

THEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES ON SLAUGHTER TECHNIQUES: CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE IN HALAL AND KOSHER CERTIFICATION

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of theology on the slaughter techniques applied in the Islamic and Jewish traditions, as well as to see how the differences and similarities in these religious teachings contribute to the development and application of halal and kosher certification in the food industry. The study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method, which involves analyzing academic literature, fatwa documents, halal/kosher guidelines, and certification standards. The results show that both traditions share similarities in the use of sharp tools, thorough bloodletting, and respect for animal welfare, reflecting adherence to ethical and spiritual principles. However, there are fundamental differences, such as the prohibition of stunning in kosher, and the role of the shochet as a trained slaughterer in the Jewish tradition. Halal and kosher certification play an important role in ensuring adherence to religious principles amidst the challenges of mass production in the modern food industry. Despite these obstacles, both traditions continue to emphasize the balance between spiritual and ethical needs in food consumption, making the principles of animal welfare and food safety a top priority in maintaining the integrity of religious values in the modern era.

Keywords: Theology; Halal; Kosher; Certification

INTRODUCTION

Human views on food consumption are strongly influenced by theological values rooted in religious teachings (Prasetiyo 2016). Religious beliefs provide clear guidelines on what is considered fit for consumption, how food should be processed, as well as slaughter procedures that are in accordance with spiritual principles. This reflects the role of religion in shaping the norms and standards adopted by its adherents.

The influence of religion on animal slaughter practices is evident in the halal and kosher traditions. These methods of slaughter are based on strict religious requirements that Muslims and Jews must adhere to. Both traditions regulate the details of the slaughter process, from the selection of suitable animals to technical procedures that ensure compliance with religious principles (Aghwan and Regenstein 2019).

Compliance with these standards raises critical points in food products that need to be considered from various aspects, especially halal and safety. This condition makes the food and beverage industry a prominent sector in society. For Muslim consumers, for example, there are two main concerns, namely the halalness of products in accordance with Islamic law and product safety that meets health standards. These aspects are also the responsibility of producers in producing food products that meet consumer needs (Devi and Mutoharoh 2024).

Meat must meet certain requirements, both from the type of animal, the method of slaughter, and the additional ingredients used. This includes theological rules governing animals that are allowed to be consumed as well as slaughter procedures that must be carried out in accordance with religious guidelines in order to meet standards (Sandela, Yuana and Kemala Sari 2023).

In Islam, these rules are rooted in the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's Hadith, which stipulate prohibitions against pork, blood, and slaughter that are not in accordance with the Shari'a. Meanwhile, in the Jewish tradition, kosher laws derived from the Torah regulate animal selection, slaughter methods, and

prohibitions such as mixing dairy and meat products (Salaymeh 2022). These two systems are not only a form of obedience to God, but also reflect ethical standards that influence food consumption practices in society. Therefore, spiritual and religious aspects remain important elements in determining food choices, both at the individual level and in the context of the food industry.

In this context, the problem to be answered is how theology influences slaughter methods, and how convergence and divergence in theological teachings affect halal and kosher certification. This study aims to analyze the influence of theology on the slaughter techniques applied in the two traditions, as well as to see how the differences and similarities in these religious teachings contribute to the development and application of halal and kosher certification in the food industry.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method to dig deeper into the influence of theology on slaughter techniques as well as convergence and divergence in halal and kosher certification. The main data sources in this study include relevant academic literature, fatwa documents, halal/kosher guidelines, and certification standards related to the two systems.

To analyze the data, the analytical techniques used are comparative and descriptive. The comparative technique will compare various theological approaches to animal slaughter according to Islam and Judaism, while the descriptive analysis will explore the application of these slaughter practices in the context of halal and kosher certification. Through this approach, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between religious teachings and slaughter practices in the food industry.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Influence of Islamic and Jewish Theology on Slaughter Methods

Halal is an Arabic term that means “permissible” or “legitimate”. Halal laws prohibit the consumption of carrion, flowing blood, pork, and food offered to other than Allah. Halal ritual slaughter must be performed by chanting the name of Allah and cutting the animal's throat (Fischer 2016).

