

HALAL FOOD: A STUDY ON CLAYPOT CHICKEN RICE ISSUE

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Abstract

This study addresses concerns regarding the halal status of Ahmad Muzakin Restaurant's claypot chicken rice cooked with rice wine. It explores historical origins, impact on Muslim patrons, and effects on unaware consumers, aiming to dismantle facts and laws supporting Muslim diners. The qualitative approach employs document analysis, extracting insights from various sources like journal articles, books, social media, and newspapers. In conclusion, the Sri Petaling claypot chicken rice case emphasizes the responsibility of restaurant owners in ensuring collective food safety. Ethical practices, transparency, and prioritizing customer safety over profits are crucial for a halal business, with open communication and customer awareness essential during crises. Customers should be cautious, vigilant about food safety, and verify halal certifications from JAKIM.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of selling claypot chicken rice to the public that has been cooked with rice wine will be clarified by this case study. providing evidence and a more thorough explanation of this matter. This is a result of the restaurant's delectable dishes, including claypot chicken rice, becoming popular on social media (Lok Jian Wen, 2023). Following that, a video emerged demonstrating that the store makes claypot chicken rice with rice wine. The young Chinese man who posted the video on social media shared it extensively. It was captured in a brief vlog. Many people are now doubting if the restaurant's food is halal.

This paper will delve further into the issue's historical origins. The effect on Muslim patrons who have savored restaurant meals comes next. Talk about whether consumers who are unaware of religious law are likewise impacted by this issue. For Muslims, halal is a very essential food. We shall dismantle the facts and the law in favor of Muslims who eat at Ahmad Muzakin's eatery. Decide how to prevent this problem from

occurring in the future.

Ahmad Muzakin Restaurant located at 11 GF, Jalan Radin Anum 2, Bandar Baru Sri Petaling, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. Additionally, this store is open Friday through Wednesday from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm. A Muslim who is proficient in Cantonese owns and prepares the halal version of Claypot Chicken Rice, which is the most well-known dish here (<https://www.facebook.com/carimakan126>). People from all origins have come together to enjoy their delectable dishes because of their robust and tasty cuisine. With over 28 years of experience in claypot chicken rice cooking, every meal is guaranteed to delight the senses.

Their distinct charm lies in more than just their fluency. Their Claypot Chicken Rice, which comes in small (RM9) and big (RM18) portions, is the true star of the show. He serves a lot of Chinese clients, which attests to the authenticity of his food. Since the chef is a Muslim, it is appropriate for Muslims to enjoy as well. His unique method is used to squeeze chicken chunks, and rice is cooked in a claypot over a charcoal fire, producing a scent that is unmatched by a gas fire. Remember that salted fish is another “MUST HAVE” component that can improve the flavor of the dish and make Sri Petaling's Claypot Chicken Rice even more wonderful (Lee Khang Yi, 2023).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study applies the document analysis methodology to examine and interpret written, visual, or audio materials. The goal of document analysis is to extract meaningful information, identify patterns, and gain insights from the content of documents regarding to the issues highlighted in this study. The data have been collected from various sources includes journal articles, books, media social contents and newspaper both in online and printed material. The data have been analyzed under a few new themes as stated below.

CHRONOLOGY OF RISE OF THE ISSUE

The chronology of this issue is about the use of alcohol in cooking. A few months ago, in September, it went viral on social media about a restaurant selling halal version of chicken claypot rice in Sri Petaling. Many Malays have visited the shop because they are amazed by the deliciousness of the food. Some even commented on the store to the extent that it went viral. The restaurant is owned by a couple named Ahmad Muzakin (48 years old) and Rotiya Ropai (49 years old). They are users of blue identity cards but are of Indonesian descent and his wife is from Surabaya. They have been in business for almost 30 years, where Aman's Food Stall has been operating for 28 years sharing shop with Good Tea Restaurant at Jalan Anum Radin 1, Bandar Sri Petaling. Next, continue the business in the new place and change the name of the shop as Restaurant Ahmad Muzakin Claypot Chicken Rice which has been in operation for 2 months at Jalan Anum Radin 2, Bandar Sri Petaling.

The issue began to spread when a youtuber named Oppa Zuzu gave a reprimand and warning to the Malay community who ate at Ahmad Muzakin's restaurant and revealed in more detail each matter about the making of the Claypot Chicken Rice (Oppa Zuzu, 2023). Similarly, there is a tiktokker, @mawarninamli (Bonda Wani I Peanut Entrepreneur) who further explains the video of Claypot Chicken Rice's use of rice wine based on the Home Live Asia video review (Syihabudin, n.d.). Ahmad Muzakin was included rice wine brand Pagoda Brand Shao Hsing Hua Tiao Chiew. When the bottle is researched, it says that the substance contained is 15% alcohol and 1% is salt. During the video, the review was recorded Mr. Muzakin said “We Malays really want to find things that are Halal Chinese, so I want to be brave in this field, Alhamdulillah”. This can lead to much speculation about how the food is made (Donivia Channel, n.d).

