification benefits from strong state support and integration with national legal frameworks, as seen in Indonesia and Malaysia (Khan & Haleem, 2021). On the other hand, Singapore offers an instructive example of a small Muslim minority country that has leveraged statutory authority via the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) and embraced digital innovation (e.g., LicenseOne portal) to facilitate halal certification processes (Ali et

al., 2020). However, Singapore's small Muslim demographic and voluntary certification model limit domestic uptake, indicating that even robust institutional frameworks must align with market size and business incentives to maximize effectiveness.

In conclusion, Indonesia's halal certification system is on a promising trajectory, grounded in comprehensive regulation and institutional collaboration. The country's strengths lie in its legal mandate, institutional arrangements, and digital infrastructure supporting MSMEs. Nevertheless, challenges in equitable regional implementation, bureaucratic complexity, and business capacity must be addressed. Lessons from Malaysia's centralized authority and international harmonization, Singapore's digital facilitation, and Thailand's NGO-driven model highlight that successful halal certification frameworks combine strong government leadership, technological adoption, and market incentives. As global halal markets expand, Indonesia's ability to streamline its certification processes and enhance stakeholder capacity will be critical in consolidating its leadership within the international halal economy (Zailani et al., 2015; Ali et al., 2020; Faiqoh & Fatwa, 2024).

Halal Authority, Regulations, and Certification in Malaysia

Malaysia's halal policy journey began earlier than Indonesia's, with the first halal initiative launched in 1965 by the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS). At that time, halal practices were limited to declarations without official product certification. In 1969, the Malaysian government established the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs (MKI) to oversee all Islamic matters nationwide. The Religious Unit of the Prime Minister's Department (JPM) served as the MKI secretariat, which later evolved into the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), now the central authority for halal policy in the country.

In 1984, the 26th MKI assembly issued Malaysia's first official "Guidelines on Food, Drink, and Consumer Goods for Muslims," providing clear halal and haram rulings concerning these products. The following year, the Religious Division of JPM transformed into the Islamic Affairs Division (BAHEIS), which managed halal certification. Meanwhile, each Malaysian state established its own Islamic Religious Department (JAIN) to oversee halal certification locally, using state-specific halal logos. To unify these logos, BAHEIS introduced a standardized halal certification logo, which was distributed nationally between 1994 and 1998.

A significant regulatory milestone occurred in 2011 when the Trade Descriptions Act (TDA) of 1972 was amended to include specific halal provisions through the Trade Descriptions (Halal Matters) Order and the Halal Certification and Marking Order. These regulations defined halal according to Shariah law and fatwas, regulated halal terminology, and imposed penalties for counterfeit halal certificates and logos, including fines. Malaysia's halal certification system adheres to the MS1500 standard, which aligns with international food safety standards such as Good Hygiene Practice (GHP), Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Inspection, Measurement, and Testing Procedures (IMP), and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

Over the years, the responsibility for halal certification shifted among various agencies, including a brief period under the Halal Industry Corporation (HDC), which caused a temporary halt in certification services. Eventually, responsibility reverted to JAKIM. Since 2019, JAKIM's Halal Hub Division has

managed halal certification for Malaysia's federal territories, while each state's JAIN continues to handle halal certification within their respective jurisdictions.

Malaysia's halal certification is internationally recognized and serves as a benchmark for halal certification bodies in countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Brazil. Unlike Indonesia, Malaysia employs a single streamlined halal certification procedure. The certification process is as follows:

1. Businesses submit applications online via the MYeHALAL system along with supporting documents.
2. Applications are reviewed, and incomplete submissions are returned for correction.
3. Businesses receive an invoice for the certification fee.
4. Payment is made according to the invoice.
5. JAKIM or JAIN schedules a field audit.
6. If any Non-Conformance Reports (NCRs) arise, businesses must resolve these; samples may also be taken for laboratory testing.
7. The audit results are reviewed by the Malaysian Halal Certification Panel.
8. Upon approval, JAKIM issues the Malaysian Halal Certification (SPHM); otherwise, a warning letter is issued.

To facilitate efficient certification for established businesses, Malaysia offers a fast track program divided into three types:

1. Fast Track without Field Audit: For non-critical applications from businesses on a whitelist.
2. Fast Track without NCR: For applications that pass audits with no NCR findings.
3. Fast Track with Closed NCR: For applications where previously identified audit issues have been resolved.