Slaughter is part of the commandments perfected by the Qur'an. In the Qur'anic verses, it is explained that animals should be slaughtered by mentioning the name of Allah. Animals that die or are consumed without proper slaughter and without mentioning the name of Allah are considered haram. This is the main guideline in determining the halalness of an animal for consumption in Islam (Roselia and Hafiz 2024). The arguments that form the basis of the theology of animal slaughter in Islam include the following (Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) 2009):

1. Qur'an Surah Al Maidah: 3

“Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah, and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns, and those from which a wild animal has eaten, except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death], and those which are sacrificed on stone altars, and [prohibited is] that you seek decision through divining arrows. That is grave disobedience. This day those who disbelieve have despaired of [defeating] your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. Today I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion. But whoever is forced by severe hunger with no inclination to sin – then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”

2. Qur'an Surah Al An'am: 121

“And do not eat of that upon which the name of Allah has not been mentioned, for indeed, it is grave disobedience. And indeed do the devils

inspire their allies [among men] to dispute with you. And if you were to obey them, indeed, you would be associators [of others with Him].”

3. Qur'an Surah Al Hajj: 34

“And for all religion We have appointed a rite [of sacrifice] that they may mention the name of Allah over what He has provided for them of [sacrificial] animals. For your god is one God, so to Him submit. And, [O Muhammad], give good tidings to the humble [before their Lord].”

4. Hadith by Muslim:

“Shidad ibn Aus reported that the Messenger of Allah said: Verily, Allah requires good in everything. Therefore, when you kill, kill in a good way and when you slaughter, slaughter in a good way. And let one of you sharpen his knife and make the animal happy.”

5. Hadith by Al Baihaqi:

Rafi' ibn Khadij said: “We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, tomorrow we will face the enemy and we have no knives.' He said, 'Hurry up, whatever draws blood and the name of Allah is mentioned on it, then eat it. Do not use teeth or nails, and I will tell you why. As for the teeth, they are bones, and the nails are the cutting tools of the people of Habashah.”

6. Imam al-Qurthuby's opinion in his tafsir regarding the provision of slaughtering tools is as follows:

“The scholars differed concerning the validity of slaughter. According to the majority of scholars, any tool that cuts the sinews and draws blood is a means of slaughter other than teeth and nails. This opinion is supported by the mutawatir atsar” (Imam al-Qurthuby in Tafsir al-Qurthubi, volume 6, p. 53).

7. Wahbah al-Zuhaily's opinion regarding the procedures for slaughtering with modern tools as follows:

“There is no impediment to using means that weaken the animal's movements without torturing it (for animal slaughter). For this reason, it is permissible in Islam to use modern non-lethal methods of stunning before slaughter.” (Wahbah al-Zuhaily in al-Fiqh al-Islamy wa Adillatuh, juz 4 p. 2800)

The main principles of slaughter in Islam include several important aspects that must be adhered to in order to ensure that the slaughtering process is done in accordance with the Shariah. Before slaughtering, the mention of Allah's name (*bismillah*) is mandatory when slaughtering, as a form of acknowledgment of Allah's power and to ensure that the slaughter is done with the right intention. Furthermore, the animal's blood must be completely drained from its body, as this is considered a legitimate way of making the meat halal.

Animals should be treated well before and during slaughter, to avoid excessive pain and ensure that the slaughter process is conducted humanely, in accordance with Islamic principles that emphasize compassion towards all living beings. This foundation shows that slaughter is not only a worldly act but also a form of worship that affirms man's relationship with Allah.

On the other hand, in the Jewish tradition, kosher laws are rooted in the Torah. Kosher is a Hebrew term that means “proper” or “righteous”. Kosher laws include a number of prohibitions, such as the prohibition against pork and the mixing of milk and meat. These laws are based on passages in the Bible, rabbinic expositions, and decisions of rabbinic authorities (Fischer 2016).

