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Research Paper

Framing The Role of Halal Supervisors Through the Lens of Halal Epistemology and Competency Theory

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Abstract

The evolving global halal industry demands a comprehensive understanding of the roles and responsibilities of halal supervisors, particularly in Brunei Darussalam, where halal compliance is strictly regulated. This study investigates the roles of halal supervisors through two complementary lenses: halal epistemology, a knowledge framework based on Islamic principles, and competence theory, which emphasizes the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. By synthesizing each of these perspectives, the study develops a framework that bridges the gap between spiritual knowledge and professional application. This enables supervisors to perform their duties with both technical competence and uphold religious integrity. This study used library research, integrating both primary and secondary sources to substantiate the findings. Therefore, the study demonstrates how an epistemologically informed and competency-based approach can enhance supervisory effectiveness, strengthen consumer trust, and support the sustainability of halal. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and halal authorities seeking to establish more effective training, qualification, and oversight systems for halal supervision.

Keywords: *Competency, Epistemology, Role, Supervisors*

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the global expansion of the halal business has highlighted the necessity for a strong supervisory framework to maintain syariah conformity as well as technical and contemporary food safety and quality standards. The demand for these individuals has increased together with the growth of halal-related enterprises and regulatory frameworks, emphasising the necessity for a workforce that is both technically skilled and prepared for the industry (Abidin et al., 2026). Halal supervisors are traditionally characterised by regulatory responsibilities and procedural monitoring and are important actors in the halal industry.

However, a deeper examination of their role through the epistemological foundations of halal and competency theory will uncover a more comprehensive set of responsibilities that encompasses not only operational control but also ethical management and building consumer trust. The originality of this research resides in its interdisciplinary approach to halal supervision by integrating halal epistemology and competency theory, and providing a novel conceptual perspective on the responsibilities of halal supervisors. In contrast to previous studies that primarily focused on procedural or regulatory dimensions, this research conceptualises halal supervisors as epistemic agents. These individuals embody, implement, and disseminate halal knowledge, which is fundamentally derived from Islamic principles.

This study incorporates the spiritual and ethical aspects of halal epistemology with the systematic methodology of competency theory, creating a comprehensive framework that includes knowledge, skills, and moral integrity necessary for proficient halal supervision. This research enhances the academic discussion on halal governance by offering a theoretically grounded

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framework for identifying and evaluating the abilities of halal supervisors. It facilitates the Islamization of knowledge by integrating modern human capital development strategies with Islamic epistemological principles. The suggested approach offers practical value for policymakers, training institutions, and halal authorities in improving certification legitimacy, professional standards, and the sustainability of the halal ecosystem.

Hence, the primary purpose of this study is to frame the role of halal supervisors through the cooperation of these two frameworks. Accordingly, the study objectives are:

1. To examine halal supervisors' understanding of ethical and spiritual responsibilities through the lens of halal epistemology.
2. To identify the practical competencies, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes, required for effective halal supervision based on competency theory.
3. To integrate the insights from halal epistemology and competency theory to develop a framework that enhances supervisors' effectiveness while maintaining both technical ability and religious integrity.

Furthermore, this study examines how halal epistemology enriches the understanding of supervisors' ethics, while competency theory identifies the practical proficiencies required for supervisors' success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the Islamic context, halal epistemology refers to the body of knowledge, sources, and interpretive frameworks derived from Islamic teachings that guide halal decision-making. The meaning of epistemology generally "*means the theory of knowledge*." It debates the hierarchy of knowledge and proves the value of references and sources of knowledge. This etymology comes from two Greek words, episteme and logos. "Episteme" means knowledge, while "logos" means theory or study. It discusses in depth the processes that lead to the addition of knowledge. This matter is also called *nazariyyat al-ma'rifat* (Said & Hanapi, 2022a). Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud (2003) defined epistemology as "*the philosophy that deliberates the nature, meaning, content, source, and process of knowledge*" (al-Edrus, 1993).

Therefore, the theory of halal epistemology acts as an Islamic epistemology. A previous study by Said and Hanapi (2022a) stated the importance of seeking knowledge as guided by the Quran, and this theory can encourage the integration of faith and practice. The theory of epistemology of halal encompasses three important elements, which are: (i) the ontology; ii) the epistemology; and iii) the axiology. It encompasses the sources, principles, and process through which knowledge concerning permissible and prohibited is acquired, interpreted, and applied in practice. Therefore, halal supervisors are not only regulatory officers but custodians of halal integrity whose actions are guided by epistemic principles in Islamic teachings.

Furthermore, the competency theory, which is frequently applied in educational and human resource development, offers an organised framework for evaluating the skills required for successful performance. This encompasses not just procedural expertise and technical understanding but also character traits like critical thinking, communication, and ethical judgment. Furthermore, Spencer and Spencer (1993) stated a competency is an underlying characteristic of an individual that is casually related to criterion-referenced effectiveness and superior performance on a job or situation. "Character" means personality, behaviour, and performance.

