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Comparative Policy Analysis of Halal Food Industry Governance in Malaysia and Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Halal food governance increasingly combines religious compliance with consumer protection, food-safety assurance, supply-chain integrity, and industrial competitiveness. Malaysia and Indonesia are major Southeast Asian halal markets, yet they organize certification and industrial development through different policy architectures. This study compares the halal food policy frameworks of the two countries across five dimensions: legal basis, institutional arrangement, certification mechanism, industrial support, and market orientation. A qualitative comparative-policy design was used. The analysis drew on legislation, official certification manuals, strategic policy documents, government information, and peer-reviewed literature, which were coded thematically and compared across the five dimensions. The comparison shows that Malaysia has developed a relatively consolidated certification and industrial-promotion model centered on JAKIM and supported by the Halal Industry Master Plan 2030, with strong emphasis on international reputation and market access. Indonesia has moved toward a state-led mandatory assurance system under BPJPH, supported by regulatory restructuring and facilitation mechanisms for micro and small enterprises. The two models therefore differ less in the objective of halal assurance than in the way regulatory authority, industrial policy, and business inclusion are organized. Strengthening cross-border recognition, digital traceability, institutional coordination, and proportionate support for small enterprises would improve the credibility and competitiveness of both systems.

IMPACT STATEMENT

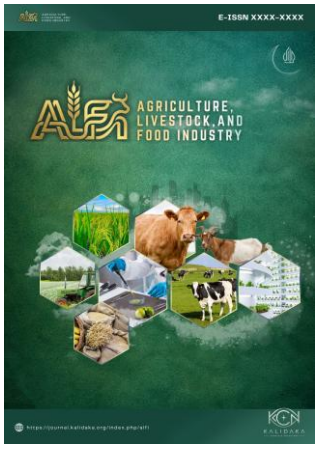
This comparative analysis shows that halal certification operates differently when embedded in distinct governance architectures. Malaysia combines certification credibility with industrial promotion and international market positioning, whereas Indonesia combines mandatory product assurance with large-scale domestic compliance and inclusion challenges. The comparison identifies practical priorities for both systems: clearer institutional coordination, proportionate support for micro and small enterprises, interoperable digital traceability, supply-chain assurance, and reciprocal recognition. These findings can support regulators, certification bodies, and food-industry stakeholders seeking to strengthen consumer protection while maintaining business accessibility and international competitiveness.

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1. Introduction

Halal food governance has expanded beyond the narrow question of whether a product is religiously permissible. In modern food systems, halal assurance is intertwined with ingredient verification, production controls, hygiene, traceability, logistics, labeling, and consumer confidence [1]–[6]. From a supply-chain perspective, halal integrity must be protected across sourcing, processing, storage, transport, and distribution rather than at the point of final certification alone [2]–[6]. This makes halal certification simultaneously a religious assurance mechanism, a credence-quality signal, and, in many markets, an instrument that influences market access and product differentiation [1], [4], [5].

Malaysia and Indonesia provide a useful comparison because both treat halal as a strategic public-policy issue but have built different institutional architectures. Malaysia's system combines JAKIM-led certification, formal certification procedures, and an industrial development agenda represented by the Halal Industry Master Plan 2030 and the New Industrial Master Plan 2030 [7], [8], [18]–[20]. Indonesia's framework is anchored in Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance and was recently consolidated through Government Regulation No. 42 of 2024 and Presidential Regulation No. 153 of 2024, which strengthened the implementation framework and BPJPH's institutional position [9]–[11], [21]–[23].

Indonesia also faces a distinctive implementation challenge because mandatory assurance must accommodate a large and heterogeneous base of micro and small food businesses. Administrative capability, ingredient documentation, understanding of certification requirements, and the cost of compliance can determine whether formal rules are practically accessible [12]–[14], [24]. Malaysia faces its own challenge of maintaining audit consistency, certification reputation, and supply-chain integrity as halal certification becomes increasingly connected to international trade and industrial promotion [5], [7], [26].

