Thriving Against the Odds: A Multiple Case Study on the Opportunities and Challenges in the Halal Dining Industry

Jessica M. Alfonso, DBM 🆔
University of the Immaculate Conception
jalfonso@uic.edu.ph

Dr. Emma V. Sagarino 🆔
University of the Immaculate Conception
esagarino@uic.edu.ph

Abstract

This qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore the opportunities and challenges faced by five halal restaurant owners or managers in Davao City coming from different types of restaurants: catering and banquet, fast-food, café bistro, grill restaurant, and restaurant inside the hotel. They were chosen through purposive sampling. The experiences and coping strategies of the five cases were examined using in-depth Interviews. Triangulation of the gathered data was done in each case by interviewing their cooks, waiters, or supervisors. It was analyzed using thematic analysis resulting in three emergent themes on the opportunities: growing halal and health-conscious market, halal certification as business enabler, and leveraging delivery platforms and digital contents. The emergent themes for challenges included the Fragmented, Costly, and Unreliable Halal Certification Ecosystem, Difficulty of Maintaining Halal Integrity and Standards, and Operational and Cost Crisis. The five cases were generally similar in their declaration of satisfaction with the quality of their work life. As regards their coping strategies on the challenges of their experiences, five emergent themes have been drawn: Utilizing Available Certification Resource, Ensuring and Upholding Halal Integrity, Reduction of Overhead Costs, Secure the Supply Chain, and Maximize Market Reach.

Keywords*: Business Management, halal, halal certified establishment, dining industry, halal standards, thriving, multiple case study, Davao City, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Halal dining has become a rapidly expanding segment of the global hospitality industry, driven by the rising Muslim population, increasing health consciousness, and growing interest in ethical and clean food preparation (Saleh & Rajandran, 2024).. While halal traditionally refers to what is permissible under Islamic law, its contemporary appeal extends beyond Muslim consumers, influencing mainstream dining trends (Wilson, 2014. Globally, the halal food market is projected to surpass USD 5 trillion by 2033, with Southeast Asia emerging as a critical growth region (Research and Markets, 2025). The Philippines—particularly Davao City—has likewise witnessed increasing demand for halal-compliant services due to

tourism diversification, the rise of Muslim-friendly travel, and the presence of multi-faith communities (Lañas et al., 2023; Yusof & Muslim, 2024).

Despite these opportunities, halal dining establishments in the Philippines face unique barriers. Studies highlight challenges such as fragmented certification systems, limited halal suppliers, high operational costs, cultural misunderstandings, and inconsistent regulatory support (Liba et al., 2022; Balaoing-Pelkmans, 2025; Abdulraof, 2024). While research exists on halal consumer behavior and service quality, very few studies examine the *lived experiences* of halal restaurant owners and managers, especially regarding how they thrive amid structural, operational, and cultural constraints. This gap is notable in Davao City, where halal-friendly initiatives are emerging but remain underdeveloped (Lañas et al., 2023).

This study addresses this gap by exploring the opportunities, challenges, and coping strategies of halal dining operators in Davao City through a multiple case study approach. The work is guided primarily by the Resource-Based View (RBV), which explains how internal capabilities support competitive advantage, and the Halal Market Theory, which describes the expanding appeal of halal products among Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. Additional theories—including Agency Theory, the Elaboration Likelihood Model, Social Cohesion, Institutional Theory, Contingency Theory, and Supply Chain Management Theory—aid in interpreting managerial decisions, consumer behavior, inter-organizational relationships, and adaptive practices.

Objective. This study aimed to (1) identify opportunities and challenges experienced by halal restaurant owners and managers in Davao City, (2) examine their coping strategies, and (3) understand similarities and differences across cases.

METHODOLOGY
Research Design
A qualitative multiple case study design was employed to enable an in-depth, comparative exploration of halal restaurant operations in diverse real-life contexts. This approach supported cross-case analysis of similarities and differences in opportunities, challenges, and coping strategies

Research Participants in the Case Units
Maximum variation purposive sampling selected five halal establishments representing different formats:
1. catering & banquet, 2) fast food, 3) café bistro, 4) grill restaurant, and 5) hotel restaurant.

