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# Consumption Practices of Halal Products by Indonesian Muslims in Osaka Japan: A Phenomenological Study of Religion

# (Praktik Konsumsi Produk Halal oleh Muslim Indonesia di Osaka Jepang: Kajian Fenomenologi Agama)

**Eman Suherman**[1*]
**Putri Alpyani**[2]
[1,2] Department of Japanese Language and Culture, Faculty of Culture Science,
Universitas Gadjah Mada
Sosio Humaniora Street, Depok, Sleman 55281
Tel.: +62(274)513096
[*]Email: eman.suherman@ugm.ac.id

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**Abstract**

Indonesia merupakan salah satu negara yang aktif mengirimkan pendatang ke Jepang. Pada tahun 2021 tercatat 59.820 orang Indonesia tinggal di Jepang, yang 70—80% di antaranya diperkirakan beragama Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dinamika konsumsi produk halal oleh muslim Indonesia di Osaka, Jepang, menggunakan perspektif fenomenologi agama. Analisis data dilakukan dengan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode survei dan deskriptif analitis. Data primer dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara terstruktur terhadap 31 responden dan 8 informan muslim Indonesia yang tinggal di Osaka sejak November 2022 hingga Mei 2023. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa praktik konsumsi halal di Osaka memiliki dinamika religius yang kompleks, melampaui sekadar kepatuhan tekstual terhadap syariat. Konsumsi halal merefleksikan upaya spiritual yang melibatkan refleksi emosional, kognitif, dan multisensoris. Informan dengan tingkat kepatuhan tinggi pada agama menunjukkan komitmen mendalam melalui upaya proaktif dalam mengonsumsi produk halal. Aktivitas tersebut juga menciptakan solidaritas sosial yang memperluas makna ibadah ke ranah kolektif. Informan dengan tingkat kepatuhan moderat menunjukkan adaptasi kreatif terhadap tantangan, seperti memadukan fleksibilitas dan prinsip halal dalam konteks keterbatasan akses dan informasi. Fenomenologi agama mengungkap bahwa praktik konsumsi produk halal oleh Muslim Indonesia di Osaka tidak hanya menjadi upaya mempertahankan identitas religius, tetapi juga mencerminkan proses adaptasi dan negosiasi nilai spiritual dalam lingkungan yang mayoritas nonmuslim.

**Kata kunci**: fenomenologi keagamaan, kepatuhan terhadap hukum Islam, konsumsi produk halal, muslim Indonesia, Osaka Jepang

**Abstract**

Indonesia is one of the countries actively sending migrants to Japan. In 2021, 59,820 Indonesians were recorded as living in Japan, with an estimated 70—80% identifying as Muslim. This study aims to describe the dynamics of halal product consumption among Indonesian Muslims in Osaka, Japan, through the lens of religious phenomenology. Data were analyzed using a qualitative approach with survey and descriptive-analytical methods. Primary data were collected through questionnaires and structured interviews with 31 respondents and 8 informants residing in Osaka between November 2022 and May 2023. The findings reveal that halal consumption practices in Osaka exhibit complex religious dynamics, transcending mere textual compliance with Islamic law. Halal consumption reflects spiritual efforts involving emotional, cognitive, and multisensory reflection. Informants with high levels of religious adherence demonstrated profound commitment through proactive efforts to consume halal products. These activities also fostered social solidarity, extending the meaning of worship to a collective dimension. Informants with moderate levels of religious adherence displayed creative adaptation to challenges, such as balancing flexibility with halal principles in the context of limited access and information. Religious phenomenology reveals that halal consumption practices among Indonesian Muslims in Osaka are not only efforts to maintain religious identity but also reflections of the adaptation and negotiation of spiritual values within a predominantly non-Muslim environment.

**Keywords**: adherence to Islamic law, halal product consumption, Indonesian Muslims, Osaka Japan, religious phenomenology

## INTRODUCTION

Halal products are one of the main needs for Muslims to practice their religion, especially in the aspect of consumption. In Indonesia and other Muslim-majority countries, halal products are easily available. However, Muslims will face challenges when living in countries with Muslim minority population, such as Japan, where access to halal products is not as easy as in Indonesia. This requires special efforts and adaptation for Muslim communities living abroad.

