

IDENTIFYING GAPS IN HALAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT IN MALAYSIA: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract	<p><i>This study aims to identify and analyze gaps in the literature concerning the development and management of halal talent in Malaysia, a key player in the global halal industry. By employing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, this research provides a systematic review of existing studies to highlight critical areas needing attention. A comprehensive literature search was conducted across Scopus, Emerald Insight, and Google Scholar databases and 13 relevant studies published between 2019 and 2024 were selected based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The review revealed several key themes: 1) the need for technological and educational enhancements in halal compliance; 2) sustaining halal talent through well-being and career development; 3) aligning educational and organizational strategies with industry needs; and 4) resource allocation and organizational structures in halal management. The analysis also identified potential risks of bias, particularly in qualitative studies where small sample sizes and purposive sampling methods may limit the generalizability of findings. Variations in study design were noted, with a predominant use of qualitative methodologies such as case studies and thematic analyses, and fewer quantitative approaches. Participants in these studies were diverse, encompassing halal executives, auditors, trainers, and university students from various sectors of Malaysia's halal industry. Addressing these gaps is essential for ensuring the continued growth and global competitiveness of Malaysia's halal industry. This study provides a foundation for future research and strategic initiatives aimed at cultivating a robust and sustainable talent pool capable of meeting the evolving demands of the halal sector.</i></p> <p>Keywords: Halal Industry, Talent Development, Malaysia, PRISMA, Systematic Review.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The halal industry has emerged as a pivotal sector in the global economy, valued at trillions of dollars annually (Ahmed, 2024). As a global leader in this sector, Malaysia has established itself as a premier hub for halal products and services, playing a central role in halal certification, production, and innovation (Ab Talib et al., 2021). The industry spans various sectors, including food and beverages, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and finance, each

demanding specialized knowledge and skills to ensure strict compliance with halal standards (Abd Wahab et al., 2023).

Qualified halal professionals are the backbone of this thriving industry, ensuring Malaysia maintains its esteemed position in the global halal market (Ibrahim et al., 2022). These professionals are not only responsible for overseeing halal certification processes but also contribute significantly to research and development, quality assurance, and the strategic expansion of Malaysia's influence in international markets. As the global Muslim population grows and consumer awareness of halal principles increases, the demand for skilled halal professionals continues to escalate.

However, despite the critical importance of halal professionals in sustaining and advancing the industry, there is growing concern that the existing body of research on halal talent development and management in Malaysia is insufficiently comprehensive (Mohamad Zain et al., 2022). The halal industry in Malaysia is a cornerstone of the nation's economy and a significant player in the global market, necessitating a highly skilled and specialized workforce to uphold halal standards across diverse sectors. This gap in the literature hinders a full understanding of the challenges and opportunities in cultivating a robust talent pool capable of meeting the evolving demands of the halal industry. The lack of cohesive and in-depth analysis leaves gaps in understanding the specific needs, strategies, and frameworks required to cultivate and manage halal professionals effectively.

Given the integral role of the halal industry in the global market and the need for a robust pool of qualified professionals to maintain high standards, this study aims to identify gaps in the literature regarding the development and management of halal talent in Malaysia. Utilizing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) method, the study will systematically review current research to uncover these gaps, laying the groundwork for future research. To achieve this objective, the study addresses the following research question: What are the existing gaps in the literature regarding the development and management of halal talent in Malaysia?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Halal Talent Development

The halal industry has emerged as a significant contributor to Malaysia's economy, with the nation positioned as a global leader in halal products and services. To sustain and enhance this position, the development of specialized halal talent has become a critical focus area. This literature review examines Malaysia's various efforts and strategies to develop halal talent, highlighting key initiatives and frameworks.

The Halal Industry Master Plan (HIMP) 2030 serves as a strategic blueprint for Malaysia's halal sector, emphasizing the critical role of talent development in maintaining the country's global leadership. One of the main thrusts of HIMP 2030 is to establish a larger pool of halal experts and professionals, aligning educational and training programs with industry needs (HIMP, 2020). The plan outlines several key initiatives to enhance the competency of halal-experienced and skilled workers. This includes the implementation of a government-backed recognition framework, which aims to upskill professionals. Additionally, HIMP 2030 advocates for the incorporation of halal technical and vocational knowledge into mainstream education, thereby creating a steady pipeline of skilled workers ready to enter the halal industry (HIMP, 2020).

The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) has introduced a comprehensive programme standard for halal studies, designed to produce graduates with the necessary expertise to meet the demands of the halal sector. This programme standard emphasizes a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, ensuring that educational programs are well-aligned with the industry's requirements (Programme Standards: Halal Studies, 2020). Several universities in Malaysia have responded by offering halal-related programmes to address this growing demand. For instance, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) offers a Bachelor of Syariah (Industry Halal). Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) also provides a

Bachelor in Halal Industry Management and a Diploma in Halal Management. Additionally, the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) offers various halal-related programs, including a Master in Halal Industry Management and a Doctoral of Philosophy in Halal Industry. These programs integrate Islamic values and technical competencies, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared to meet the evolving needs of the halal industry. The curriculum is designed to be flexible, allowing educational institutions to innovate and adapt their programs in response to evolving industry needs. The emphasis on digital skills, leadership, and entrepreneurship further prepares graduates for the challenges of the modern halal industry (Programme Standards: Halal Studies, 2020).