Kosher principles govern the selection of the type of animal fit for consumption, the method of slaughter, and the role of a shochet/slaughterer who is specially trained and has religious integrity. The Torah emphasizes the importance of obeying God's commandments in every aspect of life, including the consumption of food. Kosher slaughter must be done by ensuring that the animal does not experience excessive suffering, reflecting respect for living beings as God's creation (Regenstein dan Regenstein 2024). The legal basis is in the Jewish Scriptures (Ghazali and Sabjan 2023):

1. The Torah portion of Deuteronomy 14:3-8:

“Do not eat anything declared unclean by God (3) You may eat these animals: oxen, sheep, goats (4) deer, wild sheep, wild goats, and antelope (5) Every animal that is cloven-hoofed and ruminating may be eaten (6) You may not eat animals that are not cloven-hoofed and that do not

ruminate. You shall not eat the flesh of a camel, an arnab, or a stone urchin, which are unclean, because although they are ruminants, they are not hoofed (7) You shall not eat a pig. That animal is unclean, because although it has cloven hooves, it does not ruminate. You shall not eat such an animal, nor touch its carcass (8)” (Borneo Version, 2016, Deuteronomy 14:3-8)

2. The Torah portion of Leviticus 11:13-19:

“You shall not eat the following birds: eagles, owls, all kinds of swallows, vultures, ravens, ostriches, gulls, pigeons, and all kinds of cranes, swallows, kosa birds, and bats” (Borneo Version, 2016, Leviticus 11:13-19).

3. The Torah portion of Leviticus 11:9-12:

“You may eat all kinds of fish that have fins and scales (9), but any animal that lives in the water and does not have fins and scales, you shall not eat (10). You shall not eat them, nor touch their carcasses (11) You shall not eat any animal that lives in the water and has no fins or scales (12).” (Borneo Version, 2016, Leviticus 11:9-12)

4. The Torah portion of Leviticus 11:20-23:

“All insects that have wings are unclean (20) except those that can jump (21) You may eat million locusts, crickets, and grasshoppers (22) But all other insects that have wings and also those that crawl must be considered unclean (23)” (Borneo Version, 2016, Leviticus 11:20-23).

5. Torah portion of Leviticus 11:26-27:

“Wherever the Israelites live, they shall never eat the blood of birds or the blood of animals (26) Anyone who breaks this rule is no longer considered a member of God's people (27)” (Borneo Version, 2016, Leviticus 11:26-27)

6. The Torah portion of Deuteronomy 14:21:

“You shall not eat a common dead animal. The flesh may be eaten by a foreigner who lives among you, or sold to a foreigner. But you belong to your God; you are His people. You shall not boil a lamb or a goat in its mother's milk” (Borneo Version, 2016, Deuteronomy 14:21).

7. Torah portion of Exodus 22:31:

“You shall be holy to Me. You shall not eat meat torn by wild animals. Throw it to the dogs.” (Borneo Version, 2016, Exodus 22:31)

In Judaism, forbidden animals are divided into four main categories: quadrupeds, birds, marine animals and insects, with certain species in each category considered forbidden, while others are permitted. For four-legged animals, two main characteristics, cloven hoof and ruminant, are required to be kosher. Animals with only one of these characteristics, such as camels and rabbits that are ruminants but not cloven hoofed, or pigs that are cloven hoofed but not ruminant, are considered therif or forbidden. Animals without both characteristics, such as elephants, are clearly therif and may not be consumed by followers of Judaism (Ghazali and Sabjan 2023).

In addition, kosher requirements also involve strict post-slaughter inspection to ensure the animal's fitness. These checks are not limited to the lungs, but also include other conditions that may cause the animal to suffer during its lifetime, such as broken ribs. Animals with these conditions, even if they have been slaughtered according to the rules, are still considered therif or haram. In addition to the three main issues in Jewish forbidden food, namely the prohibition against certain animals, blood, and the mixture of meat with milk, there are two additional categories that are also considered forbidden: the prohibition against certain fruits or herbs and certain types of wine. Although not the main issue, these two categories still play an important role in the lives of Jewish believers, who continue to avoid these foods (Lever, Vandeventer and Miele 2022).

Conditions of Ritual Prayers and Objects of Slaughter

One of the main elements that differentiates the slaughtering methods in the Islamic and Jewish traditions is the prayer that is said before the slaughtering process. In Islam, a prayer in the form of *bismillah* (in the name of Allah) must be made by the slaughterer before starting the process. This confirms the intention to carry out Allah's command and ensures the halalness of the slaughtered animal.