Meanwhile, competence is the ability and skills gained from training, work, and life experiences. Dubois and Rothwell (2004) defined competency as the combination of knowledge, thought patterns, skills, and characteristics that lead to success. Furthermore, human resource management perceives competence as the ability of individuals to complete the tasks assigned to

them. The main purpose of using the concept of competency in an organisation is to help evaluate employees' suitability in completing assigned tasks (Salleh et al., 2015). Fundamentally, competency has three important aspects: knowledge (cognitive), attitude (affective), and skills (psychomotor). These are combined to solve certain assignments.

According to Abidin et al. (2026), a skilled and knowledgeable workforce is widely recognised as essential for driving organisational excellence and long-term talent development. When integrated with halal epistemology, competency theory enables a multifaceted portrayal of halal supervisors as individuals whose efficacy is influenced by both religious literacy and professional competency.

In this study, the role of halal supervisors is conceptualized through the integration of halal epistemology and competency theory, establishing a clear analytical relationship between the two. Firstly, halal epistemology provides the foundational framework, defining what is considered lawful (*halal*), unlawful (*haram*), and ethically appropriate based on divine sources such as the Quran and Hadith. It shapes the moral, spiritual, and ethical orientation of halal supervisors. In contrast, competency theory operationalizes these principles by identifying the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to implement halal requirements effectively in practice. Thus, while halal epistemology addresses the "why" and "what" of halal compliance, competency theory explains the "how" and "how well" these principles are implemented in real-world settings.

The integration of these frameworks enables a more comprehensive understanding of halal supervision, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach to investigate and comprehend the role of halal supervisors through the lenses of halal epistemology and competency theory. The research was conducted in three phases: data collection, data analysis, and framework development. The purpose was to extract thematic insights and synthesize them into a framework that redefines the function of halal supervisors in contemporary halal ecosystems.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a comprehensive literature review of both primary Islamic texts and academic sources relevant to halal supervision, Islamic epistemology, and competency theory. Primary sources were obtained through the analysis of authoritative sources from the Quran, Tafsir, Hadith, scholars' interpretations, and classical and contemporary scholarly works in the field of Islamic jurisprudence; these were included because they represent the original theoretical grounds. In addition, primary data were also collected from Halal standards or guidelines from government agencies in Brunei Darussalam, including the Brunei Islamic Religious Council (BIRC) and Halal Food Control Division (HFCD). Secondary sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, reports on halal supervision, halal epistemology, and competency frameworks.

According to Tariq (2025), trustworthiness is essential for establishing the credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability of results; credibility, in particular, refers to the authenticity and truthfulness of the findings. Therefore, the credibility and trustworthiness in this study were ensured by:

i. Selecting reputable sources with recognized authority in Islamic jurisprudence, halal guidelines, and competency research,
ii. Comparing multiple sources for consistency in interpretations of halal principles and competency framework.

Data Analysis

The study used qualitative content analysis to examine and interpret the collected texts and literature. This involved identifying key themes related to the conceptualization of halal epistemology and competency theory. Secondly, thematic using conceptual categories drawn from halal epistemology, such as ontology, epistemology and axiology and competency theory involve knowledge, skills, and attitude was used in this study. Moreover, this study employed thematic analysis following the approach proposed by Braun and Clarke. Thematic analysis proved to be a fitting choice to align with the research's objectives (Clarke & Braun, 2016). The analysis involved six phases and the analysis followed these explicit steps:

i. Familiarization: Reading and reviewing all texts multiple times to gain an in-depth understanding of the content.
ii. Coding: Extracting relevant statements, concepts, and practices from texts, using codes aligned with halal epistemology (ontology, epistemology, axiology) and competency theory (knowledge, skills, attitude).
iii. Categorization: Grouping similar codes into broader conceptual categories representing ethical, spiritual, and practical competencies.
iv. Thematic Synthesis: Integrating these categories to identify overarching themes and patterns, illustrating how halal supervisors' roles are shaped by both spiritual knowledge and professional competencies

Framework Development

Based on the identified themes and synthesized insights, the development of a conceptual framework. This framework was developed to illustrate how halal supervisors' roles can be understood at the intersection of halal epistemology and competency theory, bridging ethical, spiritual, and technical dimensions.