The Halal Industry Occupational Framework (2021) provides a structured approach to talent development within the halal sector, categorizing job roles and competencies essential for halal compliance. This framework offers a detailed Occupational Structure (OS) and Occupational Area Structure (OAS), which help organizations identify critical job titles and the necessary competencies for various sectors, including regulatory, manufacturing, and services. A key focus of this framework is the integration of Industry 4.0 technologies, aligning job roles with the demands of digital transformation. The framework also highlights the importance of tailored training and certification processes, guided by the National Occupational Skills Standards (NOSS), to ensure that personnel are proficient in halal practices. This structured approach is vital for developing a workforce capable of supporting the growth and integrity of the halal industry in Malaysia and globally.

The Malaysian Standard MS 2691:2021, titled "Halal profession – General requirements," defines the general requirements that halal professionals must meet to ensure compliance with halal principles. This includes the qualification and competency requirements for individuals working in various sectors of the halal industry. It emphasizes the need for proper training and competency among halal professionals. This includes knowledge of halal principles, regulations, and procedures necessary to carry out their responsibilities effectively. The standard outlines expectations for ethical behavior and professional conduct. This ensures that halal professionals adhere to high standards of honesty, integrity, and transparency in their work. MS 2691:2021 encourages continuous improvement and updating of skills and knowledge to keep pace with evolving halal practices and regulations. The halal profession in Malaysia is structured into three levels: halal talent, halal expert, and halal professional. This hierarchical structure ensures a clear progression within the industry, with each level requiring specific skills, knowledge, and competency certification (MS 2691:2021).

1. Halal Talent: Individuals with basic educational certification and limited practical experience in the halal industry.
2. Halal Expert: Professionals with managerial skills and substantial practical and theoretical exposure within the industry.
3. Halal Professional: Experts who meet all the requirements of halal experts and act as reference persons within the industry.

This structure is essential for maintaining Malaysia's halal industry's strength, expandability, and global competitiveness. Addressing the development of halal talent in Malaysia is crucial for sustaining the country's leadership in the global halal industry. Through initiatives like the HIMP 2030, the Halal Studies Standard, the Halal Industry Occupational Framework, and MS 2691:2021, Malaysia is working to create a competent and ethically grounded workforce capable of driving the industry's growth. By aligning educational programs with industry needs and fostering continuous professional development, Malaysia can ensure a steady supply of skilled professionals ready to contribute to the global halal sector.

Existing Research on Halal Talent

The existing literature on halal talent in Malaysia has predominantly been analyzed through bibliometric methods, which focus on mapping publication trends, citation patterns, and research themes within the field (Mohamad Zain et al., 2022). Out of 257 articles reviewed, only 9 were found to discuss halal talent in Malaysia specifically. This indicates a significant gap in the literature regarding halal talent development. The research highlighted that most studies focused on assessing the knowledge and attitudes of halal talent, particularly in the food industry. However, while bibliometric analysis is useful for understanding the scope and trends in research, it lacks the depth required for a critical evaluation of the quality and content of the individual studies.

To address this limitation, the implementation of a PRISMA-based systematic review is essential. PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) provides a structured methodology for systematically identifying, screening, and appraising relevant studies (Page et al., 2021). Unlike the broad, quantitative nature of bibliometric analysis, PRISMA is designed to offer a comprehensive synthesis of evidence, specifically tailored to address detailed research questions.

The PRISMA approach is particularly beneficial in critically appraising the methodologies, findings, and implications of the studies included in the review (Ramli et al., 2023; Ariffin et al., 2023; Mohd Isa et al., 2023; Bidin et al., 2021). This enables researchers to identify both strengths and weaknesses within the existing literature an aspect that bibliometric analysis typically does not cover. By conducting a systematic review using the PRISMA framework, a more nuanced and detailed understanding of the current state of halal talent in Malaysia can be achieved. This process will also highlight specific areas where further research may be necessary, ultimately contributing to the development of more effective strategies for managing and enhancing halal talent in Malaysia.

It is important to note that the studies by Ibrahim et al., (2022), Asbullah et al., (2022), and Nik Mohd Rosli et al., (2022) were not included in this systematic review as one of the criteria for exclusion was non-empirical studies, including theoretical or conceptual papers, literature reviews, content analysis, and bibliometric analysis. Although these studies offer valuable insights, such as the disconnect between the skills provided by educational programs and the needs of the halal industry (Ibrahim et al., 2022), the call for new curriculum standards to meet global market demands (Asbullah et al., 2022), and the development of a conceptual core competency model for halal executives in food manufacturing (Nik Mohd Rosli et al., 2022), their non-empirical nature precluded their inclusion in the systematic review. These studies underscore the importance of addressing the structural and curricular aspects of halal education, which can directly impact the employability and global competitiveness of halal professionals. While they were not part of the systematic review, their findings can still inform future empirical research and contribute to the broader understanding of halal talent development.

