

HALAL RESEARCH HUB IN SULU: “EMPOWERING HALAL PRODUCERS AND ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HALAL RESEARCH HUB IN SULU, BARMM”

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BACKGROUND :

Halal industry is gaining increasing growth worldwide. However, Minority Bloc of the BTA Parliament & Development Advisory Group Philippines (DAGph) (2021) posited, what good is economic growth, when the local communities in the BARMM feel detached from pursuing their industry and exercising their aspirations towards a culturally relevant economy? While halal encapsulates the *raison d'être* of majority of the residents, it fails to evolve as a dominant anchor of economic affairs of the local communities and the Bangsamoro region. In fact, if the regional government does not adopt systematic measures to catapult the halal economy, BARMM will probably lose out its competitive edge to its neighbors in a short span of time. In the context of Sulu province, Halal industry is driven from BARMM and National forces. There is no existing Halal Certifying Body in the province of Sulu to assure that local foods produced are ensured of its Halalan-Toyyiban standards. This study aims to determine an initial data base on the need for Halal Research Hub in Sulu: “Empowering Halal Producers and Entrepreneurs through the Establishment of a Halal Research Hub in Sulu, BARMM”.

METHOD

This study employed a Value Chain Analysis (VCR) research process designed to serve as a guide in the generation and analysis of data for the research project. The research process was divided into main components: 1) Desk information review where the researchers extracted secondary data and information from Website research and information from existing literatures, especially from the Minority Bloc of the BTA Parliament and Development Advisory Group Philippines (2021), moreover, data about halal industry in Sulu was taken from MTIT & MOST-Sulu; and 2) Primary data collection where an individual semi-structured interviews among 13 food producers/entrepreneurs in Jolo, Sulu were done.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis revealed that based on existing secondary information, the stakeholders in the Halal Industry in BARMM context which had been based from the proposed initiative were broke away from the previous and current experiences which put halal activities under the domain of very few agencies responsible for agriculture, industry and trade, science and technology. There was creation of Bangsamoro Halal Ecosystem Program, under which halal agencies will be managed by eight ministries and the Parliament will serve as the lead entities in implementing the various projects and sub-programs identified. Furthermore, the results also revealed which based on the primary data taken from local food producers and consumers in Jolo, the situation of the Halal industry is yet to be developed locally. Foods producers/entrepreneurs mostly have workplace access by tenant or rental. In terms of market sources, foods that are locally produced/prepared are presented/sold for marketing, few are at the nearby market, some at neighbors, and mostly at other areas such as schools, among others. In terms of Halal information flow, all of the respondents have no Halal standards training, though they are aware of the existing Halal certification process in the Philippines. Most of them have information source of Halal market and price information through social media. Most of them have concern or problems related to Halal production, price, and market information. Some have problems related to financing, especially on sources for their business. In terms of socio-economic status, only few individuals are involved in production of local foods, mostly women, the percentage of the household income from the product was not enough, it was just to meet the basic needs for everyday living, and their consumers were from all classes, low and middle class income (LCI/MCI).

CONCLUSION :

Based from the findings of the study, the proposed project by Sulu State College for the Halal Research Hub in Sulu: “Empowering Halal Producers and Entrepreneurs through the Establishment of a Halal Research Hub in Sulu, BARMM” may be recommended to be pursued as an avenue for growth and development of Halal industry in the local and the region, as well.

KEYWORDS

Keywords: Halal, Research Hub, Sulu, BARMM