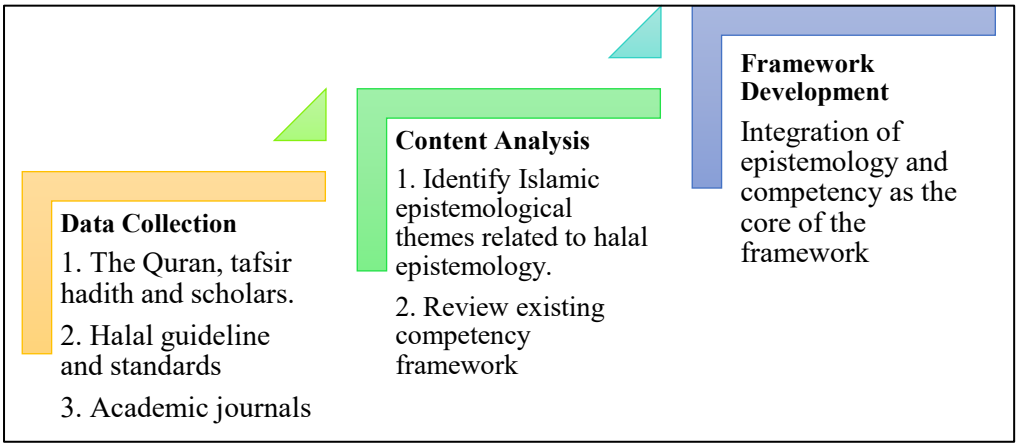


Figure 1. Research Procedure

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results are discussed in two interrelated dimensions. The first presents insights through the lens of halal epistemology, emphasising the spiritual and ethical foundations of halal supervision. The second interprets these findings through competency theory, translating the epistemic values into measurable competencies required for effective halal supervision.

Halal Epistemology

Halal epistemology pertains to the comprehension of the concept of halal, since it underpins the foundation for comprehending halal principles correctly. It includes the study of the sources of knowledge, methods of understanding, and principles of interpretation related to the concept of halal (Masruhen et al., 2023). The halal epistemology draws from the Quran, Hadith, scholarly consensus (*ijma'*), and reasoned interpretation (*ijtihad*) to inform practices related to consumption and permissibility. The epistemology of halal, as defined in the Quran, encompasses three fundamental components: Allah SWT as the Creator, divine revelation (*wahyu*) as the primary source of guidance, and humankind as believers of good moral principles established by the Quran. The expression halal epistemology is built from two terms, namely "halal" and "science" (Said & Hanapi, 2018b).

From a terminological aspect, halal means legal law. Halal is against the concept of haram, which means that there are bad elements in it that harm a person's faith and health. Moreover, the epistemology of halal, grounded in the Quran, hadith, and scholarly interpretations, outlines the guiding principles for the responsibilities of a halal food supervisor. As mentioned in Surah An'aam, verse 145; "*I do not find within that which was revealed to me [anything] forbidden to one who would eat it unless it be a dead animal or blood spilled out or the flesh of swine – for indeed, it is impure – or it be [that slaughtered in] disobedience, dedicated to other than Allah But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], then indeed, your Lord is Forgiving and Merciful*." This Quranic verse on halalan thayyiban encompasses a wide interpretation of what defines good food. It broadens the notion of "permissibility and wholesome" within Islam.

Deuraseh et al. (2022) mentioned that Allah s.w.t. only restricts a few types of food that Muslims cannot eat; the reasoning behind the prohibition is only for the benefit and well-being of humanity. Additionally, halalan thayyiban considers quality, safety, and hygiene in addition to legal food permissibility. The integration of these factors strives to protect Muslims' physical and spiritual well-being. Halalan thayyiban also refers to food that is not only religiously lawful but also healthful, helpful to health, and promotes human well-being (Ariffin, 2023; Hashim et al., 2022).

Furthermore, when applied to the role of halal supervisors, halal epistemology highlights their function as transmitters and enforcers of divine guidance, tasked with interpreting and upholding Islamic standards in real-world practice. In addition, it is the responsibility of a supervisor to ensure that the food is both permissible and pure, wholesome, and beneficial. This focus aligns with Islamic epistemology, requiring the supervisor to utilise knowledge that is legally compliant and ethical. Hence, the discussion extended to the epistemology of halal, focusing on three main themes: i) the ontology; ii) the epistemology; and iii) the axiology.

Ontology

The first element is ontology, which refers to the occurrence of something related to nature, cosmology, and the metaphysical (Abdullah, 2011). Ibn Abbas (2000) and Al-Tabariy (2009) stated that it is necessary to have faith in the signs or indicators delivered by Allah SWT through His revelations about the food that is permitted and prohibited for human consumption. There is an agreement between humans and Allah SWT, as mentioned in Surah al-Maidah, verse 1, *Meaning: "O you who have believed, fulfill [all] contracts. Lawful for you are the animals of grazing livestock except for that which is recited to you [in this Quran] – hunting not being permitted while you are in the state of ihram. Indeed, Allah ordains what He intends."* This agreement shows devotion, absolute obedience, and complete allegiance to Allah SWT.

From an ontological perspective, the notion of halalan thayyiban transcends simple adherence to Islamic dietary regulations and embodies the divine qualities of Allah, especially His kindness and compassion for humanity. The order to consume what is lawful and wholesome

protects not only the for the physical well-being, but also their spiritual, moral, and social welfare. This view reveals that Islamic law is basically based on the principle of *rahmatan lil-'alamin* (mercy to all creation), which is consistent with the goals of maqasid al-syariah in protecting religion, life, intellect, lineage, and riches (Bakar & Man, 2025).