Participants were owners, managers, chefs, and service staff who had at least five years of operational experience or involvement in halal compliance

Data Collection
Data were collected from March 2025 to November 2025 using multiple qualitative techniques to ensure depth and credibility of findings. The primary method involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with owners and managers, complemented by triangulation interviews with cooks, waiters, supervisors, or customers to validate and enrich the data. Additional sources included document reviews such as halal certifications, menus, and social media pages, which provided contextual and operational insights, as well as on-site observations of kitchen layouts, food-handling practices, and overall restaurant operations. All interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent and transcribed verbatim. Ethical approval for the study was secured from the University Research Ethics Committee (Protocol GS-ER-07-25-0340).

Data Analysis
Thematic analysis followed open coding, category development, axial coding, and final theme generation across cases. Cross-case matrices supported comparison of patterns and divergences. Credibility was

enhanced through triangulation, member checking, prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, and maintenance of an audit trail.

RESULTS

Cross-Case Analysis

Table 1.

Profile	Halal Catering & Banquet (Case A)	Halal Fast Food (Case B)	Halal Café Bistro (Case C)	Halal Grill Resto (Case D)	Halal Hotel Restaurant (Case E)
Age	54	27	43	41	50
Sex	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Marital Status	Married	Single	Married	Married	Single
Position	General Manager/Owner	Supervisor	Operation Manager	Manager	General Manager/Owner
Years of Service	Over 10 years	3 years	5 years	Over 10 years	19 years
Number of Years Operating the Business	37 years, 10 years as Halal	8 years	5 years	Over 20 years	19 years

Profile of the Participants
The five participants represent a diverse mix of ownership and management experiences within Davao City's halal dining sector. The participants are composed of three female and two males. Their managerial experiences ranging from five years to more than 20 years. Their restaurants range from small-scale ventures to large establishments serving up to 700 customers. Despite varying religious and business backgrounds, all participants share a commitment to maintaining halal integrity in Davao City where Muslims remain a minority. This diversity provides rich insights into how halal entrepreneurs navigate cultural, economic, and regulatory complexities.

Similarities and Differences of Opportunities and Challenges Presented
Opportunities. Across the five cases, three major opportunity themes emerged that strengthened the market position of halal restaurants in Davao City. First, the growing halal and health-conscious market has broadened customer reach, as both Muslim and non-Muslim diners—including Adventists, health-focused consumers, and government agencies—seek halal food

because of its perceived cleanliness, quality, and ethical preparation. Demand increases even more during major events such as Ramadan, Kadayawan, Araw ng Davao, and other citywide celebrations. Second, halal certification functions as a powerful business enabler, enhancing credibility, attracting institutional partnerships, and increasing visibility among tourists and Muslim travelers. For many customers, especially Muslims, certification is a key factor in establishing trust and legitimacy. Third, digital platforms and online content have opened new revenue channels, with food vlogging, social media marketing, and food delivery services significantly expanding customer reach, particularly for restaurants located in low foot-traffic areas. These opportunities highlight how cultural trends, tourism activities, and digital engagement collectively support the sector's growth.

Challenges. Despite promising opportunities, three major challenges consistently surfaced across cases. First, participants described the halal certification system as fragmented, costly, and unreliable, citing inconsistent standards, limited certifying bodies, confusing procedures, and high fees. Sourcing halal-certified meat is especially difficult due to the scarcity of compliant slaughterhouses and the strictness of verification requirements. Second, restaurants struggled with maintaining halal integrity, which requires ongoing staff training, strict protocols, segregated kitchen spaces, diligent ingredient vetting, and consistent monitoring of suppliers. These challenges are intensified in non-Muslim-majority contexts where the risk of cross-contamination is higher and the availability of halal ingredients is lower. Third, operational and cost pressures posed serious difficulties, as establishments faced high rental and utility expenses, fluctuating customer traffic, seasonal demand, and staffing shortages. The reliability of halal suppliers also varied, creating disruptions in menu consistency and inventory management. Collectively, these challenges highlight the structural, operational, and contextual barriers faced by halal dining businesses.