More surprising thing, in fact on July 24, 2016, there was a Chinese youtuber who was fluent in Malay, his YouTube is Gerryko Malaysia Media Events & Food made a review of the restaurant while still selling at Good Tea Restaurant at Jalan Radin Anum 1, when his restaurant name was Aman's Food Stall. The Youtuber tried to unravel the matter. When the youtuber wanted to record the uncle was cooking, restrained and angry. After that, given the menu. The surprising thing is that there is one menu, Claypot Wine Chicken which costs RM10. There is also a confession of Mr. Muzakin that he is

Malay and not Indonesian. It was also recorded how the food was made and the youtuber claimed that the one used was rice wine (Shao Hsing). He said again “He afraid to prepare Chinese food and not afraid to like use wine”. It is also shown that the shop is surrounded by sellers selling pigs and liquor (Donivia Channel, n.d). Stronger evidence can also be seen, there was a Facebook post shared by Dato' Tony Looi Chee Hong on 23 November 2022. Where he shared the dining experience at the Good Tea Restaurant and there was also a picture of Mr. Muzakin and his wife in the picture. It can also be seen that the store has a sale of liquor and pigs (Syihabudin, n.d.).

On September 12, 2023, the Harian Metro released an article about Mr. Muzakin's description of the issue. He made a denial of the allegations of using prohibited substances in cooking. It is claimed that the two bottles used are sesame oil commonly used in Chinese cuisine, but it is a substance that is believed to be halal only the factory does not have a halal certificate from the authorities (Noor Hidayah & Suhaila, 2023). According to the Halal Portal, Ahmad Muzakin's restaurant does not have halal certification. Therefore, find things that are Halal is our responsibility as a Muslim, so be careful in buying. Make this issue a lesson in our lives.

Effects of The Issue

From this claypot chicken rice issue, there are many effects of their marketing. Either the negative effect or the positive effect. The positive effect of this case is maybe their profit is a lot because they are famous for their Chinese-style claypot chicken rice at Sri Petaling. The bad effect of this case is it may cause discomfort in the Islamic community where it affects the social relationship of a Muslim. Everyone knows that in promote marketing as Muslims must be based on Sharia, which is halal and *tayyib*. This is something that sellers and customers should focus on when buying or selling food because for this matter it shall be our flesh and blood. As said by Rasulullah SAW: It means:

“In the person of the son of Adam there is a piece of flesh. If the meat is good, then the human being is good. If it is damaged, then humans are damaged. Know that is the heart (spirit).”

(Riwayat Bukhari dan Muslim)

However, this issue more related about its marketing itself that causing a loss of regular customers and trust within the Muslim community might stem from a few factors, it will affect social relationships like misunderstanding between the customers and the owner of the restaurant. Customers' trust is being eroded because of messing with Islam by just claiming that the food is halal, or rather the contrary (Van Buren et.al, 2020). Inadvertently conveying erroneous information about the dish's preparation is possible with marketing messaging or descriptions. If there is doubt regarding the dish's halal status (adherence to Islamic requirements) or if customers view it as non-halal owing to marketing materials, Muslim customers may lose faith (Nurul Najla' Athirah Muhamad Nazari et.al, 2023).

There may be issues or worries regarding the legitimacy of the components used or the manner of production in some situations. This may cause Muslim customers to be skeptical about whether the food satisfies their nutritional needs. To guarantee that a dish fulfills one's dietary and religious criteria, it is critical to receive detailed information about its contents and cooking techniques (Jean Pierre Enriquez & Juan Carlos Archila-Godinez, 2021).

. For this issue, the seller's actions are very clear they are using rice wine in their cooking. In this claypot chicken rice cases may give the consequences of drinking alcohol-containing food vary depending on the amount ingested, the concentration of alcohol consumed, the pace of consumption and whether the alcohol is drunk with or without food.

Next, this prohibition has a tremendous influence on Muslim views and actions regarding alcohol. Alcohol drinking is often less tolerated in Islamic communities and religious and societal beliefs play a significant influence in deterring alcohol usage. In research investigations, Muslims were shown to have a high incidence of not reporting alcohol usage, and religious views were found to have a greater negative impact on reporting alcohol consumption than social variables (Cynthia et.al, 2012). Intoxication, behavioral and cognitive impairments, disorientation, dependency, and toxicity to organs

such as the brain are all short and long-term impacts of alcohol on mental and physical health.

Other than that, this case may cause it to be hard to get customers again. Customers may have a bad impression of the previous dining experience, which makes it difficult to get them to come back, especially to attract Muslim customers because it related to our cultural sensitivity. Cultural nuances and sensitivities around food are crucial, especially when marketing dishes to specific communities (Wilkins et.al, 2019). If there is a lack of understanding or respect for the cultural and religious significance of certain ingredients or cooking practices, it can inadvertently offend potential customers.