This portrayal of human psychology emphasises the worth of humans relative to other beings. Quraish Shihab (2003) explained that Allah SWT made the earth a place for humans to live and walk. The rains give life to various plants and livestock, benefiting humankind and sustaining life. The verse also stated the classification of food and substances. The ontology involves existence in halal epistemology, such as the classification of lawful, unlawful, syubhah, and thayyiban.

According to Sai'd Abu Jayyib (1998), linguistically, halal is defined as something that is allowed and cannot be punished if it is done. According to Baalbaki (1993), the term haram means "*forbidden, inviolable, ill-gotten, sin, wrongdoing, offense*." Hence, the principle of halalan thayyiban, derived from the Quran, necessitates that food be both lawful and pure or wholesome, as mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:168): "*O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good*." Thus, Muslims must comply with Islamic legal standards while also promoting health and well-being. This ontological perspective affirms that the authority to determine what is lawful and unlawful rests solely with Allah SWT.

According to the Islamic scholar Al-Qurṭubi (2009), the term halal indicates the legal and regulatory aspects of permissibility, whereas ṭhayyib denotes the values of goodness, wholesomeness, and beneficial qualities associated with what is consumed. Furthermore, understanding halal is not limited to the legal *(fiqh)* aspect alone, but also involves the dimension of faith and belief *(aqidah)*. Halal is an essential part of Islamic belief, as it is prescribed by Allah SWT and conveyed through the teachings of Prophet Muhammad SAW (Masruhen et al., 2023). As highlighted by Hamdan (2023) the power to legislate matters of permissibility and prohibition is divinely ordained, and no human being, regardless of their spiritual or worldly status, has the right to assume this authority. Therefore, a proper understanding of halal requires accurate and comprehensive knowledge of Islamic teachings, as well as the epistemological principles that underpin the concept of halal.

Epistemology

The second element is epistemology, which means the theory of knowledge. For halal science, it includes the Quran and hadith as sources of knowledge, and not all of them can be achieved by human reason. Sidek Baba (2016) discussed the sources of knowledge, where the author states that Islamic epistemology has two main sources, namely revelation (*naqli)* and *ijtihad* (*'aqli).* The sources of *naqli* are the Quran or recited revelations (*al-wahy al-matlu)* and unrecited revelations (*al-Sunnah or al-wahy ghayr al-matlu).* Both are also known as indisputable proof of its truth (*al-adillat al-qat'iyyat)*. As for the *'aqli'* sources, especially those that have been agreed upon, they are *al-ijma'* and *al-qiyas*.

From an epistemological perspective, the concept of halalan thayyiban is strongly established in divine revelation, as proven by its clear reference in four Quranic verses (2:168, 5:88, 8:69, and 16:114), with 19 more verses referring to permissible food consumption. Halalan thayyiban, a Quranic concept related to syariah compliance, emphasises individuals' ethical responsibility to make lawful, healthy, and principled decisions. As a result, the epistemology of halal is based on revealed knowledge, which supports Muslims in understanding and practising halal as a holistic way of life (Bakar & Man, 2025).

In addition, Al-Tabariy (2009) stated that the arrival of Prophet Muhammad (*sallahllahu 'alaihi wassalam*) aimed to clarify what is lawful and unlawful. It was to facilitate daily life matters, including obtaining halal food and avoiding haram food. The issue of halal products is a reference

that guides people to live better. It shows the benefits of everything that Allah SWT has bestowed upon them.

Furthermore, a study by Masruhen et al. (2023) mentioned that the interpretation of the halal concept must also consider the social and cultural context in which it is applied. This is because the concept of halal has practical implications that affect many parts of life, including food, beverages, cosmetics, medications, and others. Therefore, when implementing the concept of halal in everyday life, it is vital to consider social and cultural variables, as well as the applicable syariah rules that govern its implementation.

Beyond its Syariah foundations, halal science also draws upon scientific and empirical approaches, including laboratory analysis, scientific testing and technological advancements, to investigate the characteristics, composition and processing of substances and products. This requires the integration of interdisciplinary knowledge, particularly in Syariah, food science, biotechnology, chemistry and microbiology, to examine contemporary halal-related issues.

As a result, halal epistemology considers not only the sources of knowledge, but also the techniques of interpretation and contextual application, ensuring that halal principles remain relevant and applicable while keeping their fundamental integrity. This indicates that understanding halal is both a textual and contextual process, driven by established *fiqh* principles and tailored to society's needs.