To qualify for the whitelist, a business must have held an SPHM for at least five years, maintain a positive track record without significant issues during that period, and comply with JAKIM or JAIN monitoring activities within the last six months. Certain applications considered critical, such as new applications, abattoirs, and hotel or restaurant franchises, are excluded from the fast track without a field audit.

Halal Authority, Regulations, and Certification in Thailand

Islam is the second-largest religion in Thailand and enjoys legal and official protection under the kingdom's laws. The Thai Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and upholds the principles of equal rights and freedoms for all citizens. In line with this, the government respects and protects religious rights, including halal certification practices to ensure compliance with Islamic dietary laws for the country's Muslim population. Furthermore, the government actively promotes interfaith dialogue and understanding to foster peaceful coexistence among Thailand's diverse religious communities (Yakub & Zein, 2022)

Halal certification in Thailand began in 1948 with the establishment of an Islamic organization known as Sheikhu Islam, located in Nu Mai Khlong Sip, Nong Chok, Bangkok. Sheikhu Islam is responsible for managing all affairs related to the Muslim community in Thailand and serves as the office of the Mufti (Chularatchamontri), who is appointed by the King on the Prime Minister's recommendation. The Mufti operates under the Ministry of Interior (Yakub and Zein, 2022).

Initially, halal certification in Thailand was limited to slaughterhouses to prevent the Muslim community from consuming non-halal meat. Thailand was also a pioneer in introducing halal logos, launching its first halal logo in 1971. This certification later expanded to include a variety of food products beyond meat, ensuring food safety and compliance with Islamic dietary laws. These

developments helped position Thailand as a key player in the global halal market, attracting both local and international consumers seeking certified halal products.

Sheikhul Islam is supported by the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), established under Law 340/1997 concerning the administration of Islamic organizations. This law mandated the formation of the Thailand Islamic Central Committee, with Sheikhul Islam serving as the chairman. Committee members are appointed with the King's approval, drawn from regional Islamic religious councils. CICOT assists Sheikhul Islam in administering Islamic affairs and stands as the highest Islamic religious authority in Thailand, functioning under parliamentary oversight (Yakub and Zein, 2022).

In contrast to Indonesia and Malaysia, where halal certification is managed by government agencies, Thailand's halal certification is overseen by a non-governmental Islamic organization—CICOT—led by Sheikhul Islam. This structure resembles Indonesia's earlier halal certification system, which was fully under the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) before authority shifted to the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH). However, in Thailand, the government supports and legitimizes CICOT and Sheikhul Islam through Law 340/1997, establishing a legal framework to ensure halal standards comply with Islamic principles and enhance consumer confidence in halal products (Nawawi et al., 2020; Sudrajat, 2022).

Within CICOT's organizational framework, the Thai government has helped establish key institutions, including the Halal Executive Committee (HEC), the Halal Standard Institute of Thailand (HSIT), the Halal Accreditation Body (HAB), and the Halal Science Center (HSC). These bodies contribute to the credibility and rigor of halal certification in Thailand. Government-backed regulations and programs, funded by the national budget, support the halal industry's growth by encouraging participation from local businesses and producers. This approach strengthens Thailand's halal sector for both domestic consumption and international trade (Wannasupchue et al., 2019). The halal certification process in Thailand involves three main stages:

1. **Application Preparation:** Businesses register and submit the required documents to CICOT. New businesses receive halal training programs, followed by payment of the prescribed fees.
2. **Audit Program:** CICOT assigns an audit team to conduct on-site inspections. The team reports findings to the halal committee. If necessary, laboratory tests are performed to verify compliance.
3. **Endorsement and Certification:** The halal committee reviews the audit report. If the business meets halal standards and procedures, the halal certificate is issued, allowing the use of the halal logo on products and premises (Nurdiansyah, 2018).

Halal Authority, Regulations, and Certification in Singapore

Unlike Indonesia and Malaysia, where the Muslim population forms the majority, Singapore's Muslim community numbers approximately 915,118 individuals. This community primarily consists of two major groups: Malay Muslims and Indian Muslims, the latter including people of Pakistani, Arab, and other diverse backgrounds. Despite having a smaller Muslim population, Singapore places significant importance on halal certification to ensure that food and products comply with Islamic

dietary requirements. This effort fosters inclusivity and respect for cultural practices within Singapore's multi-religious and multi-ethnic society (Ridwan et al., 2020).

The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) was established in 1968 and holds the authority over all matters related to halal certification services. Singapore issued its first halal certificate in 1978, and its halal certification logo is recognized internationally by countries including Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, and members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (Azam & Abdullah, 2021). MUIS acts as the sole authority for certifying halal food, beverages, and other products for both local consumption and export. It also oversees collaborations with halal organizations in importing countries to facilitate trade (Asa, 2019).