This is rooted in the belief that slaughter is not just a physical act but a spiritual act that connects the individual to God (Salaymeh 2022).

In contrast, In Jewish tradition, the role of shochet includes not only the act of slaughter, but also a deeply spiritual dimension, as reflected in the *berakah* recited during the process. The *berakah* is a formal prayer that recognizes God's authority over life and death, thus reinforcing the sanctity of the slaughter process. This prayer illustrates the belief that every aspect of life, including the act of killing for the necessities of life, has deep divine meaning (Yonatan 2022). Moreover, while both emphasize the importance of the spiritual dimension in slaughter, they also have further specific rules regarding the animals that are considered legal for slaughter.

Permitted animals under the concept of halal include land animals that have flowing blood, live on grass and leaves, and do not prey on other animals. Examples include camels, cows, goats, buffaloes, sheep, and deer. Predatory animals that hunt with teeth or fangs are considered haram, such as lions, cheetahs, tigers, leopards, wolves, foxes, dogs, and cats. In addition, all birds of prey (birds that hunt with claws) are considered unclean (Bir, et al. 2024).

Whereas in kosher, an animal is considered kosher if it is a ruminant (chews cud) and has split or forked hooves. These animals include all species of cattle, sheep, goats, deer, and antelope, both wild and domestic. Animals such as pigs, camels, rabbits and horses are not considered kosher as they do not meet these two criteria. In addition, the torah does not give a specific mark for kosher birds, but lists 24 classes of birds that are not kosher. In general, kosher birds are not birds of prey and have extra toes or talons, gizzards or piles that can be peeled off. However, domestic birds such as chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, pigeons and pigeons are considered kosher (Bir, et al. 2024).

Convergence of Slaughtering Techniques

In halal and kosher slaughter techniques, there are fundamental similarities that reflect respect for animals as living beings (Gultom 2023). Both techniques emphasize the importance of reducing animal suffering during the slaughter process. This reflects religious principles that honor God's creation and promote compassion. In Islam, the Prophet Muhammad said, “Allah has enjoined *ihsan* (good) on everything,” including animal slaughter (Hadith by Muslim). This principle requires the use of sharp tools to ensure a quick death and minimize pain (Alam, et al. 2024).

The tools used in both traditions also reflect these ethical standards. Sharp tools and quick cuts aim to ensure instant death, minimizing animal suffering. This rigor in the use of tools and techniques demonstrates a commitment to animal welfare, which is integral to both traditions. In addition, the use of appropriate sharp tools is essential to ensure that the slaughter process is quick and minimizes pain for the animal, so that the animal is not tormented (Rahman, et al. 2024).

In the Jewish tradition, the kosher law has similar principles. The slaughterer (*shochet*) must be well trained to ensure the slaughter is done with very sharp tools and without flaws (El-Rahim, Mashat and Fat'hi 2023). The Torah emphasizes the importance of treating the animal with respect before and during the slaughter process, demonstrating the value of compassion in Jewish tradition. Prior to slaughter, the *shochet* also undergoes rigorous inspection to ensure that the animal is healthy and fit for slaughter according to kosher laws (Yonatan 2022).

In addition, thorough drainage of blood is an important requirement in both traditions. In Islam, blood is considered unclean, as affirmed in QS. Al-Baqarah: 173: “Forbidden to you (to eat) carrion, blood, pork...”. The same prohibition is also found in Jewish tradition, as stipulated in Leviticus 17:14: “For blood is the life of every creature; therefore, I say to the children of Israel: You shall not eat the blood of any creature.” Blood drainage is not only to fulfill religious requirements but also for health reasons, as blood can be a medium for bacterial

growth. In both methods, the animal's blood must be removed completely as blood is considered unfit for consumption (Hossaina, et al. 2022).

Another similarity between halal and kosher slaughter is the ethical standards that both traditions hold themselves to. Both view slaughter not only as a technical process to obtain meat, but also as a ritual that reflects respect for life. In Islam, this ethical standard is seen in the prohibition of slaughtering animals in the presence of other animals, to avoid stress on animals waiting their turn. This reflects the value of *rahmatan lil alamin* (mercy to all nature) at the core of Islamic teachings (Kanani 2024).