Axiology

The final element is axiology, which means the science of values, theories, and systems of values. Islam values knowledge and thought, as they shape human actions and behaviours. Sidek Baba (2016) also stated that there are four elements that support Islamic epistemology: belief (*aqidah*), worship (*ibadah*), morals (*akhlak*), and *syariah*. Furthermore, good deeds refer to practice that are in accordance with the syariah, such as the values in halal assurance: purity, safety, ethical sourcing, trust (*amanah*), and honesty. Similarly, Al Zuhayli (2016) emphasised that good deeds (*amal soleh*) are practices that follow the syariah; that is, the completion of *fardhu* and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, sallahllahu'alaihi wassalam). This proves that getting halal food can encourage people to carry out righteous deeds.

This value-based understanding demonstrates that halal consumption and practice are only legal compliance issues but also pathways toward cultivating righteous behaviour, Furthermore, Wan Harun Mohammad Amir (2020) elaborates on the interpretation of halalan tayyiban described by mufasiral-Quran scholars and identifies six principles which are halal, nutritious, hygienic, safe, prosperous, and lastly, syubhah-free. This echoes what Man and Bakar (2025) added: the principle of halalan thayyiban encompasses holistic values of goodness that promote physical well-being, cleanliness, spiritual welfare, and alignment with the objectives of Maqasid al-Syariah. In particular, it contributes to the preservation of religion (*Hifz al-Din*), life (*Hifz al-Nafs*), intellect (*Hifz al-'Aql*), progeny (*Hifz al-Nasl*) and wealth (*Hifz al-Mal*).

Additionally, from an axiological perspective, the idea of halalan thayyiban should be understood holistically, as it demands food to be both legally allowed and healthy in terms of ingredients, preparation techniques, and effects on human health and the environment (Omar & Rahman, 2023). Halalan thayyiban prioritizes cleanliness, safety, quality, and proper food management, combining scientific and syariah perspectives (Ismail, 2018).

Hence, within the context of this study, the axiological principles strengthen halal epistemology by shaping how knowledge is translated into practice among halal food supervisors, where values guide both understanding and implementation. This demonstrates that halal supervision is not only a technical responsibility but also a value-driven competency, where ethical

understanding directly influences professional behaviour and decision-making in ensuring halalan thayyiban compliance. Table 1 presents halal epistemology foundations:

Table 1. Halal Epistemology Foundations

Domain	Descriptions
Ontology (Nature and Reality of Halal)	• Devotion, obedience and submission to Allah SWT. • The divine classification of food and substances. • The nature and reality of halal science, including the divine classification of substances, products and practices into halal (lawful), haram (unlawful), syubhah (doubtful) and tayyib (wholesome). • Recognition of the natural laws and characteristics of substances, ingredients, animals and food products that are relevant to determining their halal status. • Legislating something is lawful and unlawful is exclusively the authority of Allah SWT. • The integration of the halal and tayyib concepts, recognising that permissibility should be accompanied by qualities such as cleanliness, safety, wholesomeness and suitability for human consumption
Epistemology (Sources and Methods of Knowledge)	• Divine revelation "*wahyu*", comprising the Quran and Hadith, as the primary sources of Islamic knowledge and guidance. • References and sources of halal knowledge • The integration of Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli (rational knowledge) in understanding and developing halal science. • The application of Islamic jurisprudential methodologies, including Ijtihad, Qiyas, Ijma' and other recognised principles of Usul al-Fiqh, in deriving and interpreting Islamic rulings. • The use of scientific and empirical approaches, including laboratory analysis, scientific testing, technological advancements and research, to investigate the characteristics and composition of substances and products.
Axiology (Value, Ethics and Objectives)	• The cultivation of human morals, ethical conduct and values in accordance with Islamic teaching. • The principle of obedience to Allah SWT, whereby human actions and practices should comply with the requirements of Syariah. • The promotion of integrity, honesty, trustworthiness (amanah), accountability and transparency throughout the halal production and supply chain.

	• What is valued in halal assurance: purity, safety, ethical sourcing, trust, and honesty. • The application of Maqasid al-Shariah, particularly the preservation of religion (Hifz al-Din), life (Hifz al-Nafs), intellect (Hifz al-'Aql), progeny (Hifz al-Nasl) and wealth (Hifz al-Mal).

The findings highlight that the roles of halal supervisors are deeply rooted in halal epistemology, encompassing ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions. From an ontological perspective, the classification of food and substances into halal, haram, syubhah, and thayyiban reflects a metaphysical understanding that all rulings ultimately originate from the authority of Allah SWT. This reinforces the supervisors' responsibility to uphold devotion, obedience, and complete allegiance in ensuring compliance. Epistemologically, halal knowledge is derived from both *Naqli* sources (the Quran and Hadith) and *Aqli* reasoning, guiding supervisors in interpreting and applying halal principles within contemporary contexts.

However, challenges arise when supervisors must translate these sources into operational decisions, particularly in situations where interpretations may differ or where practical constraints limit full adherence. Axiologically, the emphasis on values such as purity, safety, trust, and ethical conduct underscores the moral dimension of halal supervision. Despite this, tensions may emerge when these values are confronted with business pressures, such as cost efficiency or time constraints. This suggests that while halal epistemology provides a strong spiritual and ethical foundation, its effective application requires continuous interpretive support and alignment with real-world practices.