Globally, Islam is the second largest religion with around two billion adherents (World Population Review 2024). The spread of Muslims is not limited to traditional areas, including in Japan which is now experiencing an increase in the number of Muslim tourists and immigrants. Muslim travelers in Japan generally want the availability of prayer spaces and halal food when they eat out (Saville & Mahbubi 2021). Indonesia is one of the countries that actively sends migrants to Japan, both as students and as seasonal workers. In 2021, there were 59,820 Indonesians living in Japan, and 70—80% of them are estimated to be Muslims (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2023). With the increasing number of Muslims, halal products such as halal seasonings, halal instant noodles, and halal cosmetics are starting to be available in some specialty stores and online platforms in Japan.

The consumption practices of halal products by Indonesian Muslims in Osaka, Japan, are interesting to study, especially from the lens of the phenomenology of religion. The phenomenology of religion approach provides a perspective in understanding religious practice through one's personal experience, which is private, unique, and independent. This is because a person's experience in feeling the presence of God or holy things in daily life is not the same from one to another, including how they obey the rules outlined by religion. This approach wants to see religion more than just focusing on its teachings, but more on how individuals interpret, interpret, and articulate their unique and sublime observances into daily life practices.

There are various studies related to the phenomenology of religion. One of the many research themes that have been carried out, for example, is related to ritual practices, symbolism, and unity in religious diversity seen from the lens of religious phenomenology. Chantepie de la Saussaye, a pioneer of the phenomenology of religion, emphasized that the essence of religion can be understood through ritual practices. In Anjom-e Rouz & Elmi's (2023) research, Chantepie's ideas suggest that there is a kind of unity in religious diversity. Although ritual practices and symbols as religious expressions are different, there is a common goal or need: they both seek to get closer to the transcendental (God) or understand the meaning of life

Another similar study is Akhiyat's (2019) view, which emphasizes the importance of a phenomenological approach when building interfaith tolerance through a principle called *epoché*. *Epoché* is the attitude to refrain from judging a particular religious belief, value, or practice. *Epoché* aims to see phenomena as they are, without prejudice or interpretations that come from the perspective of the observer. Research conducted by Alvis (2019) and Cibotaru (2023), with the concept of "play" reveals that religion actually provides space for freedom to practice through its rules, rituals and symbols. This research is similar to the findings of Leng (2022), who uses Heidegger's perspective that lived experience and temporality are at the center of phenomenological attention. Both highlight how religious rituals and practices can provide space for experimentation in understanding religion.

Research focusing on concrete and multisensory experiences in religion is demonstrated by studies conducted by Völker (2022), who proposes a holistic approach in the study of religion, and Harding (2021) and Sigurdson (2023), who emphasize minimalist phenomenology and aesthetic experiences in sacred space, both of which highlight the need to value concrete and multisensory aspects in religious practice.

Although these studies have different focuses and objects, there are some similarities; first, they are concerned with the subjective experience of individuals in religion rather than as objects of religion. That religion needs to be seen not only from its cognitive aspects, but also how it is practiced in everyday life. Religious experience is unique and individual, complex and multidimensional so that it does not merely dwell on issues of right-wrong, good-bad, and sin-reward. Second, the need for a holistic approach in looking at all aspects of religion, for example by combining other concepts such as hermenetics, Heideggerian, ecology, culture and so on with the aim of producing a rich and multi-perspective understanding.

There are many areas that have not been explored further, such as the relationship between religious practice and culture, religious experience in the midst of new or marginalized communities or cultures, and the like. The application of a phenomenological perspective to look at religious practice in a multicultural and pluralist context is an area that needs to be explored more deeply. Especially when followers of certain religions are faced with different social and cultural situations that are not familiar with how they practice their religious beliefs.

The consumption practices of halal products in Japan, for example, reflect a complex interaction between religious spirit, personal needs, and adaptation to the socio-cultural-economic environment. Studies on halal products in Japan are mostly dominated by topics related to certification, marketing, distribution, business, and a little culture (Jamaludin & Sugawara 2022; Ishak et al. 2024; Batubara & Harahap 2022). For example, Adidaya (2016) pointed out that the "Halal Boom" phenomenon in Japan, in addition to creating new economic opportunities in the food and tourism sectors, also has challenges such as the emergence of fake certifications and

inconsistent halal standards. This study uses the theory of globalization and cultural identity to analyze how Japan adopts the concept of halal within the framework of product commodification.