METHODOLOGY

Systematic Review Process

This study employs a systematic review approach to comprehensively assess halal talent development and management in Malaysia. Systematic reviews are recognized for their rigorous methodology in synthesizing existing literature, ensuring transparency and replicability in the research process (Abdul Mokti et al., 2024; Naeem et al., 2020). The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines guided the systematic review process, enhancing the reliability and credibility of the study's findings.

The review process includes several key stages. Initially, a comprehensive literature search was conducted across multiple academic databases to identify relevant studies published in peer-reviewed journals. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to filter studies that are most relevant to the research question. The selected studies were

screened after the search to assess their relevance. Data extraction involved systematically coding and summarizing key findings, methodologies, and outcomes from each study. The extracted data was analyzed to identify common themes and gaps in the literature. To ensure the robustness of the review, a critical appraisal of the included studies was performed, focusing on their methodological approaches and identifying potential biases. The synthesis of findings provided an in-depth analysis of the current landscape of halal talent development and management, identifying key gaps, and areas requiring further empirical investigation (Figure 1).

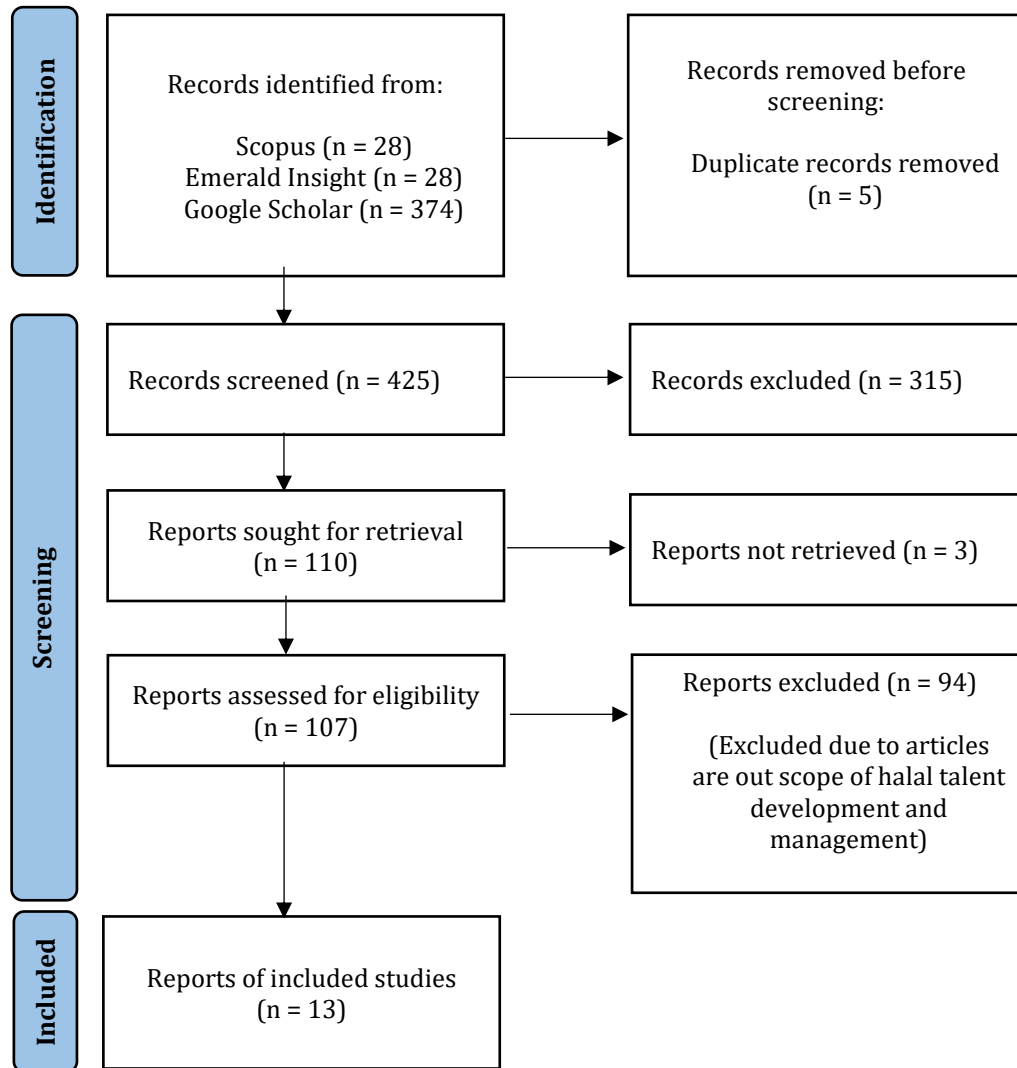


Figure 1. PRISMA flow chart (Modified Page et al., 2021).