Table 4.1
Similarities and Differences of Opportunities and Challenges

Themes	Similarities Across Cases	Differences Across Cases	Explanation
A. Opportunities			
Growing Halal and Health-Conscious Market	Most of the Halal resto owners recognize the growth of halal and health-conscious individuals, especially in Muslim-dominated regions. (A,B,C,E)	One highlighted the observation that the number of non-pork eaters, including Christians, is growing. (D)	*Similarity*: Transforming Halal compliance from a religious obligation into a competitive advantage that captures both the mandatory Muslim market and the voluntary, premium non-Muslim market seeking quality, safety, and ethical food. *Difference:* For the non-Muslim customer, the strictness of the Halal Assurance System (HAS) offers non-religious value
Halal Certification	Two owners gave credence to the Halal certificate, stating that it	Case C recognizes that having Halal certification makes it easier to	*Similarity*: Every practice mentioned serves to either acquire the Halal certificate or uphold the operational integrity necessary to

as Business Enabler	plays a significant role in enticing and gaining the trust of customers. (B,E)	partner with both governmental and private entities as clients.	make the certificate's promise of Halal} and Tayyib (wholesome) truthful, thereby driving both enticement and trust. *Difference:* The unique element is the recognition of Halal certification as a Business-to-Business (B2B) and Business-to-Government (B2G) credential that facilitates commercial partnerships, rather than merely a Business-to-Consumer marketing tool (B2C)
Leveraging Delivery Platforms and Digital Contents	The majority utilize the delivery services of Food Panda and Grab. (B to E)	The methods differ: one uses vlogging (B), while the other adapts Facebook to advertise its Halal restaurant (E).	*Similarity:* Halal restaurant owners utilize the delivery services of Food Panda because of the need to expand market reach and ensure accessibility in the face of the growing demand from both their target segments: the Muslim population and the health-conscious consumer. *Difference:* The difference in marketing methods—one using vlogging (Case B) and the other using Facebook advertising (Case E)—reflect a strategic split in how Halal restaurants choose to achieve customer trust and maximize visibility based on different approaches to content, target audience, and verification.
B. Challenges			
Fragmented, Costly, and Unreliable Halal Certification Ecosystem	Three owners faced the dilemma of the rigorous and costly requirements of Halal certification. (A,D,E)	One noted the disputes among certifying bodies and the non-regulation of Halal certifying bodies in the Philippines. (A)	*Similarity:* The commonality that three owners faced the dilemma of the rigorous and costly requirements of Halal certification is explained by the fundamental business trade-off between the high upfront investment in Halal Assurance Systems (HAS) and the significant long-term returns it promises.

			Difference: The uniqueness of this observation is that it identifies a crucial problem on the supply side of the Halal industry—the lack of government regulation and disputes among certifying bodies—which directly undermines the value proposition of Halal certification for the consumer.
Difficulty of Maintaining Halal Integrity and Standards	The majority of the proprietors had noticed the misunderstanding that Halal food is exclusively for Muslims. (A,B,E) .	One dealt with the challenge of a customer bringing in pork to the restaurant (D), while another faced the issue of meticulous customers (A).	*Similarity:* In essence, the commonality arises because correcting this deeply rooted misunderstanding is the most crucial step a Halal business must take to transition from a niche, religious service provider to a mainstream, profitable, and respected food establishment. *Difference:* Both challenges are distinct but critically affect the restaurant's reputation and operational approach, illustrating how different customer behaviors need customized handling strategies in the restaurant business.
Operational and Cost Crisis	Two owners are confronted with the lack of supply of halal certified meat. (B,C)	One case struggle on non-strategic location of the restaurant and costly rentals (B). While one had cash flow issues due to operational costs exceeding income (C).	*Similarity:* The commonality that owners are confronted with the lack of supply of Halal certified meat is explained by the underdeveloped Halal supply chain infrastructure in non-Muslim majority regions, where demand has outpaced the logistical and industrial capacity to produce and distribute certified meat efficiently. *Difference:* The Halal element transforms generic business challenges into unique strategic dilemmas because the high standards and costs of Halal compliance are fixed, non-negotiable drains on revenue that cannot be easily offset by market expansion if fundamental operational problems persist.