In relation to consumer behavior, Ratih et al. (2021) found that religiosity and quality of food ingredients strongly influence purchasing decisions, while halal labelling and knowledge do not play a big role. Using consumer behavior theory and quantitative regression models, this study provides guidance for manufacturers to understand the preferences of Muslim consumers in Japan. Aminah & Bhakti (2022) showed that the concept of halal in Japan is often localized through the use of pictograms (icons) and local versions of halal products. Using the theory of multiculturalism and cultural assimilation, this study reveals how halal promotion in Japan is more inclined towards local cultural assimilation than multicultural coexistence. Meanwhile, Luthfi et al. (2024) offer a *fiqh aqalliyah* approach as a legal solution in halal standards in Japan. This approach considers the local context and offers gradual flexibility to meet the needs of the Muslim community. With the theory of cultural assimilation and global halal standardization, this study suggests the importance of adaptation of Islamic law in Muslim minority countries such as Japan.

This study aims to describe the dynamics of consumption of halal products by Indonesian Muslims in a multicultural and cosmopolite environment, namely Osaka, Japan, seen from the concept of phenomenology of religion. If previous studies on halal consumption practices in Japan tend to be dominated by studies on structural aspects such as certification, marketing, and distribution, this study tries to see how the subjective experiences of Indonesian Muslim consumers interpret, and articulate halal consumption as part of their religious and emotional experiences with a religious phenomenology approach. This research is expected to reveal a richer meaning of religiosity behind the consumption practices of *halal* products/food

## METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach by applying survey and descriptive analytical methods. Through this approach, researchers try to understand the phenomenon or experience of participants' perspectives in depth (Maxwell & Reybold 2015).

Primary data was collected through questionnaires and structured interviews from November 2022 to May 2023 with 31 respondents and 8 informants of Indonesian Muslims living in Osaka, Japan. Respondents were selected with the criteria of Indonesian Muslim citizens living in Osaka with a duration of stay from less than one year to more than seven years, age 19—40 years old, occupation can be diverse, minimum high school education, having an income that reflects the purchasing power of halal products, and willingness to be interviewed. A total of 31 people met the criteria, and 22 were female, while the other 9 were male. Female respondents are 19—25 years old with a background as students, while male respondents have a more varied age range, between 21—30 years old, with jobs such as professional workers, students, or small entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, informants are respondents who are willing to be interviewed in depth, which was obtained by 8 informants.

The results of the questionnaires and interviews were then recapitulated, interpreted, and analyzed. The analysis process is carried out using the perspective of the phenomenology of religion, and is directed at answering research questions.

Conceptually, the phenomenology of religion explores religion through the lens of subject experience, focusing on how individuals experience and make meaning of the sacred aspects of

their lives (Knibbe & Versteeg 2008). This approach tries to see how interactions and even negotiations between religious practices and cultural contexts are formed. It departs from the assumption that religion is not simply a collection of doctrines or fixed ritual practices, but rather a lived reality that is felt and interpreted by individuals (Day 2016).

The characteristics of the phenomenology of religion contain several concepts, including the so-called *epoché*, which is a kind of limitation of prejudices and assumptions when understanding an individual's religious experience and trying to see it subjectively. Second, the concept of *Eidetic vision* which focuses on intuitive understanding of the spiritual or religious essence of an experience (Connolly 1999). Third, it is characterized by a descriptive nature that describes religious phenomena and their essential structure, and fourth, antireductionism, which rejects the simplification of religious experiences into non-religious categories, as well as intentionality, which emphasizes that it is consciousness that shapes religious phenomena (Allen 2005). This approach is slightly different from phenomenological studies in general because it emphasizes subjective and intuitive religious experiences, whose focus is to understand religion more deeply and inclusively while still appreciating the complexity and depth of religious experience (Mujib 2015).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A glimpse of Muslims in Japan

The beginning of Japan's interaction with Islam can be traced to the publication of "News from the West" by Arai Hakuseki in 1719. The study of Islam increased in Japan in the late 19th century through the relationship with Ottoman Turkey. The early conversions of Japanese citizens to Islam and the connection with Pan-Islamism marked the initial phase of acceptance of Islam in Japan. In the early 20th century there was an Egyptian role in the Japanese military and this shows the deep interaction between Japan and Islam (Nobuo & Göknur 2007).