Under the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA), Section 88A states that: "The Council issues halal certificates for products, services, or activities and regulates certificate holders to ensure that all processes of production, processing, marketing, and display of these products, service provision, and activities comply with Islamic law requirements." MUIS is empowered to establish, amend, or revoke halal standards and certification requirements as needed, granting it flexibility to uphold rigorous halal compliance (AMLA Section 88A, clause 3).

MUIS also enforces penalties to protect the integrity of halal certification. According to AMLA Section 88A, clause 5: "Anyone who issues a halal certificate without authority, or uses counterfeit or imitation halal logos, commits an offense punishable by fines up to SGD 10,000, imprisonment for up to 12 months, or both." These stringent measures maintain consumer trust and safeguard the halal certification's credibility (Ridwan et al., 2020).

Unlike Indonesia, where halal certification is mandatory by law, Singapore operates a voluntary halal certification framework. Only businesses that choose to obtain halal certification are required to apply, reflecting the country's diverse consumer base and commercial landscape (Henderson, 2016). The certification criteria cover the entire food supply chain—from raw materials and suppliers to production, storage, distribution, and retail—ensuring comprehensive compliance with halal standards. However, because certification is optional, some businesses may opt out, which could lead to variability in product quality and adherence to Islamic dietary laws, potentially affecting consumer confidence.

Halal certification standards in Singapore are jointly developed by MUIS and the Singapore Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board (SPRING), the national standards body. To this end, MUIS formed a Halal Standards Committee composed of industry stakeholders, government officials, academics, and Islamic scholars (Man & Pauzi, 2017). The current key standards include the Singapore MUIS Halal Standard (MUIS-HC-S001), which outlines the framework for halal food handling and processing, and the Singapore MUIS Halal Standard (MUIS-HC-S002), which provides guidelines for developing and implementing a Halal Quality Management System (HalMQ) (Ridwan et al., 2020).

According to MUIS, the halal certification process consists of six stages:

1. Enquiry: Businesses, often non-Muslim, consult MUIS to understand halal certification's purpose, benefits, and requirements.
2. Application Submission: Businesses register and submit documents via the LicenseOne portal, Singapore's one-stop government licensing website. Seven certification schemes are available for different food businesses, including dining stalls, export-import operations, slaughterhouses, production, and storage, each with specific criteria.
3. Processing: MUIS reviews submitted documents and conducts audits of the registered products and premises.
4. Certification: Upon meeting all requirements, the halal certificate is issued, and certification fees are paid.

5. Post-Certification: MUIS performs regular, typically unannounced, inspections to ensure ongoing compliance. Businesses must report changes in staff, menu items, products, or suppliers via the LicenseOne portal.
6. Renewal: Certificate holders must renew their halal certification three months prior to expiration to maintain validity.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

This study applies SWOT analysis to examine the halal certification frameworks. Indonesia has established a mandatory halal certification system. The Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH), under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, serves as the main regulatory body. Its central position within the government provides strong institutional support and legitimacy (BPJPH, 2021). Among its strengths are: government-backed regulation, broad familiarity with the concept of halal among the population, and growing international cooperation with foreign halal bodies (Nisak, 2013). However, Indonesia faces some weaknesses. The transition of authority from LPPOM MUI to BPJPH is ongoing and presents coordination challenges. Furthermore, BPJPH does not yet have full regional representation, which may limit its operational effectiveness. The implementation of the Halal Product Assurance Law No. 33 of 2014 is still relatively new, meaning the system lacks the maturity and streamlined processes that countries like Malaysia possess (Rangkuti, 2008).

Nonetheless, Indonesia has significant opportunities. The self-declaration program for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) allows free halal certification, which can stimulate halal sector growth. Furthermore, educational institutions can become involved in the halal system by establishing Halal Inspection Bodies (LPH), broadening stakeholder participation. On the other hand, threats include limited awareness among local businesses and ongoing structural tensions due to the shifting authority between MUI and BPJPH. These institutional transitions may delay public trust and reduce efficiency if not managed cohesively (BPJPH, 2021).