Similarities and Differences in the Coping Strategies of the Halal Restaurant Owners

Across cases, five key coping strategies emerged, reflecting how halal restaurant owners and managers navigate certification barriers, supply chain constraints, and operational pressures. First, participants utilized available certification resources by engaging with DOT Muslim-friendly programs, relying on supplier-issued halal certificates—especially for meat products—and tapping into community networks to verify product authenticity. Second, they ensured and upheld halal integrity through comprehensive staff training, implementation of strict food-handling protocols, establishment of separate kitchens, hiring of Muslim personnel, and continuous monitoring of ingredients and suppliers. Third, some establishments coped with financial pressures by reducing overhead costs, relocating to more affordable spaces, or shortening operating hours to manage utilities and rental expenses. Fourth, to address sourcing difficulties, restaurants secured their supply chains by developing supplier directories, building partnerships with reliable vendors, and creating clear reordering systems to maintain consistency and traceability. Finally, to strengthen visibility and attract diverse customers, businesses maximized market reach through active social media marketing, collaborations with influencers, and content emphasizing halal authenticity, effectively engaging both Muslim and non-Muslim diners.

Table 4.2
Similarities and Differences in the Coping Strategies of the Halal Restaurant Owners

Themes	Similarities Across Cases	Differences Across Cases	Explanation
Utilizing Available Certification Resource	All halal resto owners may opt to utilize the Halal certificate of their suppliers if they have not secured their certification yet.	Some avail of the free Halal certification through the DOT (D, E).	*Similarity:* In many Halal certification schemes, a food service establishment doesn't necessarily need to certify every single component of its operation independently, if a robust Halal supply chain is maintained. *Differences: Some businesses avail themselves of the free Halal certification through government programs, local councils, or partner organizations that subsidize the process. By doing so, they reduce the financial burden of certification while ensuring their products meet recognized Halal standards.*
Ensuring and Upholding Halal Integrity	Some Halal resto owners recognize the importance of educating	One owner had to set up a separate kitchen and employ Muslim staff to satisfy their clients. (A)	*Similarity:* Halal is not just about the meat; it is a complete system that must be maintained from source to service. The staff are the ones

	their staff to uphold the Halal integrity and standards. (A,D)		who implement this system daily. *Difference:* A separate kitchen setup is unique because it represents an extremely high and intentional level of dedication to Halal food integrity and preventing cross-contamination for Muslim clients. Also, the requirement of employing Muslim staff for this kitchen adds a layer of religious and cultural assurance.
Reduction of Overhead Costs; Maximize Market Reach and Secure the Supply Chain	To avoid running of stocks, most of the resto owners place orders to Halal certified suppliers ahead of time. (B,C,D,E)	To reduce the cost of operation some resto owners transferred to a place of lower rentals (B), one forego the 24-hour operation (C). Some rely on social media promotion to entice more customers that could improve their sales (B, C). Further, one owner finds the need to have a directory of Halal Certified suppliers so that they can have varied options (A).	*Similarity:* Halal certification is not just about the final ingredient; it mandates purity throughout the entire process, from sourcing to slaughter to storage. Resto owners must maintain two separate inventories, Halal and non-Halal, which is often managed by ordering and storing from different, separate suppliers. *Difference:* The strategy utilized to address operational challenges varies depending on the owner's struggle.

DISCUSSION

Opportunities and Challenges Faced by Halal Restaurant Owners & Managers

After analyzing the data for the first research question, both opportunities and challenges emerged three main themes. For the opportunity, the first theme is *Growing Halal and Health-Conscious Market* which expands rapidly, presenting strong business opportunities, specifically in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)*,* where halal practices align with local cultural and religious norms. This trend is further supported by Rahman et al. (2024), who highlight that ethical and wholesome ("tayyib") preparation practices in halal food appeal not only to Muslim diners but also to consumers who prioritize sustainability and ethical food handling. Additionally, halal organizations emphasize that halal meals meet both ethical and health-oriented expectations, making them increasingly attractive to today's health-conscious market (Halal Food Council USA, 2024). Additionally, the insights of Case D highlighted time-sensitive operational rhythm shaped by religious and cultural practices. The peak season occurring after Ramadan suggest that the business aligns its offerings with the post-fasting demand, particularly for iftar, where that evening meal breaks the fast. This supports the study of Wibowo

et al. (2025), who found that consumer influxes during Ramadan and similar events sustain halal businesses in mixed-faith markets.