Since the 1930s, there has been a significant growth in the Muslim population, especially among ethnic Tatars, with the construction of the first mosques in Nagoya, Kobe, and Tokyo. The Japanese government then used Islam as a tool of diplomacy and anti-communist strategy, and this marked an important phase in the recognition and acceptance of the Muslim community. Post World War II, there was a rebuilding of Islamic infrastructure and an "Islamic Boom" in the 1970s. Although the tragedy of September 11, 2001 raised suspicions, the Muslim population continued to grow. Fueled by tourism promotion targeting Muslim travelers, the concept of Halal Tourism has been heavily promoted by the Japanese government since 2013, showing an increasing adaptation and interaction between Japan and the global Muslim community. By 2020, there are around 230,000 Muslims in Japan (Yulita & Ong 2019).

As Muslim migrants in Japan have increased, the Japanese government has adopted an approach of multiculturalism and harmonious coexistence. These initiatives include for example the acceptance of Syrians as students and the opening of the labor market to low-skilled foreign workers. The revision of the immigration law in 2021 has prevented the long-term detention of immigrants who violate the long law to comply with international human rights law, and includes regulating religious freedom in accordance with the Japanese Constitution. The "3F" (*fashion, festival, food*) initiative is an effort to promote cross-cultural understanding and tolerance.

### Halal and Haram in Islam

Halal and haram in Islam are concepts of what is allowed and what is forbidden in various aspects of Muslim life. Halal refers to everything that is permitted, while haram to that which is

prohibited, which is based on the teachings in the Islamic holy book Al-Qur'an and hadith (habits and behavior of the Prophet Muhammad SAW) as the main source of law. This is textually regulated in a letter in the holy book of the Qur'an, namely in one of the teachings written in the text called surah Al-Baqarah verses 172—173 which recommends eating halal food and avoiding haram.

However, in emergency situations Islam allows the consumption of haram within certain limits. In addition to halal and haram, there is actually a concept that is in the middle of the two, namely *syubhat*. The concept of *syubhat* can be said to be a gray or doubtful concept that is between halal and haram. However, Islam still teaches the importance of staying away from doubt or *syubhat* to protect faith and self-respect. Mahmud (2017) provides a view that *syubhat* is subjective and depends on individual interpretation, which opens up a kind of perspective that allows a broader understanding and interpretation of the dynamics of halal and haram in Islam.

**Implementation of Halal and Haram Concept in Japan**

In Japan, the application of the halal concept has grown quite rapidly, covering not only food and beverages, but also medicine, clothing, cosmetics, and others with the aim of attracting both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. The growth of the halal industry began with the arrival of Muslim immigrants in the 1980s, driven by the need to improve international competitiveness and respond to the growing global Muslim population. In particular, the tourism industry is adjusting to welcome Muslim tourists, while on the other hand, Japanese companies are also aiming their halal products at the global market

Since before 2012, efforts have been made to provide halal menu options at universities and an intensive halal tourism promotion strategy ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The implementation of the halal strategy involves the establishment of halal certification bodies and wider offering of products and services, including fashion, cosmetics, and medical services. Although faced with challenges such as the high cost of certification and dependence on Muslim tourists, Japan's halal industry continues to grow with innovation and international cooperation (Erni & Roosiani 2021).

Osaka, Japan, which is the capital of a large special province second only to Tokyo, plays a key role as the economic center of the Kansai region. According to City Population (City Population 2020), Osaka Prefecture has a population of around 8.8 million, and is socially diverse with an increasing number of foreign residents. In terms of halal food provision, Osaka has been innovating in supporting the Muslim community. The city offers 29 halal product stores in 19 districts, as well as supermarkets and stores such as Don Quijote and Laox that provide halal-certified products and prayer facilities.

Halal restaurants, particularly in Kita-ku and Chuo-ku areas, serve halal meat and menus free of alcohol or pork, with some certified halal and others offer vegetarian options or separate kitchen practices to avoid contamination. Osaka's efforts to become a Muslim-friendly destination showcase the city's commitment to inclusivity and diversity in developing its economy and culture. This initiative not only supports the needs of the local Muslim community but also aims to attract more Muslim visitors

**Indonesian Muslims' Halal Product Consumption Practices**

The post-Covid-19 population of foreigners living in Osaka from 149 countries is about 5.1% of the total, comprising a diverse range of nationalities with Korea, China, and Vietnam as the top

three. The 3,580 Indonesians living in Osaka are a small community among the 169,000 foreign residents in Osaka (Osaka City 2023).