Lastly, it may cause destruction of stocks. May be the owner of the restaurant has bought a stock of raw ingredients for his cooking that week. But when the restaurant is closed it will cause loss and waste of the food stock. Food or raw material stocks may need to be thrown away or cannot be used again, resulting in further financial losses (Ishangulyyev et.al, 2019). It also may future uncertainty which is restaurant closings can possible difficulties in reopening because must get customers back. Because of that, obtaining halal certificates from recognized bodies can boost confidence greatly. Marketing that emphasizes the use of authentic products and cooking methods can also be useful by not using any alcohol in food to be served.

THE USES OF WINE FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Whether or not this wine contains alcohol, it is nevertheless considered haram under Islamic law when it is brought up. The food's processing method will dictate the ingredient's classification if the name of the dish is altered to something other than "wine." Even if the name is altered, the law is still broken if the processing technique is the same as the process of producing alcohol, regardless of how much or how little alcohol is distilled. This matter is in line with the decision of the Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs of Malaysia's previous Special Muzakarah of the Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs of Malaysia which discussed the issue of alcohol in food, drinks, fragrances and medicines on 14 to 16 July 2011 (Nur Bahirah Baharum et.al, 2020).

Apart from rice wine, the Muzakarah of the Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs of Malaysia (MKI Muzakarah Committee) has also issued a fatwa on wine vinegar. The committee decided that using wine vinegar that has been processed or combined with external materials is prohibited (<http://e-smaf.islam.gov.my>). It is halal, nevertheless, if the vinegar turns out to be the substitute for the wine vinegar on its own (Jamaludin et.al, 2016). The same law was decided at the Selangor State Fatwa Committee Meeting 3rd/2006, which was held on June 26–27, 2006. This serves as additional confirmation.

So, it is clear here that the viral food store that sells claypot chicken rice is indeed illegal if it is true that they use food flavouring products based on alcohol or rice wine. However, if the premise replaces rice wine with other flavour enhancers such as sesame oil, eating it will no longer be haram.

To address some netizens' comments linking tapai to rice wine, it should be made clear that, as long as it doesn't get you wasted, tapai is permissible as long as it's not alcoholic. This is because Malaysians have been making tapai as a mouth-sweetening method or a traditional dish from the beginning of time. This is not the same as tapai water, though, because it contains alcohol and can get you wasted. Nonetheless, whether it contains alcohol, any food that has the potential to make someone intoxicated is prohibited.

Because alcohol is formed through fermentation, rice wine and alcohol are closely related. All intoxicating substances include alcohol, and jurists have agreed upon the law prohibiting it (<https://muftiwp.gov.my/224>). Alcohol was seen by Ulama al-Syafieyyah as impure due to its classification as an intoxicating drink.

Alcohol is unclean, according to Imam al-Nawawi, who quoted Allah SWT as saying, "*In fact, alcohol, gambling, worshiping idols, and casting lots with arrow shafts are all impure from the deeds of Satan.*" Additionally, alcohol is impure, exactly like the law of blood since it cannot be consumed unless there is an emergency (<https://muftiwp.gov.my/185>). Therefore, in the aspect of using it in food or as a drink,

the scholars agreed to prohibit it. As for the aspect of external use such as for medical purposes, making perfume or cosmetic products then the law is also illegal.

Sheikh Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2005) urge that Wine and pork for Muslims are worthless property in the eyes of Sharia, so it is not required for a Muslim to benefit from them except in an emergency and (taken) with an emergency rate (only necessary) such as to eliminate hunger or thirst that is so extreme that it can lead to destruction, and a person does not find food or drink other than that, then (in that situation) it is required for him to take advantage of one of the two as long as he can save himself

Sheikh Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2005) also elaborate that the law for (alcohol) is that it is forbidden to drink in large or small quantities except in an emergency because it (alcohol) is forbidden by its essence, and it is not permissible to benefit from it either for medical purposes or otherwise because Allah has not made a cure (medicine) for us from something that is forbidden to us. Mentioned in the book *al-Mausu'ah al-Fiqhiyah al-Kuwaitiyah* tha the jurists say it is forbidden to benefit from alcohol for medicinal purposes, and any other form of benefit, such as using it in perfume or food or clay (<https://muftiwp.gov.my/1737>).