Search Strategy

To identify relevant literature, a systematic search of electronic databases and scholarly repositories was conducted. Key databases such as Scopus, Emerald Insight, and Google Scholar databases were searched using a combination of controlled vocabulary terms (Table 1). The use of terms like "halal AND talent", "halal AND profession", "halal AND professional", "halal AND education", and "halal AND training" are specifically chosen to capture studies that discuss the various dimensions of developing and managing talent within the halal industry. The inclusion of "Malaysia" or "Malaysian" ensures that the search results are geographically relevant, focusing specifically on studies conducted within or about Malaysia. This is crucial because the research question is centered on identifying gaps in the literature specifically related to the Malaysian context, where the halal industry plays

a significant role in the economy. The search strategy was designed to capture studies published in English and Bahasa Melayu, focusing on empirical research. The last date for this process is August 11, 2024.

Table 1. Search string used in the selected database

Database	Search string
Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY (halal AND talent) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (halal AND profession) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (halal AND professional) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (halal AND education) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (halal AND training) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (malaysia) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (malaysian)) AND (EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "ch") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "bk") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "cr") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "tb") OR EXCLUDE (DOCTYPE , "re"))
Google Scholar	"halal talent" OR "halal profession" OR "halal professional" OR "halal education" OR "halal training" AND "Malaysia" OR "Malaysian"
Emerald Insight	(content-type:article) AND (abstract:"halal talent" OR (abstract:"halal profession") OR (abstract:"halal professional") OR (abstract:"halal education") OR (abstract:"halal training") AND (abstract:"Malaysia"))

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The selection of studies for this systematic review was guided by a set of predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, designed to filter relevant research effectively. Table 2 is a detailed explanation of the criteria used.

Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the systematic review of Halal talent development and management

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Relevance to Halal Talent Development in Malaysia	Studies that focus on or significantly relate to the development of halal talent within Malaysia.	Studies that do not address halal talent development or focus on unrelated sectors or topics.
Publication Date	Studies published within the last 5 years (2019 - 2024) to ensure recent developments are captured.	Studies published before 2019
Type of Study	Full research papers with comprehensive findings.	Conference proceedings, abstracts, or summaries without full research data.
Research Methodologies	Studies using rigorous empirical research methods, such as qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods.	Non-empirical studies, including theoretical or conceptual papers, literature reviews, content analysis, and bibliometric analysis.
Availability	Full-text articles or accessible abstracts that can be reviewed and analyzed.	Studies without full-text availability or inaccessible abstracts.
Geographic Focus	Studies focused on Malaysia or including comparative analysis involving Malaysia.	Studies solely focused on regions outside Malaysia without comparative relevance to Malaysia's context.

Data Extraction and Synthesis

Data extraction involved systematically retrieving relevant information from selected studies, including publication details, study objectives, methodologies, key findings, and implications for halal talent development and management in Malaysia. A standardized data extraction form was developed and utilized to ensure consistency and reliability across the review process. The synthesis of extracted data was a thematic analysis to identify common

themes and gaps in the literature related to halal talent development and management. Findings were synthesized to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of halal talent in Malaysia, addressing the research question in the study.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were upheld throughout the review process, ensuring adherence to principles of academic integrity and respect for intellectual property rights. Proper citation and acknowledgment of sources were maintained and ethical approval is not required as this study involves secondary data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Database Search and Study Selection

Our database search across Scopus, Emerald Insight, and Google Scholar yielded 430 articles. After removing 5 duplicate records, we screened the titles and abstracts of 425 articles. Of these, 315 articles were excluded based on relevance, as they did not address halal talent development and management. A further 110 articles were assessed in full-text for eligibility, excluding 94 studies due to various reasons such as focusing on topics outside the scope of halal talent development (e.g., studies on halal certification or halal food products). In total, 13 articles met the inclusion criteria and were included in our systematic review and quantitative analyses (Figure 1). Across the 13 selected studies, key themes were identified and quantified. For instance, 7 out of 13 studies emphasized the need for better career development pathways, while 5 studies highlighted technological advancements as critical to sustaining halal talent. This frequency count helps underscore the prominence of these gaps within the existing literature. These studies spanned diverse sectors of Malaysia's halal industry, including food production, auditing, and logistics. We report the characteristics of the included studies in Table 2.

Themes and Research Gaps in Halal Talent Development and Management in Malaysia

The development and management of halal talent in Malaysia are crucial for sustaining the growth and integrity of the halal industry, both locally and globally. However, several research gaps and critical themes may hinder the effective progression of this field, which, if addressed, may enhance the industry's resilience and global competitiveness (Table 3).

Technological and Educational Enhancements in Halal Compliance

Technological advancements and effective educational strategies are critical to ensuring compliance and efficiency within the halal industry. The integration of digital technology, such as the Digital Halal Audit App (DHAA), has shown the potential to streamline halal auditing processes by improving documentation, efficiency, and compliance among halal auditors. However, adopting digital tools has been slow due to challenges such as low digital literacy among auditors and a lack of structured systems for audit filing (Abdul Aziz & Che Hussin, 2024a; 2024b).