Malaysia, although also an OIC member state, operates a voluntary halal certification system despite its substantial Muslim population (61.3%). The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) leads national halal regulation, supported by state-level Islamic bodies (JAIN). Malaysia's strengths lie in its long-standing halal regulatory framework, dating back to 1965, and the international credibility of the JAKIM halal logo. Malaysia is frequently cited as a global leader in halal certification due to its centralized system, consistent standards, and well-integrated marketing strategies (Rangkuti, 2008). Its weakness, however, lies in the voluntary nature of its certification, which may limit its domestic reach compared to Indonesia's mandatory system. From an opportunity perspective, Malaysia stands to benefit significantly from its reputation as a halal hub. Its products are widely accepted in the Middle East and other Muslim-majority regions. Yet, the rise of countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey with increasingly stringent halal standards poses a competitive threat to Malaysia's dominance in the global halal industry (Nisak, 2013).

Thailand, as a non-OIC member country with only 5.2% of its population being Muslim, nonetheless has a remarkably structured halal certification system. The Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), a non-governmental organization recognized by the government, oversees halal certification.

Thailand’s strength lies in its collaborative approach, where multiple supporting institutions such as the Halal Science Center (HSC), Halal Accreditation Body (HAB), and the Halal Standard Institute work together to enhance certification standards. This multi-institutional support strengthens Thailand’s ability to enter the global halal market despite being a Muslim-minority country (Rangkuti, 2008). The country’s weaknesses include the non-governmental status of CICOT, which may limit its authority compared to government-backed agencies. Furthermore, halal certification remains voluntary, which may discourage businesses from pursuing certification unless they are export-oriented. Thailand’s opportunities lie in building international halal partnerships, especially through scientific innovation and training programs for SMEs. However, threats include dependency on royal appointments for authority recognition, which may be subject to political changes and instability (Nisak, 2013).

Singapore, with a 15.6% Muslim population, manages halal certification through the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS). Though not a direct government agency, MUIS operates under statutory authority through the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA), giving it comprehensive power to issue certifications, set standards, and oversee halal compliance. Its strength lies in its international recognition, particularly among GCC countries, Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia, which enhances its export potential. MUIS also benefits from a digital portal (LicenseOne) that simplifies halal licensing procedures. Weaknesses include the voluntary nature of halal certification, which may limit public understanding and market penetration (Rangkuti, 2008). Nonetheless, Singapore has opportunities to expand its halal product exports, especially as MUIS consults both Muslim and non-Muslim enterprises on halal standards. The threat it faces is intense competition from neighboring ASEAN countries with more aggressive halal strategies and larger Muslim consumer bases (Nisak, 2013).

In conclusion, OIC members Indonesia and Malaysia benefit from strong Muslim populations and institutional experience, while non-OIC members Thailand and Singapore showcase innovation and adaptability despite minority Muslim demographics. Understanding these variations can offer valuable insights into developing robust and context-specific halal governance models.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis of Halal Certification Policies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore

Country	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Large Muslim population familiar with halal practices. – BPJPH operates under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, giving official state legitimacy. – Government-issued Halal Product Guarantee (JPH) potentially enhances international recognition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – BPJPH lacks local presence in all regions. – Public needs time to adapt to BPJPH replacing MUI. – New system (post-2014 law) is still complex and less mature compared to Malaysia’s framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Educational institutions can form LPHs. – Free self-declaration program for SMEs encourages certification. – Active collaboration with foreign certification bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transition from MUI to BPJPH may trigger administrative inefficiencies. – Many businesses lack understanding of halal product assurance.
Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Halal certification embedded since 1965 under JAKIM. – Strong Muslim majority familiar with halal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Certification remains voluntary, potentially reducing incentives for businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunity to dominate halal export market. – JAKIM serves as a reference body internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Growing competition from countries like Saudi Arabia and UAE. – Voluntary system may fall behind