Competency Theory

Competency theory was employed in this study to assess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective performance as a halal food supervisor. An employee's competence means they meet the performance criteria set by the organisation. This should be the main concern for a specific task, job, or profession as a reflection of the individual's 'competence' and the ability to meet the performance criteria, which include knowledge, skills, abilities, attitude, and behaviours (Ariffin, 2021). It involves identifying and assessing the specific competencies required for halal supervisors. In this study, the results for whether a halal food supervisor can perform a specific competency will depend on their actions.

Knowledge

Knowledge competency is a paramount aspect of a halal supervisor's role. According to Narula and Aithal (2018), knowledge denotes the practical or theoretical comprehension of a subject through education or experience. Moreover, halal professionals require an integrated combination of syariah, technical, and general knowledge (Jailani, 2024; Tan et al., 2023). In the context of halal supervision, they must be knowledgeable in both syariah and technical aspects. Syariah knowledge provides the religious and ethical foundation that guides decision-making and ensures adherence to Islamic principles, reflecting the epistemological basis of halal. However, safeguarding halal integrity also requires technical and scientific competencies, including knowledge of halal standards, food safety management, certification processes, and modern production systems (Abidin et al., 2026)

In the realm of halal oversight, knowledge competency is crucial for supervisors to perform their responsibilities effectively and in complete alignment with Islamic principles. This competency entails a comprehensive understanding of the halalan thayyiban concept from the

Quran and Sunnah, which underscores both the lawfulness and the wholesomeness of food. The knowledge, or *'ilm*, in Arabic is derived from the verb 'alima, which means "to know". Besides, a halal supervisor or merchant must know the rules of buying and selling according to hukum syara'. They must be honest and transparent, which requires knowledge of the product being sold.

Narrated by Hakim bin Hazim that Prophet Muhammad (*sallahllahu 'alaihi wassalam*) said: *Both parties in a business transaction have the right to annul it so long as they have not separated; and if they speak the truth and make everything clear, they will be blessed in their transaction; but if they tell a lie and conceal anything, the blessing on their transaction will be blotted out*.

Halalan thayyiban is the knowledge of certainty; the Quran mentions halal and haram multiple times, while the Sunnah highlights the benefits of eating halal and the wisdom behind avoiding prohibited food. Besides, halal supervisors must have comprehensive knowledge on technical knowledge for example competencies related to halal regulatory compliance, halal quality and halal assurance, halal governance, and business management (Abidin et al., 2026). This is in line with a study by Rosli et al. (2022) that halal executives must understand the halal certification process, auditing, and food safety regulations. In addition, they must possess proficiency in food science, specifically in selecting ingredients, additives, and critical control points, while also guaranteeing appropriate hygiene and sanitation practices. Consequently, the value of knowledge and thought is the most important element, as they affect human actions and behaviour.

Furthermore, the halal supervisors must have comprehensive understanding in terms of halal standards and guidelines, such as those provided by the BIRC, and be capable of applying them to fulfil halal certification requirements, audit checklists, and regulatory compliance. In accordance with BCG Halal 1, the general requirements for certification of halal certificate and halal label:

a. Every manufacturer/place/place of business should produce/prepare only halal products.
b. Every company applying for a halal certificate and halal label must ensure that all raw ingredients used are halal and suppliers or sub-contractors who supply only halal materials or have halal certificates are selected.
c. Every company must comply with the halal procedures and requirements as stated in the Halal Certificate and Halal Label Order, 2005; Brunei Darussalam Standard for Halal Food PBD 24:2007; and BCG Halal 1.
d. Companies that fall under multinational and medium industry categories should form an Internal Halal Audit Committee to handle and ensure that halal procedures and requirements are complied.
e. During preparation, handling, processing, packaging, or transportation, the product must be clean and not contain any non-halal ingredients according to hukum syara'.
f. The use of equipment or appliances at the premises must be clean and free from filth according to hukum syara' and not hazardous to health.
g. Transportation used must be exclusively for halal products only.
h. Cleanliness of the equipment, manufacturing area, and the surroundings must be controlled seriously, and the factory should practice Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). (The Religious Council, 2007)

Skills

Soft skills are one of the skills that are important for halal professionals (Abidin et al., 2026). Soft skills refer to a broad range of behavioural and interpersonal competencies, including cognitive skills such as critical and analytical thinking; creative thinking, problem-solving, then interpersonal and communication skills for example communication, teamwork, leadership and coordination skills; personal attributes including adaptability and self-management.