The second significant theme that surfaced is *Halal certification serves as strategic business enabler* by enhancing credibility, expanding market reach, and unblocking partnership opportunities. Which means provides Muslim customers religious and ethical compliance, while non-Muslim diners value its cleanliness and quality. Khalek and Mohd (2022) confirmed that halal products increasingly attract non-Muslim consumers because they connote cleanliness, safety, and moral integrity. In addition, restaurants with halal certification are more likely to collaborate with government agencies and private organizations in tourism, cultural programs, and inclusive food initiatives. These partnerships demonstrate what Cuevas et al. (2022) and Liba et al. (2022) describe as *institutional trust mechanisms*, where certification not only ensures compliance but also positions halal enterprises as legitimate partners in both government and corporate catering.

The third theme that emerged on the Halal dining opportunities is *Leveraging Delivery Platforms and Digital Contents.* All the participants acknowledged these digital strategies not only increase visibility but also help build stronger customer relationships, demonstrating how online platforms play an essential role in driving restaurant growth. As Wibowo et al. (2025) noted, digitalization promotes halal literacy, widens market reach, and creates consumer familiarity with halal concepts through accessible online channels. Moreover, using vlogs and Facebook for marketing enables restaurants to showcase their halal practices, promote menu items, and engage with followers through posts, videos, and live content. This supports the study of Villanueva et al. (2024) that there is a significant positive effect of food vlogging factors on attitudes and purchase intentions of diners. Together, these digital strategies strengthen the restaurant's online presence, attract new customers, and build trust within the Halal seeking community.

Like any other business, opportunities often come hand in hand with challenges. The first theme that surfaced in the challenges that the Halal restaurant owners and managers faces was *fragmented, costly, and unreliable halal certification ecosystem.* Many reported that certifying bodies impose numerous and expensive requirements, making it difficult for small businesses to comply, as reflected in the experiences of Cases A, D, and E. This mirrors Randeree (2019) and Cuevas et al. (2022), who found that inconsistent regulation in halal governance undermines credibility and discourages compliance. Entrepreneurs become hesitant to invest in certification due to overlapping authorities and unclear standards. Further compounding the problem, some certifying bodies have disputes among themselves, creating confusion and inconsistency in standards, as noted by Case A.

The second theme that emerged under the challenges is d*ifficulty of maintaining halal Integrity and standards*. Many customers hold the misconception that halal food is meant exclusively for Muslims, leading to a lack of awareness about the rules that restaurants must strictly uphold as reflected by Case A, B, and E. Which means that misunderstanding can occasionally lead to situations where customers unintentionally disrupt restaurant's halal environment, such as by unknowingly bringing in food that contains pork. Such misunderstandings reinforce Siga and Macalayo's (2025) assertion that halal illiteracy in non-Muslim communities restricts market potential and fosters cultural separation. This supports the study of Liba et al., stating that having Halal certified suppliers and ingredients would provide higher customer confidence.

The last essential theme that surfaced is the *Operational and Cost Crisis*, which means it significantly hampers the ability of restaurants to sustain their business. Many owners reported that the limited supply of halal-certified meat leads to higher sourcing difficulties and costs, which in turn undermine consistent menu offerings Bhatti (2021) and Sarip (2024). Secondly, location plays a major role: restaurants in areas with low pedestrian traffic or poor visibility struggle to draw customers, reducing daily sales opportunities and making profitability harder Kroon (2024). Financial pressures are further compounded by high rental and fixed overhead costs: many restaurants find their operating expenses outstrip income—this is especially true when large utility bills (e.g., electricity for refrigeration) and long hours add significantly to the cost base Mun and Jang (2018) and Darlington (2025). Furthermore, during

peak seasons some restaurants struggle with human-resource demands: understaffing and inefficient service further erode profitability Darlington (2025).

Coping Strategies of Halal Restaurant Owners and Managers

The coping strategies of halal restaurant owners in Davao City reveal how practical management approaches and faith-driven resilience work hand in hand to sustain their operations despite certification, operational, and financial challenges. Entrepreneurs strategically use available government-supported certification programs and rely on halal-certified suppliers to maintain product integrity without incurring the high costs of full certification. They also uphold halal standards through staff training, strict daily protocols, and, in some cases, structural adjustments such as separate kitchens or hiring Muslim staff—demonstrating varying levels of commitment to visible and rigorous halal compliance. These approaches show how owners balance resource limitations with the need to maintain consumer trust and align with established halal assurance practices.