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government and monarchy support ensure effective implementation. - Globally recognized and trusted halal logo. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centralized system via collaboration with JAIN. 	Indonesia's mandatory model.
Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CICOT and Sheikhu Islam have legal recognition. - Supported by institutions like the Halal Executive Committee, HSIT, HAB, and HSC to ensure certification quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CICOT, as a non-governmental body, may lack resources and formal authority. - Certification is not mandatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institutions like HSC can enhance partnerships with Muslim-majority nations. - Certification training programs available. - Potential to access growing halal markets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CICOT may face political or funding challenges due to its non-governmental status. - Certification authority may be unstable with political shifts.
Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MUIS certification is accepted internationally (e.g., GCC, Malaysia, Indonesia).- Authority granted under AMLA for full regulatory control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voluntary nature of certification may reduce awareness and limit market penetration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International credibility can boost export competitiveness. - Halal guidance available for non-Muslim businesses. - Digital portal (LicenseOne) facilitates access and applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-Muslim enterprises may lack incentive to comply. - Faces strong competition from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Indonesia holds a strategic advantage with the world's largest Muslim population, providing a substantial domestic market base for halal products. The existence of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH) as a governmental institution under the Ministry of Religious Affairs lends strong institutional legitimacy and enhances the national credibility of halal certification (Wajdi, 2021). However, Indonesia faces significant challenges, particularly the uneven regional presence of BPJPH and the regulatory complexity that remains in the adaptation phase among business actors, especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (Susetyo et al., 2019). The halal sector's growth potential is promising, supported by empowerment programs for MSMEs through self-declaration schemes and collaboration with educational institutions as Halal Inspection Bodies (LPH). Nonetheless, the transition from the previous system managed by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) to BPJPH may generate administrative inefficiencies, coupled with a limited comprehensive understanding of halal product assurance among business operators. In this regard, Indonesia could benefit from adopting

best practices from Malaysia, which has developed a mature, integrated halal certification system supported by effective digital technologies to broaden certification accessibility.

Malaysia boasts a well-institutionalized halal certification system through the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) and State Islamic Religious Departments (JAIN) (Asa, 2017), supported by a strong governmental framework since 1965. This system is nationally recognized and enjoys international legitimacy, positioning Malaysia as a global benchmark for halal certification standards. Nonetheless, the voluntary nature of halal certification in Malaysia poses challenges in motivating businesses to participate fully, potentially limiting the scope and coverage of certified products. Malaysia holds significant opportunities to maintain its dominance in the halal export market by strengthening international collaboration and centralizing its certification framework (Othman et al., 2009). However, emerging competition from countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, who are developing their halal certification systems, alongside the risk of stagnation due to the non-mandatory certification model, represent notable threats. Therefore, Malaysia needs to explore incentive policies that encourage business participation and continuously reinforce its role as a global halal standard-setting authority.

Thailand, as a non-OIC country with a Muslim minority, implements halal certification primarily through non-governmental organizations such as the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), which has limited legal recognition (Zamil, 2023). Major weaknesses include resource constraints and limited formal authority of these non-governmental bodies, alongside the voluntary certification system that may reduce compliance levels and market penetration. Thailand has opportunities to expand partnerships with Muslim-majority countries and leverage halal certification training programs to build capacity and access the rapidly growing global halal market. However, political instability and funding challenges pose significant threats that may disrupt the consistency and sustainability of Thailand's halal certification framework. Thailand could learn from countries like Turkey, which, despite not being a Muslim-majority nation, has successfully established an effective halal certification system backed by government support and adequate resources

Singapore, endowed with full authority granted to the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) under the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA), offers halal certification that is internationally accepted across key markets. However, the relatively small Muslim population and the voluntary nature of halal certification limit awareness and business participation. Singapore possesses strategic opportunities by leveraging digital platforms like the LicenseOne portal (Nusran et al., 2023), which facilitates access and application processes, and by providing halal guidance to non-Muslim businesses to foster market inclusivity. The primary challenges include intense competition from neighboring countries with larger Muslim populations and stronger governmental support, as well as insufficient incentives for non-Muslim businesses to comply with halal standards. Singapore could consider adopting strategies similar to those used in the United Arab Emirates, where technology integration and incentive policies have been effectively combined to strengthen halal certification systems and enhance global competitiveness

CONCLUSION

This comparative analysis reveals that halal certification policies in Southeast Asia vary significantly depending on each country's OIC membership, Muslim population, and institutional frameworks. OIC member countries like Indonesia and Malaysia demonstrate stronger governmental involvement and institutional legitimacy in halal certification, with Indonesia enforcing a mandatory system and Malaysia maintaining a globally recognized voluntary system. In contrast, Thailand and Singapore, both non-OIC members with Muslim minority populations, rely on voluntary certification

led by non-governmental or semi-autonomous bodies, tailored to their multicultural and pluralistic societies. Indonesia is leveraging its demographic advantage and regulatory reforms, but faces operational challenges during the transition to BPJPH. Malaysia sets the global standard with a mature and centralized system, although its voluntary nature may limit further growth. Thailand and Singapore, while constrained by smaller Muslim populations and limited state involvement, have innovated through institutional partnerships and digital solutions to maintain international halal credibility. Across all countries, regional cooperation—such as mutual recognition agreements and standard harmonization—could support halal trade integration and enhance the global competitiveness of Southeast Asia’s halal ecosystem.

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