Amidst the city's economic density and social diversity, the Muslim community is trying to fulfill their consumption needs, while maintaining their adherence to Islamic rules, from food and beverages to other daily necessities. Although the number of shops and restaurants providing halal products is increasing, some challenges such as distance, higher price, and availability and clarity of information about halal products are still relatively a barrier. The results of a survey on how Indonesian Muslims in Osaka consume halal products to 31 respondents are shown below.

**Survey of Indonesian Muslims' *Halal* Product Consumption Practices in Osaka Japan**

| No. | Category | Percentage | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Consumer Activities in Osaka | 89.30% | Shopping, cooking, preparing your own food |
| | | 10.70% | Using food delivery services |
| 2. | Reasons for shopping, cooking and preparing meals by yourself | 75% | Save money and get to choose the menu |
| | | 17.90% | Easier and more time efficient |
| | | 7.10% | Can choose the halal label |
| 3. | Consumption Expenses per Month | 39.30% | Less than or equal to IDR 37,000 |
| | | 32.10% | Rp37,000 to Rp45,000 |
| | | 14.30% | IDR46,000 to IDR57,000 |
| | | 14.30% | More than Rp58,000 |
| 4. | Methods of Obtaining Halal Products | 25% | Buy it at a recommended place |
| | | 17,9% | Search using apps or the internet |
| | | 17,9% | Searching at convenience stores and restaurants |
| | | 17,9% | Buying at Asian supermarkets |
| | | 21,3% | Order with a delivery service, look at the back of the package, search at *gyomu* supermarkets and halal stores, |
| 5. | How to Ensure Halal Products | 60.70% | Pay attention to halal labelling and ingredients |
| | | 32.10% | Seeing ingredients used without halal labelling |
| 6. | Reasons to Eat Halal Products | 92.90% | Obligation of every Muslim |
| | | 3,55% | Fear of sin if consuming haram |
| | | 3,55% | Family and other people's orders |
| 7. | Source country of Halal Products Consumed | 60,7% | Indonesia. |
| | | 10% | Thailand |
| | | 10,7% | Brazil |
| | | 10,7% | Malaysia |
| | | 7,9% | Turkey, Japan, others |
| 8. | Perception of Halal Product Excellence | 10.70% | Healthier and better tasting |

| No. | Category | Percentage | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 85.70% | In accordance with the belief |
| | | | Hygienic materials used |
| 9. | Difficulty Getting Halal Products | 60.70% | Yes |
| | | 39.30% | No |
| 10. | Reasons for Difficulty Obtaining Products Halal | 42.90% | Market/shop distance is far |
| | | 19% | Don't know where to sell |
| | | 23.80% | Not sure if it's halal |
| | | 9.50% | More expensive price |
| | | 4.80% | Never trouble |
| 11. | Prioritization of Halal Label vs Quality Products | 89.30% | Halal label is more important |
| | | 10.70% | Product quality is more important |

Source: the results of the researcher's questionnaire recap

The consumption practice of halal products by Indonesian Muslims in Osaka, Japan shows how Indonesian Muslims try to fulfill their consumption needs in accordance with Islamic law. This can be seen from the majority of respondents (89.30%) who prioritize shopping, cooking, and preparing their own food as the main ways to meet their consumption needs while living in Osaka. This can be interpreted as a strong desire to ensure that what they consume is halal and in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Meanwhile, only 10.70% chose to use food delivery services, indicating that there are alternatives to carry out consumption activities which require additional efforts to ensure the halalness of the product. In terms of ensuring that the products consumed are halal, 60.70% of respondents rely on the halal label as the main reference. While the remaining 32.10% have to spend time and energy to check the ingredients used if the product does not have a halal label. This shows that the majority of respondents apply caution in choosing products.

The main reason for consuming halal products is very significant, with 92.90% of respondents considering it an obligation of every Muslim. This proves how important the religious aspect is in influencing daily life activities. Meanwhile, the rest due to fear of sin and orders from family are the reasons for 3.55% of respondents. These results are in line with the perception of the superiority of halal products over non-halal products. 85.70% of respondents think that halal products are superior because they fulfill religious beliefs, and only 10.70% believe that halal products are superior because they are healthier and taste good. This shows that the reasons for health and deliciousness are much smaller portions than the belief factor.

This is corroborated when talking about which is prioritized between the halal label and product quality. Most of the 89.30% placed the halal label as a more important aspect than product quality. Reaffirming that compliance with Islamic law is the dominant factor in consumption decision making, far above product quality considerations which are only a priority for 10.70% of respondents.