In addition, halal restaurant owners respond to financial and operational pressures through cost-reduction measures, supply chain strengthening, and digital marketing efforts. Some minimize overhead by relocating to more affordable spaces or adjusting operating hours, while others focus on securing a reliable halal supply chain through curated supplier directories and stronger partnerships. These actions align with emerging literature emphasizing the fragility of halal supply chains in non-Muslim-majority areas. To expand their market reach, owners increasingly turn to social media, influencer collaborations, and online promotions to offset low walk-in traffic and broaden visibility. Collectively, these strategies address interconnected pressures and reinforce one another—reduced overhead frees resources for better sourcing, secure supply chains support menu consistency, and effective digital marketing attracts a wider customer base, contributing to the long-term sustainability of halal enterprises.

Theory Confirmation. The findings of this study can be best understood through several interrelated theories that explain the decisions, strategies, and experiences of halal restaurant owners in Davao City. The Resource-Based View (RBV) (Barney, 1991) highlights how their success depends on valuable internal resources such as certified suppliers, well-trained staff, and strong compliance and marketing systems, while the Halal Market Theory (Wilson, 2014) explains the growing demand for halal dining among both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers due to perceptions of health, cleanliness, and ethical preparation. Agency Theory (Eisenchardt, 1989) is reflected in the reliance on employees and suppliers to maintain halal standards, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Cacioppo, 1986) helps explain why Muslim customers focus on certification and compliance while many non-Muslim diners are influenced by visuals, convenience, and social media. The inclusivity of halal restaurants aligns with Social Cohesion Theory (Chan et al., 2006), showing how dining spaces help bridge cultural groups, while Institutional Theory (Scott, 2014; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) captures the role of government programs and certification pressures. Differences in how restaurants cope with challenges support Contingency Theory (Donaldson, 2001), and Supply Chain Management Theory (Mentzer et al., 2001; Tieman, 2011) explain the importance of reliable, certified suppliers and traceable processes. Altogether, these theories collectively clarify the opportunities, challenges, and adaptive strategies observed in the halal dining sector.

Implication for Practice

The stories shared by halal restaurant owners in this case study reveal more than business strategies—they reflect the courage, faith, and resilience of people who continue to serve their communities despite the weight of systemic challenges. Their experiences call for practical actions rooted not only in efficiency but also in empathy.

The findings show that many halal entrepreneurs carry the burden of navigating fragmented and costly certification systems, often feeling they must choose between staying compliant and staying afloat. This highlights a pressing need for institutions, certifying bodies, and local government units to come

together and create a unified, affordable, and compassionate halal certification pathway; one that recognizes the struggles of small business owners who simply want to serve food that honors both faith and quality. Such support would ease the emotional and financial strain evident in their stories, allowing owners to focus on what they do best: nourishing people and building inclusive dining spaces.

The results also uncover moments of tension and misunderstanding inside halal restaurants, with customers bringing prohibited food, questioning the integrity of practices, or assuming halal is 'only for Muslims. These incidents remind us that halal dining is not just about rules; it is about mutual respect. Restaurants would benefit from embracing gentle advocacy and education, using their online platforms and daily interactions to cultivate awareness and kindness. When customers understand the heart behind halal practices, they become partners in preserving the sacredness that owners work tirelessly to uphold.

Amid high operating costs, irregular supply chains, and the sacrifice of long working hours, the owners' coping strategies reveal a deep commitment to sustaining their businesses with creativity and hope. Their efforts, such as relocating to cheaper spaces, strengthening supplier networks, and turning to digital tools, serve as powerful examples for other halal entrepreneurs facing the same struggles. By continuing to share these strategies within their communities, halal restaurant owners can uplift one another, proving that resilience grows stronger when it is collective.