In this context, skills it refers to applying their knowledge practically in food handling, preparation, monitoring halal principles and documentations. Moreover, another specific skill needed is the ability to perform an internal halal audit and a supplier audit to assess compliance with halal; hence, they must analyse their work environment, including adherence to dress code and safety rules, the flow of activities, and the positioning of products (Rosli et al., 2022). This means that halal supervisors must have the capability to perform comprehensive evaluations of facilities, procedures, and records to guarantee adherence to halal standards.

This study is supported by Hamdan and Hashim (2025) mentioned the halal supervisors highlighted their dual responsibility in food preparation and supervisory oversight, ensuring both efficient operations and strict adherence to halal compliance and cleanliness. A halal food supervisor is appointed to perform duties such as syariah and halal monitoring on a continuous basis, while also supporting managers or owners in all halal-related matters. These responsibilities include ensuring that technical procedures comply with halal regulations, food safety, hygiene, and proper food handling practices. Therefore, these competencies reflect the practical skill set required to operationalize halalan thayyiban principles effectively, reinforcing the importance of technical proficiency alongside ethical understanding.

Attitude

Attitude is the supervisor's commitment, responsibility, and ethical behaviour in maintaining the halal principles. Attitude represents the character aspect of competency, influencing how halal supervisors fulfil their duties beyond technical expertise. A firm, ethical, and spiritual character guarantees that halal oversight is conducted with sincerity, integrity, and accountability.

Managerial competency includes elements such as leadership, teamwork, decision-making, problem-solving, organising, and communication. One of the most important managerial competencies that halal executives need is leadership (Rosli et al., 2022).

Furthermore, halal supervision is a sacred trust (*amanah*) that must be executed with integrity, transparency, and consistency. Then, God-consciousness (*taqwa*) is maintaining halal standards with a profound awareness of divine accountability, consistently adhering to Islamic values. Next, accountability and responsibility are assuming complete responsibility for decisions and actions within the halal assurance process, ensuring adherence to standards even in challenging or uncertain circumstances. Finally, ethical conduct is showing fairness, integrity, and professionalism in interactions with stakeholders, while avoiding any conflicts of interest. In the context of a halal food supervisor, trustworthiness and honest entails the strict adherence to halal standards and the guarantee that all aspects of food handling, from the procurement of ingredients to the final preparation must be in accordance with syariah law. Halal supervisors are accountable for maintaining the halal status of products, and their conduct is indicative of their dedication to these principles.

Thus, the competency theory is essential for comprehending the meaning of halalan thayyiban. It applies to effective restaurant supervision through qualification processes and individuals in carrying out specific tasks. Table 2 illustrates the epistemology foundations.

Table 2. Competency Theory

Domain	Descriptions
Knowledge (Cognitive)	• They must understand the halalan thayyiban based on the Quran and Sunnah, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and syariah principle.

	• Knowledgeable in halal standards and guidelines, certification requirements, food science, ingredients composition, and halal risk assessment. • Knowledgeable of Halal certificates and halal and their roles in providing assurance to Muslim consumers • Understanding the relationship between Syariah requirements and scientific principles in determining and verifying halal status.
Skills (Psychomotor)	• The ability to translate halal knowledge into practical actions and workplace procedures. • Demonstrating competency in halal documentation, ingredient verification, hazard identification, food handling and preparation, and halal compliance monitoring. • Applying appropriate procedures to identify, assess and manage potential halal risks throughout food operations. • Conducting internal monitoring, maintaining records and implementing corrective actions to ensure continuous halal compliance.
Attitude (Affective)	• Demonstrating commitment, responsibility and ethical behaviour in upholding halal principles. • Practising Amanah (trustworthiness), Taqwa (God-consciousness), integrity and accountability in fulfilling halal supervisory responsibilities. • Showing honesty, diligence and transparency in ensuring halal compliance and protecting consumer confidence. • Demonstrating continuous self-improvement, willingness to acquire new knowledge and commitment to maintaining Halalan Thayyiban principles.

The study shows that halal supervisors with technical skills such as monitoring raw materials, minimizing cross-contamination, and maintaining accurate documentation are better positioned to assure halal compliance. However, practical hurdles exist, such as limited training opportunities, varied levels of staff participation, and disparities in organizational support. This shows that, while competency frameworks provide measurable and practical skills, they must be contextualized within the operational environment in order to be effective. Supervisors must blend formal competency standards with situational judgment and adaptable tactics.

Framework Development: The integration of Halal Epistemology and Competency

The analysis results were synthesised to create a cohesive framework that integrates halal epistemology with competency theory pertinent to halal supervision. This framework defines the principal domains identified in the literature and correlates them with the practical competencies necessary in the field. Table 3 shows the integrated framework, detailing the epistemological dimension of halal epistemology and its implementation in competency components.

Table 3. The integration of halal epistemology and competency

Epistemological Dimension	Competency Component	Explanation
Ontology + Epistemology	Knowledge	Understanding halal classifications, legal sources (Qur'an, hadith, fiqh jurisprudence), food science, halal certifications, halal standards, and laws.
Axiology	Skills & Attitudes	Applying ethical values in documentation, record-keeping, communication, and decision-making; internalizing *taqwa*, *amanah*, and professionalism.