In Jewish tradition, this ethical standard is seen in the requirement that the shochet must be a person of high moral integrity and a deep understanding of religious law. In this way, slaughter becomes more than just a technical practice, but also a form of spiritual devotion. Both methods emphasize the importance of hygiene in the slaughtering process and meat handling (Hossaina, et al. 2022).

The convergence in halal and kosher slaughter techniques reflects universal values rooted in the teachings of their respective religions. These similarities, especially in the treatment of animals and ethical standards, indicate that both traditions share a view on the importance of balance between human needs and respect for living beings. By observing these principles, both traditions contribute not only to meeting the spiritual needs of religious believers, but also to improving ethical standards in the food industry globally.

Divergence of Slaughtering Techniques

In the world of animal slaughter, there is a significant difference between the practice of halal in Islam and kosher in the Jewish tradition. While both have the same goal of ensuring that the food consumed is in accordance with the teachings of their respective religions, there are variations in the techniques and rules applied in the slaughter process.

Prior to slaughter, the kosher technique requires the shochet to perform a ceremonial prayer, asking for forgiveness for the life of the animal. This prayer is only recited once outside the slaughter site, not for each animal slaughtered (Aghwan and Regenstein 2019). Whereas in the halal technique, the slaughterer is recommended to recite prayers for each animal to be slaughtered.

The slaughter process in the halal and kosher traditions is similar in basic techniques, but different in some aspects of its implementation. In kosher slaughter, the throat, esophagus, carotid artery and trachea but do not sever the spine. The animal must be cut in one swift motion while facing it towards the Qibla (Mecca), with the obligatory prayer recited by the slaughterer. Meanwhile, in the kosher tradition, a similar process is carried out by cutting the throat, esophagus, and carotid artery, jugular vein, trachea, and esophagus in one swift motion. However, this slaughter must be performed by a shochet who has been trained and certified according to Jewish religious law (Hossaina, et al. 2022).

After slaughtering, the process of bloodletting or *nikur* is mandatory, where the animal's blood must be completely removed, as blood is prohibited for consumption in Judaism (Aghwan and Regenstein 2019). However, in kosher techniques, the animal's blood only has to be fully removed as blood is not considered kosher for consumption (Hossaina, et al. 2022).

In halal slaughter practices, one of the rules that is highly emphasized is the prohibition of the use of stunning or other methods of de-consciousness before slaughter. According to Islamic law, animals must be slaughtered in a conscious state (alive) so that blood can be fully released. Stunning to facilitate the process of slaughtering animals is permissible in Islam (Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) 2009) with the following conditions:

- a. Stunning only causes temporary unconsciousness of the animal,
- b. It does not cause death and does not cause permanent injury,
- c. Its purpose is to facilitate slaughter
- d. Its implementation is a form of *ihsan*, not to torture animals

- e. Its equipment must be able to guarantee the realization of conditions a, b, c, and not used between halal and non-halal animals (pigs) as a preventive measure.
- f. Its provisions, type selection, and technical implementation must be under the supervision of experts who guarantee the realization of conditions a, b, c, and d.

In the kosher technique, stunning or electric shock methods are also not allowed. The shochet will conduct a thorough examination of the chalef knife and the condition of the animal to be slaughtered. In Judaism, after slaughtering, a veterinary examination or bedika is also performed. kosher animals that have been slaughtered must have their lungs checked to detect any defects. This is in contrast to slaughter in Islam, which does not require inspection of the animal after slaughter for defects (Ghazali and Sabjan 2023).

The divergence in slaughter techniques between halal and kosher demonstrates the profound differences in the religious rules, procedures and controls applied in these two systems. While both aim to ensure that the food consumed conforms to religious teachings, the differences in slaughter techniques before, during and after slaughter is one of the significant technical differences. In addition, the supervision and verification carried out also show differences in how each religion ensures compliance with their laws. Understanding these differences is crucial to a deeper understanding of how the two religious systems view the ethical and spiritual aspects of animal slaughter.