The survey results above illustrate how important compliance with Islamic law is in the consumption of halal products in the eyes of Indonesian Muslim respondents living in Osaka, Japan. Even when most of the respondents, 60.70%, find it difficult to find halal products, it does

not stop them from trying to find halal products. They work around this by purchasing from recommended places, searching through the internet, or even ordering from a delivery service. This shows a strong willingness to find solutions to overcome limited access to halal products.

Meanwhile, the source country of halal products consumed by the majority is from Indonesia (60.7%), indicating that even though they are equally Muslim, products from the country of origin are considered more trusted for their halalness and can also reflect emotional and cultural ties when choosing halal products abroad.

**Consumption Practices of Halal Products of Indonesian Muslims from the Perspective of the Phenomenology of Religion**

The Islamic law that requires Muslims to consume halal food appears to be practiced predominantly by Indonesian Muslim respondents in Osaka through the questionnaire. However, when referring to the results of structured interviews with eight informants, it turns out that compliance with Islamic law in the form of consuming halal food, drinks or products is not uniform. The intensity varies from one informant to another. Based on the results of the author's interpretation of the interview results, informant compliance can be sorted into two major parts, namely high and moderate compliance. Incidentally, there are no nuances of compliance that have low intensity. The informants with high compliance are Eng, Sar, Riz, Far, and Aff, and the moderate ones are Dan, Alt, and Fik.

Informants with high compliance can be detected from the various practices and habits they carry out in their daily food and beverage consumption activities. Some key factors that can be used as a reference are when they proactively search for information on various halal foods or products and at the same time try to avoid dubious ingredients or products.

Informant Eng (male), for example, showed high compliance through his efforts in seeking information about halal food and beverages and products even long before arriving and living in Osaka. He realized that Japan is not Indonesia and predicted that it would be difficult to find halal food and drinks compared to Indonesia. Through the information he gathered through the internet and the community of Indonesians in Osaka, he was finally able to choose a cafeteria that clearly provides halal food, a shop selling halal raw chicken imported from Brazil. Incidentally, the cafeteria at a large university like Osaka University has provided halal menu options as well. If he still has doubts about the halalness of the products sold there, he will choose seafood such as fish and the like. Moreover, the price of fish in Japan is cheap and easily found in supermarkets.

Whenever we go to a restaurant or shop, informant Eng always chooses a restaurant that clearly serves halal food, such as an Indian or Indonesian restaurant. If you go to a Japanese restaurant, you will choose a restaurant with a sushi (vinegared rice with side dish toppings) or tempura menu without meat or chicken. Regarding the price of food ingredients, he will still choose halal products even though they are more expensive than dubious or non-halal ingredients. This is the case, for example, in Japanese supermarkets where chicken or beef is commonly sold. Although chicken and beef are not haram ingredients in Islam and the price is more expensive than halal meat, informant Eng still chooses to buy the halal ones.

Similarly, informant Sar (female) is committed through awareness and active efforts in ensuring the halalness of products. She is even willing to bring her own *soyu* (soy sauce) when eating at a sushi restaurant. Just like informant Eng, she also utilizes halal apps to check the halal status of

products. Confirming halal seems simple, but this is not always the case. Individuals have to spend time and concentration to open a link on the halal list of products on the internet and then match the product with the one listed on the internet. If the product appears, it will say whether it is halal or not. If the product does not appear, then the product will be considered in a questionable position. There is patience, time, emotion and energy to be spent here. Therefore, she is a Muslim who tends to choose to cook herself rather than eating or buying ready-made food products outside in order to ensure the halalness of her intake.

The phenomenological approach provides a unique perspective in understanding the experiences of individuals such as informant Eng and Sar who interpret halal food consumption as an integral part of their religious practice. Through the lens of phenomenology, halal consumption is not only seen as a sharia obligation, but also as an expression of devotion to God. In this case, proactive actions such as seeking information halal food or bringing their own soy sauce reflect an effort to comply with something they believe in, and worry or fear if they cannot fulfill it. Even though no one else will criticize or even care if the individual does not do it. This proves the existence of awareness or motivation that is not only intellectual, but also involves the emotional and spiritual side, because it is done in a challenging temporal situation, namely in a non-Muslim majority country like Japan.