The integration of halal epistemology and competency theory begins with ontology, epistemology, and knowledge. Ontology and epistemology explain the nature and purpose of knowledge. This ensures that a halal supervisor understands the distinctions between halal and haram, rooted in divine command or revelation. Secondly, the relationship between axiology and skills and attitudes is significant; axiology influences the application of knowledge. For instance, skills such as documentation and record-keeping must be executed with trust, honesty, and ethical considerations to maintain halal integrity. Consequently, the result is that a halal supervisor exhibits knowledge grounded in syariah and science, skills informed by ethical practices, and an attitude shaped by Islamic values. Figure 2 illustrates the integration of halal epistemology and competency standards.

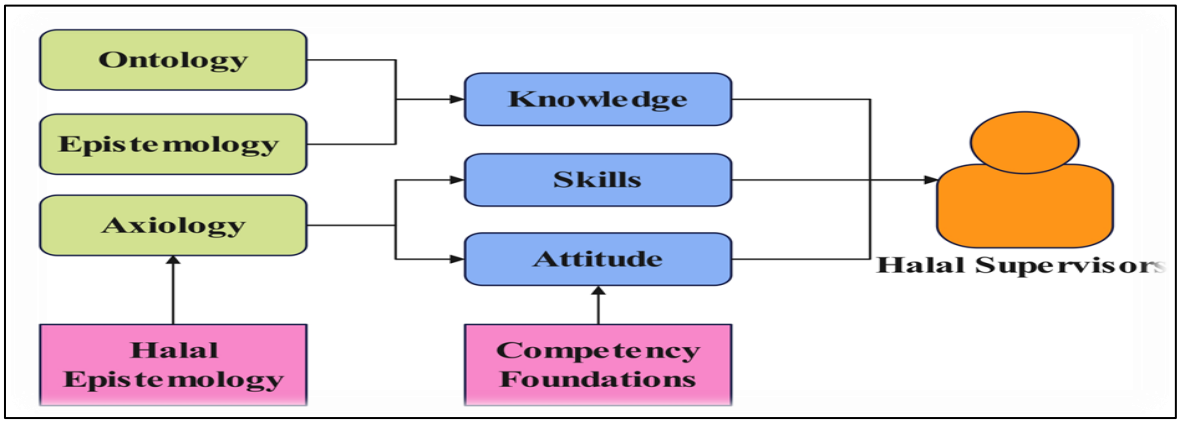


Figure 2. The Integration of halal epistemology and competency standards framework

Integrating halal epistemology with competency theory offers a holistic framework for understanding the role of halal supervisors. This dual approach bridges the gap between spiritual knowledge and professional practice, ensuring supervisors uphold both ethical integrity and technical proficiency.

CONCLUSION

The integration of Islamic epistemology into halal food oversight establishes a more profound basis for supporting comprehensive proficiency among halal supervisors. This study asserts that halal supervision excels in regulatory duties, positioning it as a syariah-based approach by integrating halal epistemology with practical competency domains such as knowledge, skills,

and attitudes. Comprehending halal through the Quran, Sunnah, and scholarly interpretation enhances the supervisor's role with ethical consciousness, responsibility, and technical expertise. The responsibility of a halal supervisor is to safeguard halal integrity based on the principles of *tauhid*, *amanah*, accountability, and halalan thayyiban. However, fulfilling these responsibilities requires more than a sound understanding of syariah principles alone. This epistemological-competency framework guarantees adherence to halalan thayyiban principles in both theoretical and practical contexts, especially within dynamic foodservice environments like restaurants. Therefore, this study argues that halal supervisors should be viewed as ethically grounded and professionally competent custodians of halal integrity, whose effectiveness lies in the integration of halal epistemology and competency theory. This integrated perspective contributes to the development of a holistic framework for strengthening halal governance, professional standards, and competency development within the halal industry.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study is predominantly conceptual, concentrating on delineating the role of halal supervisors through the theoretical integration of halal epistemology and competency theory. Consequently, it is constrained by the lack of empirical validation to assess the proposed paradigm in real halal supervisory contexts. The results are derived from theoretical analysis and may differ across various cultural or institutional contexts, including Brunei, Malaysia, and other Muslim-majority nations. Moreover, the intricacy of converting epistemic ideas into quantifiable competencies may pose difficulties in implementation and evaluation. Future studies should empirically evaluate the suggested framework using qualitative or mixed-method approaches, like interviews and observations, to assess its applicability and reliability. Comparative analyses of various halal certification systems may yield profound insights on how epistemic and competency-based methodologies might enhance the global halal ecosystem. Furthermore, longitudinal studies could investigate the impact of competency development based on halal epistemology on supervisors' performance and industry reputation over time.

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