In addition to digital technology, manufacturing technology, and other Industry 4.0 innovations also significantly impact the halal industry. Harun et al. (2023) pointed out that the lack of sufficient knowledge of modern food technology among auditors hinders the effective implementation of halal practices, particularly in sectors where food production methods are continuously evolving. This indicates a broader need for technological training, encompassing both digital and manufacturing advancements, to ensure auditors and professionals within the industry are well-equipped. The identified technological gaps, whether digital or manufacturing-based, highlight the need for educational and training programs that emphasize the integration of Industry 4.0 technologies into halal practices. These programs should focus not only on digital tools but also on the latest innovations in

food manufacturing, thus providing a holistic approach to technological enhancements in the halal industry.

Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), through its training programs, has made valuable contributions to standardizing halal certification and ensuring professionals are well-versed in halal compliance principles. However, there remains an opportunity to further enhance these programs by integrating more advanced technological components, particularly in digital and manufacturing technologies. Expanding the scope of training to include modules on emerging technologies could better equip professionals to meet the industry's evolving needs.

Educational initiatives must evolve to better prepare halal professionals for the growing demands of the industry. This includes improving the overall awareness and knowledge of halal principles and ensuring that training programs are designed to address the specific needs of the halal sector. Moreover, aligning educational content with the practical requirements of the industry will help professionals translate their theoretical knowledge into effective practice. As Hashim et al. (2020) emphasized, there is a broader need for targeted training approaches that focus on human capital development and ensure that graduates are well-equipped to meet the evolving demands of the halal sector.

Future research should focus on developing and testing these educational and technological integration strategies. Studies should explore the impact of targeted digital literacy programs and the effectiveness of various training methodologies in improving halal compliance. Additionally, the role of continuous professional development in adapting to technological changes should be examined to ensure that halal professionals remain competent and compliant in an increasingly digital landscape.

Sustaining Halal Talent Through Well-Being and Career Development

The sustainability of halal talent is a pressing issue, as the industry faces challenges related to career development, compensation, and continuous professional development. Research has highlighted the difficulties halal professionals encounter in advancing their careers and receiving adequate compensation, which poses a significant risk to retaining skilled talent (Abdul Rahim et al., 2022). Moreover, Norhayati Rafida et al., (2020) emphasized the imbalance between needs and interests in sustaining halal talent, pointing out the need for better alignment of wages, promotion, and training with professional expectations. To address this, future research should focus on designing and testing comprehensive career development frameworks specifically tailored to the halal industry, while also exploring the relationship between compensation structures and talent retention to identify effective models for sustaining a skilled workforce.

In addition to career sustainability, the well-being of halal executives is a vital, yet underexplored, area. The psychological and emotional well-being of these professionals is closely linked to their effectiveness and integrity in their roles (Ahmad et al., 2019). Ensuring their well-being is essential not only for their health but also for the long-term sustainability of the industry's talent pool. Further studies should examine the specific stressors and well-being challenges faced by halal executives, and assess the effectiveness of interventions such as mindfulness programs or work-life balance initiatives in enhancing job satisfaction and retention.

Aligning Educational and Organizational Strategies for Industry Needs

The alignment of educational programs with the specific needs of the halal industry remains a significant challenge. Studies have shown that current educational and training programs may not fully prepare halal professionals for the complexities of the industry, leading to a mismatch between graduate skills and industry demands (Harun et al., 2021). Hashim et al., (2020) further highlight this misalignment by showing that while university students in Malaysia have a high level of awareness and a positive attitude towards halal jobs, the educational programs may not be effectively bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical industry needs. This underscores the need for educational institutions to

better align their curricula with industry requirements to ensure graduates are well-equipped to contribute effectively to the halal sector.

Moreover, Harun et al., (2023) identified challenges within the auditing sector, such as a lack of manpower, insufficient knowledge of modern food technology, and inadequate equipment, which suggests that organizational strategies also need to be better aligned with industry needs. These challenges emphasize the importance of both educational reforms and enhanced organizational support to prepare professionals adequately for their roles. Additionally, cultural and organizational barriers, including gender dynamics and management support, further complicate this alignment (Md Nawari et al., 2023). Muhammad et al., (2020) also pointed out the challenges of insufficient manpower and technical skills within the industry, stressing the need for comprehensive strategies that address these issues.

Future research should investigate the effectiveness of industry-academia partnerships in developing and updating educational curricula. Longitudinal studies tracking graduates could provide valuable insights into how educational institutions can better align their programs with industry needs. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions or organizations could explore best practices for creating more inclusive and supportive work environments that align organizational strategies with the evolving demands of the halal industry.

Resource Allocation and Organizational Structures in Halal Management

Resource capability plays a crucial role in the performance of halal services, particularly in logistics. Companies with advanced technology, comprehensive knowledge bases, and strong organizational structures are better positioned to attract, develop, and retain skilled halal professionals, thereby enhancing their operational efficiency (Noorliza, 2020). However, smaller enterprises or those with limited resources face significant challenges, leading to inconsistent talent development across the industry. Nuratifah et al., (2019) underscored this by highlighting the knowledge and practice gaps in halal certification among smaller food processing companies, indicating a need for more tailored training and support. Future studies should explore how resource allocation impacts talent development and retention, particularly in smaller enterprises, and assess how improving resource capabilities in resource-constrained firms can promote consistent halal standards.