Halal and Kosher Certification

These convergences and divergences affect slaughter practices in the modern industrial context. Principles such as the use of sharp instruments, blood drainage and respectful treatment of animals have been adopted as part of global standards for animal slaughter. The halal and kosher industries are now working together in some aspects, recognizing that their basic principles are aligned in terms of animal welfare and food safety.

However, challenges remain in maintaining these standards amidst the demands of mass production. For example, pressure to meet consumer demand can lead to deviations from these principles, such as the use of slaughter methods that do not meet strict halal or kosher requirements. Therefore, halal and kosher certification plays an important role in ensuring that ethical and religious principles are maintained at every stage of the production process.

In the halal certification system, supervision is carried out by institutions or bodies recognized by the state or religious organizations such as JAKIM, MUIS, MUI, Islamic Food Council of Europe (IFCE) and Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA) etc (Fischer 2016). This oversight covers the entire process, from animal selection to slaughter and meat processing. It ensures that each step in the process adheres to Islamic religious principles, including the use of appropriate tools, slaughter by competent persons, and ensuring that there are no haram elements in the food. In addition, it is also important to ensure that the blood is completely drained from the animal's body after slaughter.

The Chief Rabbinate of Israel has been in existence since the British Mandate and has responsibility for the certification of kosher products as well as the supervision of holy places in Israel. Under the Prohibition of Fraud in Kashrut Law 5743-1983, it is authorized to issue kosher certificates, and animal slaughter can only be performed by shohet that have been certified by the Chief Rabbinate. If an application for a kosher certificate is denied, the party concerned may appeal to the Chief Rabbinate. The implementation of this law is under the responsibility of the Minister of Religious Affairs, including full authority in kosher certification. Under Chief Rabbinate of Israel Law 5740-1980, one of the Chief Rabbinate's main functions is to issue kosher certificates, which is supported by Jewish Religious Services Law 5731-1971, under which the Minister of Religious Affairs may establish religious councils. Thus, the Chief Rabbinate is a religious council established by the Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs, who is also involved in its election process (Zulham 2021).

The regulation of kosher food in Israel is governed by the Consumer Protection Law 5741-1981 which prohibits misleading information, and the Prohibition of Fraud in Kashrut Law 5743-1983 which specifically regulates kosher food. A 2009 report from the Global Agricultural Information Network states that kosher certification is not mandatory for food imports into Israel, but the market for non-kosher products is smaller as merchants generally reject such products, except for meat and meat products, which must be entirely kosher. Kosher statements on products must be accompanied by a kosher certificate; without a certificate, it is considered misleading. Kosher-certified producers are also prohibited from trading in non-kosher products. Although this regulation does not prohibit trade in non-kosher products, the kosher market still dominates due to consumer preference (Zulham 2021).

In the last two decades, five major kosher certifiers namely Orthodox Union, OK Kosher, Kof-K Kosher Supervision, Star K, and Chicago Rabbinical Council have achieved global reach. Kosher certification involves various parties, including ingredient suppliers, manufacturers, technical services and financial management. Halal, on the other hand, does not yet have the resources to conduct inspections globally and as a result they have shifted the responsibility to Muslim organizations around the world, such as the Islamic Food Council of Europe (IFCE) and the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA) who conduct inspections (Fischer 2016).

CONCLUSION

Theology has a significant influence on slaughter techniques in the kosher and halal traditions. Despite differences in rules and practices, these two traditions share similarities in respecting animal welfare and adhering to strict religious principles. Convergence in slaughter techniques reflects universal values rooted in the teachings of each religion, while divergence indicates profound differences in religious rules and practices.

Halal and kosher certification play an important role in ensuring that ethical and religious principles are maintained at every stage of the production process. Close supervision by certification bodies ensures that the products produced meet the standards set by each religion. In the context of modern industry, challenges remain in maintaining these standards amidst the demands of mass production, but the basic principles of animal welfare and food safety remain a top priority. Thus, this study has attempted to offer a deeper understanding of how theology influences slaughter techniques and how convergence and divergence in religious teachings contribute to the development and implementation of halal and kosher certification in the food industry.

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