Ultimately, this study shows that the future of halal dining in Davao City is shaped not only by policies or profits but by people. Supporting these restaurateurs means recognizing their humanity, valuing their cultural and spiritual contributions, and providing pathways that allow their businesses to flourish with dignity. Their journeys remind us that every plate of halal food served is an act of service, identity, and love, and the systems around them should honor that.

Recommendation for Future Research

Future research on halal restaurants in Davao City should move toward more systematic, data-driven solutions by complementing current qualitative insights with quantitative studies that measure the market impact of halal certification on consumer trust, sales, and loyalty among both Muslim and non-Muslim diners. This includes analyzing how perceptions of cleanliness, ethics, and quality influence dining choices across demographics, assessing operational costs and sourcing constraints to guide subsidy policies, and evaluating the role of digital platforms through metrics such as engagement, conversion, and repeat patronage. Further studies should also explore halal literacy in mixed-faith communities to understand how cultural perceptions shape consumer behavior, while giving attention to the emotional labor and lived experiences of halal entrepreneurs. Finally, experimental designs can test how inclusive messaging and communication strategies influence consumer attitudes and willingness to try halal-certified products.

Concluding Remarks

The findings of this study revealed that the halal dining industry in Davao City thrives through a blend of expanding opportunities—such as a growing health-conscious market, strong institutional partnerships, and the increasing acceptance of halal as an ethical dining choice—while simultaneously confronting persistent challenges like fragmented and costly certification processes, supply chain limitations, and widespread misconceptions about halal dining. As I journeyed through this research, I often found myself carrying not only the weight of academic responsibility but also the emotional weight of their struggles. Hearing their frustrations, their hopes, and their quiet perseverance made the process both humbling and deeply moving. There were moments when I wished I could offer solutions right then and there, yet I held on to the hope that this study would become a bridge, one that connects them to the right institutions, advocates, and policymakers who can ease their burdens, especially in certification, access and public awareness. In the end, this research transformed me, teaching me that halal dining is not merely a business pursuit but a testament to courage, inclusion, dignity and the owners' love in serving clean and healthy food; and it reaffirmed my belief that research, at its best, becomes a voice for those striving to thrive against the odds.

References

Abdulraof, A. G. (2024). *The impacts of halal certification policies in the Philippines: A literature review. Cognizance Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 4*(12), 648-667. https://doi.org/10.47760/cognizance.2024.v04i12.059

Balaoing-Pelkmans, A., & Ilao, A. P. (2025). The halal conundrum: Issues in certification and market access in the Philippines (Policy Brief No. 2025-30). University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies. https://cids.up.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/The-Halal-Conundrum_-Issues-in-Certification-and-Market-Access-in-the-Philippines.pdf

Bhatti, M. A. (2021). An exploratory study of Muslim consumers' halal meat purchase behaviour. British Food Journal, 123(13), 4222-4236. https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-01-2021-0005

Bashir, A. M. (2022). The influence of mobile halal applications on consumer trust and purchasing decisions. Journal of Islamic Marketing, 13(8), 1673–1689. https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-04-2020-0103

Chan, J., To, H.-P., & Chan, E. (2006). Reconsidering social cohesion: Developing a definition and analytical framework for empirical research. *Social Indicators Research, 75*(2), 273–302. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-005-2118-1

Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications.

Cuevas, S.V., Franco, C., Capistrano, R. C., and Guia, J. (2022) "Exploring the potential of halal tourism through institutional analysis of halal certifiers in the philippines," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*: Vol. 10: Iss. 2, Article 8. https://doi.org/10.21427/73k7-4855

DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality. *American Sociological Review, 48*(2), 147–160. https://doi.org/10.2307/2095101

Donaldson, L. (2001). *The contingency theory of organizations*. Sage Publications.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Agency theory: An assessment and review. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(1), 57–74. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4279003

Halal Food Council USA (2024). Top Halal Food Trends to Watch in 2024. Retrieved from: https://halalfoodcouncilusa.com/top-halal-food-trends-to-watch-in-2024/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.063

Khalek, A. A., & Mohd Mokhtar, R. A. (2022). Religious tolerance through the lens of halal dining experience in Malaysia. *Kajian Malaysia*, *40*(2), 91-112. https://doi.org/10.21315/km2022.40.2.5

Kroon, E. (2024, June 20). Why does restaurant location matter? *Eat App Blog*. https://restaurant.eatapp.co/blog/why-location-is-important-for-restaurant

Lañas, B. J. M., Blanco, L. A. A., Emuy, D. V., & Emuy, E. V. (2023). *Service factors of halal restaurants. Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management,* 11(2), 21-28.