The role of Internal Halal Committees (IHCs) and auditors is equally critical in maintaining halal integrity. These committees and auditors are essential for enforcing halal standards, yet their effectiveness is often limited by a lack of resources and organizational support (Md Salleh et al., 2020). Strengthening these roles through better financial and structural support, as well as continuous training, is necessary to ensure they can uphold halal integrity effectively. Future research should focus on the effectiveness of different organizational structures in supporting these committees and auditors, exploring how varying levels of support impact their performance and long-term effectiveness.

Table 3. Summary of key studies on halal talent development and management in Malaysia

Study	Authors & Year	Title	Study design	Population/Sample	Key findings	Identified gaps	Relevance to halal talent
1.	Abdul Aziz and Che Hussin, (2024a)	Perceptions of Internal Halal Auditors Toward Digital Halal Audit App in Malaysia	Quantitative, Confirmatory Study	30 Internal Halal Auditors from companies listed in Malaysia's halal directory	The Digital Halal Audit App (DHAA) enhances efficiency, value, and compliance in halal auditing. It integrates TTF, UTAUT2, and religiosity to assess acceptance among Internal Halal Auditors. Results confirm the suitability of the proposed framework for evaluating DHAA acceptance.	Limited discussions on DHAA acceptance, particularly factors influencing IHAs' acceptance. Small sample size, untested hypotheses, and need for expanded research to generalize findings.	Highlights the importance of technological integration and competency development in halal auditing within Malaysia, suggesting areas for future research and development of halal talent, particularly in technology adoption.
2.	Abdul Aziz and Che Hussin, (2024b)	Thematic Analysis of Interview Insights: Challenges in Halal Auditing Practices in Malaysia	Qualitative, Thematic Analysis	Interviews with 6 Internal Halal Auditors from various companies in Malaysia	Identified key challenges in halal auditing, including lack of digital tools, delays due to inexperience, improper documentation, and lack of structured filing systems. Recommended digital solutions to enhance audit efficiency.	There is a significant gap in the adoption of digital tools for halal auditing in Malaysia, leading to inefficiencies. The study also highlights the need for more experienced auditors and better documentation practices.	The study emphasizes the importance of competency development, particularly in digital skills and proper audit documentation, highlighting a critical need for training and development in halal talent within Malaysia.

3.	Harun et al., (2023)	Halal Auditing Challenges: A Case Study on Auditors in Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Kelantan (JAHEAIK)	Qualitative, Case Study	7	Interviews with Halal Auditors at JAHEAIK	Identified internal and external challenges faced by auditors, including lack of manpower, insufficient knowledge of modern food technology, difficulties in documentation, and lack of necessary equipment. Also highlighted challenges in dealing with applicants and managing time effectively.	Significant gaps include the need for more specialized training in modern food technologies, increased manpower, and better equipment for auditors. The study also points to the need for better management of applicant relations and time allocation for audits.	The study emphasizes the need for competency development in modern food technologies and better resource management among halal auditors, highlighting critical areas for improving halal talent in Malaysia
4.	Abdul Rahim et al., (2022)	Negotiation of needs towards halal talents sustainability	Qualitative, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with TRIZ Analysis	7	Halal Executives from various industries in Malaysia	Identified critical factors affecting the sustainability of halal talent, including poor career paths, lack of training, and inadequate salary structures. TRIZ analysis provided solutions for developing a sustainable framework for halal talent in Malaysia.	The study highlights significant gaps in career development, training provision, and compensation for halal talents, indicating the need for more structured approaches to address these issues.	The findings emphasize the importance of addressing career development, training, and compensation to sustain halal talent, crucial for the growth of Malaysia's halal industry.

5.	Md Nawi et al., (2023)	Firms' commitment to Halal standard practices in the food sector: impact of knowledge and attitude	Quantitative, Survey-based with PLS-SEM Analysis	200 Internal Halal Executive Officers from MNCs and SMEs in Sabah, Malaysia (112 valid responses)	Attitude significantly impacts firms' commitment to Halal standard practices; knowledge, however, does not have a significant effect. Gender moderates the relationship between attitude and commitment, with male employees showing a stronger effect.	The study identified a gap in the significance of knowledge on commitment to Halal practices, suggesting that merely knowing is not enough without the proper attitude. Further research is needed to explore other moderating factors such as income and age.	The study emphasizes the importance of fostering the right attitudes among Halal executives to strengthen commitment to Halal practices. It also highlights the need for more comprehensive training that goes beyond knowledge acquisition, focusing on attitude development.
6.	Noorliza, K. (2021)	Resource-capability of halal logistics services, its extent and impact on performance.	Quantitative, Cluster Analysis	123 Malaysian halal-based third-party logistics (3PL) providers	Identified that the extent of emergent resource-capability (physical, technology, knowledge, relational, and organizational resources) significantly impacts customer service innovation and cost advantages. High and medium resource capabilities lead to better performance.	Gaps include the need for a more in-depth understanding of how different resource-capability configurations affect performance. Further research is required to explore other factors that might influence the development and deployment of these capabilities.	The study provides insights into the critical role of resource capability in the performance of halal logistics services in Malaysia, highlighting areas for improvement in resource management and talent development within the halal logistics sector.