SUGGESTION FOR THE ISSUE

In nations with predominantly Muslim populations and those with Muslim minority communities, individuals of the Islamic faith are particularly mindful of the permissible and prohibited components in their food. This heightened awareness is accentuated by the increasing complexity and elongation of food supply chains (Jalil et.al, 2018)). This complexity may instigate uncertainty regarding procedural attributes and credibility factors, making it crucial for these attributes to be meticulously prepared and consistently maintained in strict accordance with the laws and customs of the Islamic religion until they reach the end consumer. Consequently, the harmonization of the halal concept is of utmost importance for Muslims, serving as a critical criterion in their selection of high-quality foods and products for consumption (Yedi Herdiana et. al, 2023). Moreover, for Muslims, this aspect is a significant reference point, given that it pertains to the religious compliance of what they consume, drink, or use, and cannot be substituted by alternative processes.

As JAKIM holds the primary authority for granting halal food certifications, there is a need for enhancements in current halal practices within the food industry. New entrants in halal food operations require ongoing guidance from JAKIM. While JAKIM has the authority to suspend or revoke halal certificates for non-compliance, there is a suggestion to impose penalties as a form of punishment (Liow, 2011). Manufacturers, within the context of the value chain, play a crucial role in establishing the halal concept. It is recommended that JAKIM actively promotes the application of halal certificates, especially among small businesses, particularly SMEs. Despite reservations among some food manufacturers, the process of obtaining halal certification, as outlined in (Rohayati Che Din & Salina Daud, 2014), is not overly complex. Recognizing the significance of halal certification for business operators, particularly in the food industry, Malaysia could explore the integration and coordination of inspection and certification processes. Moreover, to align with halal requirements, food producers are advised to adhere to standards consistent with global benchmarks such as ISO9000, Codex Alimentarius, QA, HACCP, GHP, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) (Mohd Aliff Abdul Majid et.al, 2015).

Moreover, there should be encouragement for food manufacturers to obtain JAKIM's certified halal logo for their products, as it holds significant importance for their business. According to Shafie, consumers, especially Muslims, may not scrutinize or understand the scientific ingredients in products, but the presence of a halal logo eliminates doubts. The study highlights that, for Muslim consumers, the importance of products carrying halal logos might surpass those with International Standardization Organization (ISO) or similar certifications (Haslenna Hamdan et.al, 2013). Given the substantial number of Muslim consumers, there is a considerable market potential for halal food products.

Additionally, stakeholders should focus on raising awareness about halal to position Malaysia as a global halal centre, surpassing other nations in halal implementation and exhibition. This strategic positioning could make Malaysia a hub for halal-related knowledge and information. As outlined by

Ambali, halal consumption is influenced by religious beliefs, exposure, the role of halal certification through logos, and health-related reasons. Policymakers are urged to establish strict policies for all involved in providing halal food, including breeders, slaughterhouses, certifying agencies, retailers, consumers, and religious representatives.

Future research could broaden the scope by examining halal issues and challenges for Muslim and non-Muslim consumers globally, contributing to the existing halal literature. The global recognition of halal products and services as a safety and quality standard emphasizes the significance of hygiene and sanitation in processing. Malaysia has taken strides to establish itself as a major player in the halal industry, positioning the country as a comprehensive halal centre. Despite existing challenges, producers of halal products play a pivotal role in realizing the government's goal. Proper procedures can address highlighted issues, paving the way for Malaysia to become a global halal hub.

CONCLUSION

In short, there are many information and lessons can be learned from this claypot chicken rice case that opened at Sri Petaling. The most important is about their responsibility as the owner of the restaurant. Food safety is not just the responsibility of the restaurant or food outlet, but also of the workers and regulatory bodies. All parties engaged in the food chain are responsible for upholding standards and ensuring safe consumption.

As a Muslim owner of a restaurant, every Muslim should practice ethics and be transparent in doing any marketing to gain halal profits and not harm any party. The business also must prioritize customer safety and well-being over profit margins because they are the reason their marketing is profitable. Do not look for an easy way by putting something like alcohol in the food to attract customers in an inappropriate way like in this case mentioned. Communication between the seller and customer is also important in marketing that is open and honest, especially in times of crisis, which is when people make something bad, people will take notice and start spreading it on social media which makes our marketing fall even more.

Therefore, the customer must be aware of this issue like people should be cautious about the food they eat and be aware of the symptoms of food poisoning or bother their superiors if there is a restaurant that does not comply with the sharia that has been set by Islam and ensure that the restaurant that is eaten has a valid halal certificate from JAKIM.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors affirm that there is no conflict of interest in this article.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

All authors jointly contributed to the development of this paper. All authors also contributed to reviewing and refining the paper, providing intellectual and methodological input, and ensuring its academic rigor and clarity. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

AI GENERATIVE DECLARATION

The author declares that generative AI tools were not used in the creation of this article, except for text paraphrasing and cross-checking references. The author assumes full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and final content of this work.

RESEARCH ETHICS STATEMENT

The author(s) declare that this study did not involve any human biological samples or data, or animal subjects. Consequently, formal ethics committee approval and informed consent were not required for this research.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to institutional and ethical requirements.

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