Liba, R. T., Bernardino, M. S., Real, J., & Viaña, E. (2022). Practices and challenges of halal restaurants in Metro Manila. *Journal of Tourism Research & Hospitality. DOI*, *10*, 2324-8807.

Mentzer, J. T., DeWitt, W., Keebler, J. S., Min, S., Nix, N. W., Smith, C. D., & Zacharia, Z. G. (2001). Defining supply chain management. *Journal of Business Logistics, 22*(2), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2158-1592.2001.tb00001.x

Mulok, M. G., Mangali, M. B., Manala S. D., (2023). Predictors of Filipino Consumers' Demand for Halal-Certified Restaurants Using the Theory of Planned Behavior: Awareness, Religiosity and Consumer Characteristics as Moderators. Psych Educ, 2023, 15(5): 507-516, Document ID:2023 PEMJ1381, doi:10.5281/zenodo.10248036, ISSN 2822-4353. https://journals.indexcopernicus.com/api/file/viewByFileId/1879644

Mun, J. M., & Jang, S. (2018). Restaurant operating expenses and their effects on profitability enhancement. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 73*, 110-118.

Rahman, M. H., Wahab, M. A., & Hassan, M. F. (2024). *A Shariah perspective study on the concept of halal food*. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369666866_A_Shariah_Perspective_Study_on_the_Concept_of_Halal_Food

Randeree, K. (2019), "Challenges in halal food ecosystems: the case of the United Arab Emirates", *British Food Journal,* Vol. 121 No. 5, pp. 1154-1167. https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-08-2018-0515

Research & Markets, (2025). *Halal Food Market Size, Share, Trends and Forecast by Product, Distribution Channel, and Region, 2025-2033*. Retrieved from: https://www.researchandmarkets.com/report/halal-food?utm_source=GNE&utm_medium=PressRelease&utm_code=crgn82&utm_campaign=2041333+-+Halal+Food+Market+Size%2c+Share%2c+Trends+and+Forecast+by+Product%2c+Distribution+Channel%2c+and+Region+2025-2033&utm_exec=jocamspi#product--toc

Saleh, H., & Rajandran, T. (2024). Relationship between non-Muslim consumer intention to purchase halal products with halal awareness, halal certification, halal marketing and halal knowledge: Systematic review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 14*(9). https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i9/22495

Sarip, N. S. (2024). A comparative study of halal-compliant and non-halal-compliant meat prices and its influence on halal certification in the Lanao region, Philippines. *Journal of Islamic Economics, Business and Research, 10*(1), 62-75.

Scott, W. R. (2014). *Institutions and organizations: Ideas, interests, and identities* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Tieman, M. (2011). The application of halal in supply chain management: In-depth interviews. *Journal of Islamic Marketing, 2*(2), 186–195. https://doi.org/10.1108/17590831111139875

Tieman, M., & Hassan, F. H. (2019). The halal supply chain and its role in consumer trust. *Journal of Islamic Marketing, 10*(1), 185–200. https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-04-2017-0043

Villanueva, M. C. C., Alejandro, A. F., Regala, G. D., (2024). Quantitative Study. *Effect of Food Vlogging on Attitudes and Purchase Intention of Diner's Restaurant Selection.* International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS) Vol VIII Issue IV, pp. 1673 DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.804120

Wibowo, M. G., Ardiansyah, M., Berakon, I., Salic, J. Z., & Manalundong, S. Q. (2025). Enhancing halal literacy and supply chain integration: Empowering the Muslim community in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. International Journal of Economics, Finance and Management, 8(6)

Wilson, J. A. J (2014). The Halal Phenomenon: An Extension or a New Paradigm? *Social Business, 4*(3), 255-271. https://doi.org/10.1362/204440814X14103454934294

Yusof, N. F. F. M., & Muslim, N. H. (2020). Halal tourism development: Insights from global practices and implications for the Philippines. *Journal of Halal Studies, 2*(1), 45–58.