7.	Harun et al., (2021)	Halal training: Issues and challenges from trainers' perspectives in Halal Products Research Institute (HPRI).	Qualitative, Thematic Analysis	Interviews with 2 Halal Trainers at HPRI	Identified three key challenges in halal training: language barriers, misunderstandings about the scope of certification, and diverse educational backgrounds among participants. These factors impact the effectiveness of training delivery and comprehension.	Gaps include the need for tailored training approaches to accommodate different educational backgrounds and better communication about the limitations of halal certification. Further research is suggested to explore strategies for improving training effectiveness.	The study highlights critical challenges in the delivery of halal training in Malaysia, emphasizing the need for more effective training methods and clear communication to enhance the development of halal talent
8.	Muhammad et al., (2020)	The challenges faced by halal certification authorities in managing the halal certification process in Malaysia	Qualitative, In-depth Interviews	15 Respondents: Halal Auditors from JAKIM and JAIS, Halal Certification Panel members, and Halal Executives from various companies	Identified six major challenges: lack of manpower, auditors' lack of skills and knowledge, issues with MYeHALAL system, challenges in reviewing applications, lack of proper guidelines, and competition from foreign certification bodies.	The study highlighted significant gaps in manpower, technical skills, and effective communication, particularly within the MYeHALAL system. Further research is suggested to improve the standardization and efficiency of halal certification processes.	The study emphasizes the critical need for enhancing the competencies and resources of halal auditors and certification authorities, which directly impacts the effectiveness and credibility of halal talent in Malaysia.

9.	Md Salleh et al., (2020)	Role of Internal Halal Committee in Ensuring Business Sustainability: The Case of a Multinational Slaughter House	Qualitative, Case Study	Case study on Jimat Jaya Sdn. Bhd., a multinational slaughterhouse in Malaysia	The establishment of an Internal Halal Committee (IHC) is crucial for ensuring compliance with halal standards and maintaining business sustainability. The IHC plays a key role in monitoring, controlling, and improving halal processes, which is critical for maintaining customer trust and meeting legal requirements.	The study suggests that there is a need for more financial allocation for continuous training on halal standards and certification. Additionally, there is a recommendation for stronger industry-academia linkages to enhance knowledge and skill development.	The findings emphasize the importance of having a well-established IHC and continuous training to ensure compliance with halal standards. This is essential for the development and sustainability of halal talent within the industry, particularly in large-scale operations like multinational slaughterhouses.
10.	Norhayati Rafida et al., (2020)	Negotiation Parameters of Needs Versus Interest Towards Sustainability of Halal Talents in Malaysia	Qualitative, In-depth Interviews	5 Experts from industries, authorities, academia, and NGOs in Malaysia	The study identified that the negotiation parameters of needs are emphasized more than interests in the sustainability framework for halal talents in Malaysia. Priorities include wages, promotion, and training.	The study highlights a gap in balancing the negotiation of needs and interests, indicating that more attention should be paid to aligning these factors for sustainable halal talent development. There is also a lack of specific frameworks that address these parameters holistically.	The study is highly relevant for understanding the factors that contribute to the sustainability of halal talent in Malaysia, particularly in balancing needs and interests to ensure long-term engagement and development of professionals in the halal industry.

11.	Hashim et al., (2020)	Relationship between awareness, knowledge, and attitude of behavioural intention towards halal jobs among Malaysian Muslim university students.	Quantitative, Survey-based	1,454 final-year Muslim university students from public and private universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia	The study found a high level of awareness, adequate knowledge, and favorable attitudes towards halal jobs among the students. The relationships between awareness, knowledge, and attitude were significant, influencing students' behavioral intentions towards halal jobs.	The study identified a gap in addressing the practical implementation of these positive attitudes and intentions in actual career choices. There is also a lack of focus on the transition from academic settings to professional environments in the halal industry.	The findings highlight the importance of targeted education and awareness programs to further enhance students' readiness and commitment to pursuing careers in the halal industry, which is crucial for developing future halal talent in Malaysia.
12.	Nuratifah et al., (2019)	Evaluation of knowledge and practices of halal certification among food processing companies in Sabah, Malaysia	Quantitative, Survey-based	27 Halal Managers from food processing companies in Sabah, Malaysia	The study found that the majority of respondents had good knowledge of the halal concept, halal assurance system (HAS), and practices of halalan tayyiba. Length of employment significantly influenced HAS knowledge, while ethnicity and product cluster influenced halalan tayyiba practices.	The study identified a gap in the practical implementation of HAS among companies, particularly in smaller industries. There is a need for more tailored training and support to enhance compliance with halal standards.	The study underscores the importance of continuous education and training for halal managers, particularly in improving the implementation of HAS and halalan tayyiba practices, which are crucial for maintaining halal certification and standards in the food industry.