Their experience also shows how religious activity becomes a multisensory experience that was previously not practiced in Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia. Ensuring the halalness of food involves not only the senses of sight and taste, but also emotional and cognitive drain. Processes such as matching halal products on an app, choosing seafood, or avoiding certain restaurants illustrate the concrete effort to exert body and soul to adhere to what one believes. In terms of phenomenology, this is a real life experience, and unique because it is not necessarily done or experienced by other individuals, who are sometimes not accustomed to reading, researching, examining something complicated to just eat, and this goes beyond mere compliance with formal rules.

Moreover, the varying intensity of compliance among informants is not seen as an aberration, but as a reflection of the different life circumstances and temporal experiences of each individual. Informant Eng and Sar, for example, show a high level of compliance through their active efforts in keeping their consumption halal. This proves that the challenge of ensuring halalness actually strengthens their religious identity. The situational factors in Japan, as shown by informant Eng and Sar, triggered the birth of a way to practice their halal consumption

Similar but slightly different to informant Eng and Sar, informants Riz, Aff, and Far also show high compliance through their efforts in ensuring the consumption of halal products. In addition to ensuring the halalness of the product through the halal label, informant Riz is willing to take the time to ensure the halalness of the product by calling the company that produces the food. In Japan, there is always a phone number for complaints on every food package, and the company will always take the call seriously. Several times informant Riz called the company just to confirm the halalness of the product, for example asking if the product contained shortening (fat), and if so, it was made from vegetable or animal sources. Once it is confirmed, he then spreads the information through social media about the halalness of the food so that other Muslims can enjoy it without hesitation. Thus, Riz is an informant who has seriousness in applying halal principles in everyday life.

Informants Aff (female) and Far (female) have similar awareness, for example, they always try to

buy meat directly from providers/stores that provide halal meat and use special applications to verify the halalness of the product. Informant Aff does this even though the shop or store is far from where she lives. She also has a cautious attitude towards products with *syubhat* (unclear halal) content and chooses to eat at restaurants that provide halal menus. Informant Far is a bit unique, although he still relies on halal products, he compares them with Japanese products. Japanese products for beef are of high quality on average. If he finds beef produced in Japan that is halal even at a high price, he will choose it. There is also a consideration of taste in this case

From the perspective of the phenomenology of religion, actions such as calling producers to ensure the halalness of food, as done by informant Riz, reflect a form of adherence to a belief that is carried out with full awareness and thoroughness. The act of sharing halal information on social media also expands the meaning of worship from the personal to the collective. It shows how individuals not only maintain religious compliance for themselves, but also support others in their community to do the same

For informants Aff and Far, the use of halal apps and long trips to halal stores reflect their engagement on a broader level, both intellectually and multisensorially. The phenomenology of religion looks at how each step in this process, from verifying information to selecting products in the store, necessarily involves concentration, time, and physical energy in order to maintain compliance with halal principles. In the case of informant Far, considerations of quality and taste also show how spiritual values are integrated and negotiated with personal preferences in everyday life. The solidarity built through sharing halal information shows that religious practices can create a network of support that strengthens relationships between individuals in the Muslim community, which is not necessarily the case in their home country of Indonesia. Compliance with halal requirements has created a kind of social solidarity.

Regarding informants with another category, namely the moderate level, the practice of consumption of halal products has a more varied spectrum, namely moderate towards high and low to low. This is influenced by various factors such as flexibility in consumption, dependence on halal applications and labels, certain priorities and conditions, understanding of what is halal and haram, and the dynamics of social interaction. There are three informants who can be classified into this category, namely Alt, Fik, and Dan.

At the moderate to strong level, there are informants Alt (male) and Fik who are trying to face limitations in the choice of halal products, but still trying to choose halal options. It's just that for these two informants who come from an environment with limited availability of halal products, they are not too concerned about the ingredients of a processed food product. For example, snacks, bread, or ice cream produced in Japan generally contain ingredients or elements such as gelatin, shortening, margarine, and the like. These ingredients are either animal or plant-based. If they are animal-based, they may be considered haram because they could be taken from pigs, but if they are plant-based, they may be considered halal. Informant Alt doesn't bother too much about these ingredients. He just relies on *scanning the barcode* and being told by the seller whether it is halal or haram. The question is whether we can be sure that every Japanese seller understands the halalness of the products. There seems to be a looser, simpler, and more flexible practice of following religious rules.