13.	Ahmad et al., (2019)	The lived experience of eudaimonic well-being in a religio-economical role: A phenomenological study	Qualitative, Phenomenological Study	3	Halal Executives in food and beverage companies in Malaysia	The study identified three key components of eudaimonic well-being in halal executives: awareness of the need for change, striving for excellence with a malleable mindset, and intense involvement with inner potencies. These elements contribute to the overall well-being and effectiveness of halal executives.	The study identified gaps in understanding how the role of halal executives affects their well-being and performance. There is a need for further research to explore these aspects in different contexts and with a larger sample size.	The findings highlight the importance of promoting well-being among halal executives to enhance their effectiveness and integrity in performing their roles, which is crucial for the sustainability and growth of halal talent in Malaysia
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Study Design, Demographic Characteristics, and Risk of Bias

The reviewed studies on halal talent development and management in Malaysia utilized a variety of research designs, each contributing unique insights into the field. The study designs predominantly included qualitative methodologies, such as case studies, thematic analyses, and phenomenological approaches, along with a few quantitative survey-based studies.

Study Design

The qualitative studies, such as those by Ahmad et al., (2019) and Harun et al., (2021), utilized in-depth interviews and thematic analysis to explore the lived experiences and challenges faced by halal executives and trainers. These studies aimed to uncover nuanced insights into the psychological and operational aspects of halal talent management. The case studies, such as those by Md Salleh et al., (2020) and Harun et al., (2023), focused on specific organizations or regions, offering a detailed examination of halal auditing practices and the role of internal halal committees. On the other hand, quantitative studies, like those by Hashim et al., (2020) and Md Nawawi et al., (2023), employed survey methods to gather data from a broader sample, analyzing the impact of knowledge, attitudes, and training on halal practices using statistical tools like PLS-SEM.

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics across these studies varied, reflecting the diverse population involved in halal talent management in Malaysia. Participants included halal executives, auditors, trainers, and university students, with sample sizes ranging from small, focused groups in qualitative studies (e.g., three to seven participants in Ahmad et al., 2019; and Abdul Rahim et al., 2022) to larger samples in quantitative research (e.g., 1,454 university students in Hashim et al., 2020; and 112 halal executives in Md Nawawi et al., 2023). The participants were primarily drawn from various sectors within Malaysia's halal industry, including food processing companies, logistics providers, and certification authorities. This diversity in sample demographics provided a comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities in halal talent management across different organizational and cultural contexts within Malaysia.

Risk of Bias

The risk of bias in these studies varies depending on the research design and methodology used. Qualitative studies, while providing deep insights, are often subject to biases related to the researcher's interpretations and the subjective nature of the data. For example, the small sample sizes in phenomenological studies (Ahmad et al., 2019) and case studies (Md Salleh et al., 2020) may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the purposive sampling methods used in qualitative studies could introduce selection bias, as participants who are more articulate or have more extreme experiences may be overrepresented.

In contrast, quantitative studies tend to have a lower risk of bias in terms of generalizability due to larger sample sizes and the use of statistical analysis. However, these studies may still face risks related to survey design, such as non-response bias or the accuracy of self-reported data (Hashim et al., 2020; Md Nawawi et al., 2023). Moreover, the cross-sectional nature of most quantitative studies in this review limits the ability to infer causality, potentially leading to biases in interpreting the relationship between variables, such as knowledge, attitudes, and compliance with halal practices.

While the studies reviewed provide valuable insights into halal talent development and management in Malaysia, they also present certain risks of bias that must be considered when interpreting their findings. Given the nascent stage of research in halal talent development, qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies were often necessary to explore the nuances of this field. These methods provide rich, detailed insights that are essential for understanding the context-specific challenges faced by halal professionals. Nevertheless, we recognize that the predominance of qualitative research, while

informative, may limit the ability to generalize the identified gaps across broader populations. Future studies could benefit from a more balanced approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research designs.

CONCLUSION

This systematic review has provided a comprehensive analysis of the existing research on halal talent development and management in Malaysia, highlighting key themes and identifying gaps that need to be addressed. The main findings revealed that the theme of technological and educational enhancements in halal compliance, sustaining halal talent through well-being and career development, aligning educational and organizational strategies for industry needs, and resource allocation and organizational structures in halal management were highlighted as critical areas requiring further research. Most of the studies utilized qualitative research methodologies, including case studies and thematic analyses, with a smaller proportion employing quantitative approaches. The demographic characteristics of participants were diverse, ranging from halal industry professionals to university students, providing a broad perspective on the issues at hand. However, the review identified potential risks of bias, particularly in qualitative studies, where the use of small, non-representative samples and purposive sampling methods could limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should aim to incorporate more quantitative approaches to complement the rich qualitative insights and validate the findings across broader populations. This study lays the groundwork for further exploration aimed at cultivating a robust and sustainable talent pool capable of meeting the evolving demands of the halal industry.

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