Finally, informant Dan (male) also shows flexibility in consuming halal products or towards moderation that is not too strong. For example, he consumes Japanese-produced beef even without a halal certificate because of his passion for the meat. He considers that cattle are halal

regardless of the way they are slaughtered. He starts from the assumption that the important thing is that the beef is halal and not prohibited in Islam. He does not seriously think that the way of slaughtering also determines whether livestock or poultry are halal or not. The important thing is that it is not pork

He is also less strict about the ingredients of a product, such as those containing animal gelatin. Gelatin is an animal protein commonly extracted from cattle or pigs for the manufacture of processed foods such as bread or ice cream. Gelatin is a kind of supporting element in a food and not the main ingredient. But even if it is just an element, if it is not halal and contained in food, then the food can also be considered non-halal. In Islam, it is not explained how much non-halal content is allowed, so it will be considered as small as long as it is not halal, it will make the large content not halal either. Related to this, this informant took a more flexible step. There is a kind of negotiation and adaptation to the situation where the informant may be lazy or not have time to make sure, check and so on.

Through the lens of phenomenology of religion, the practice of halal consumption by moderate informants such as Alt, Fik, and Dan reflects the unique dynamics between religious understanding, adaptation to limitations, and interaction with the socio-cultural context. In informants Alt and Fik, there is an awareness to maintain halal principles even in situations full of limitations. Actions such as relying on halal applications or information from sellers to verify the halalness of products reflect a practical and functional form of compliance. From a phenomenological perspective, this shows how religion is integrated into life in a more flexible way, where religious principles are still obeyed and carried out, but with simpler adaptations. This practice reveals that halalness is not solely understood as a religious doctrine, but also as a response that takes into account situations of limited access and information in a non-Muslim country like Japan.

On the other hand, informant Dan shows a higher level of flexibility in understanding the concept of halal. The choice to consume beef without a halal certificate or processed products containing gelatin reflects a creative personal interpretation of religious law. In phenomenology, this can be interpreted as a process of negotiation between religious values and social reality, where time constraints, access and practical needs become factors that influence the level of compliance. This practice highlights how individuals try to maintain their religious identity while still adapting to the realities of the surrounding environment.

Furthermore, this flexibility in practice suggests a deeper dimension of experience, namely how religion functions as a fluid and adaptive guide in daily life. In the case of informant Dan, the assumption that beef is halal even if the method of slaughter is unknown reflects a looser understanding of sharia principles. The phenomenology of religion sees this as not only a matter of practicality, but also reflects a spiritual experience connected to the individual's perception of what is important in their religious practice. For informant Dan, for example, avoiding pork is a top priority, or one can get the impression that as long as it is not pork, such as chicken or beef, the halalness of the slaughtering method can be ignored.

In the context of moderate informants, the phenomenology of religion reveals that religious practice is not something rigid, but a dynamic process that is continuously negotiated between beliefs, values, and environmental conditions. The flexibility shown by informants Alt, Fik, and Dan reflects an attempt to bridge the gap between idealized religious rules and practical realities in a non-Muslim environment. Their experiences show that halal is not only about literal

compliance, but also about how religious principles are applied in complex and challenging conditions, taking into account time constraints, access, and social needs. Through the lens of the phenomenology of religion, the halal consumption practices of these moderate informants reflect a deep meaning: religion is not just about rules, but also about adaptation, negotiation, and how spiritual values are applied in everyday life. Phenomenology provides insight that each individual has a unique way of living their religion, by combining religious principles and practical reality, creating rich, unique and personalized religious meanings.

## CONCLUSION

Through the lens of the phenomenology of religion, the practice of halal consumption by Indonesian Muslims in Osaka, Japan, reveals a complex religious dimension, where halal consumption is not just compliance with religious rules, but also gives birth to a subjective experience full of spiritual, emotional, and reflective awareness, which is not necessarily experienced by those in Muslim-majority home regions such as Indonesia.

This practice also shows how religion is a fluid and adaptive guideline, where religious principles are integrated into daily life in a way that suits their social context. The multisensory experience involving emotions, time and physical effort reflects that adherence to halal is not only ritualized, but also an expression of identity and survival in a predominantly non-Muslim environment.

The phenomenology of religion has opened the insight that the practice of halal consumption by Indonesian Muslims in Osaka reflects a unique dynamic between beliefs, adaptations, and social interactions. Religion is present not only as a formal rule, but also as a reference for life but continues to be negotiated and reinterpreted according to the challenges and realities faced. This proves that religious practices are dynamic and able to create rich meanings in everyday life, especially in minority contexts.

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