Existing scholarship has examined halal certification law, supply-chain integrity, certification barriers, digitalization, and governance in individual countries [9], [12], [15]–[17]. Comparative studies likewise show that Southeast Asian halal systems differ in the location of religious authority, the role of the state, and certification procedures [25], [27]–[29]. However, much of this literature either predates Indonesia's 2024 regulatory restructuring or treats certification, industrial strategy, and small-business inclusion as separate issues. A current comparison is therefore needed to explain how legal authority, certification governance, industrial policy, and market orientation interact within the two national systems.

Accordingly, this study asks how Malaysia and Indonesia differ in the design of halal food policy and what those differences imply for regulatory credibility, business accessibility, and industrial competitiveness. The comparison uses five analytical dimensions: legal and regulatory basis, institutional arrangement, certification mechanism, industrial and small-business support, and market orientation. Its contribution is to connect these dimensions with supply-chain integrity, digital traceability, and cross-border recognition, thereby treating halal policy as an ecosystem of regulation, assurance, and industrial development rather than as a stand-alone certification procedure.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Halal certification as a governance and assurance mechanism

Halal certification operates as a governance mechanism for a credence attribute that consumers cannot fully verify through ordinary inspection. Its credibility therefore depends on rules that connect religious requirements with ingredient control, production procedures, hygiene, documentation, logistics, labeling, and post-certification supervision. Research on Malaysia's halal food control system emphasizes the role of coordinated governmental control, while halal supply-chain scholarship argues that integrity must be protected across the full chain rather than only at the point of final production [1], [2], [4]. This perspective shifts halal from a product label to an assurance system whose effectiveness depends on institutional reliability and traceable processes.

The governance literature also shows that certification systems combine legal authority, religious legitimacy, technical inspection, and administrative service. In Indonesia, the transition from the earlier MUI-centered arrangement toward the BPJPH framework has altered the allocation of certification functions and increased the role of the state in product assurance [9], [10], [11]. Comparative scholarship confirms that differences in state-religion relations and institutional mandates shape how halal rules are translated into certification practice [25], [27], [28]. For policy analysis, the relevant question is therefore not only whether certification exists, but how authority, responsibility, and accountability are distributed across the governance system.

2.2. Institutional evolution in Malaysia and Indonesia

Malaysia has developed a government-led halal ecosystem in which JAKIM serves as a central reference for certification and standardization, state Islamic authorities participate in implementation, and industrial-development institutions connect halal assurance with investment, market development, and international positioning. Recent studies describe this model as an ecosystem in which certification credibility and industrial policy reinforce one another [7], [8]. The Halal Industry Master Plan 2030, the New Industrial Master Plan 2030, and the Malaysia Halal Certification Procedure Manual provide the strategic and procedural foundations for this approach [18], [19], [20]. At the same time, studies of Malaysian certification authorities identify operational pressures related to staffing, procedural complexity, consistency, and maintaining confidence in certification outcomes [5], [26].

Indonesia has followed a different institutional trajectory. Law No. 33 of 2014 established halal product assurance as a statutory framework, while subsequent regulations strengthened BPJPH's institutional position and implementation mandate [21], [22], [23]. This architecture combines state administration with religious

determination and technical inspection, creating a multi-actor model that requires sustained coordination. The system also incorporates facilitation mechanisms for micro and small enterprises, including self-declaration for eligible products, alongside the broader transition toward mandatory certification [13], [14], [24]. Studies of regulatory transformation and digital certification in Indonesia show that administrative simplification, service integration, and public understanding remain central implementation concerns [12], [42].

2.3. Halal supply-chain integrity, traceability, and digitalization

Halal integrity is vulnerable to failures that occur beyond the certification application itself. Ingredient substitution, supplier changes, cross-contamination, storage conditions, transport, and documentation gaps can affect product status throughout the supply chain. The foundational halal supply-chain literature therefore treats segregation, coordination, traceability, and risk control as core requirements [2], [3], [4], [30], [31]. Sustainability-oriented studies extend this reasoning by linking halal assurance with organizational capability, resilience, and responsible supply-chain management [32], [33].

Digital technologies can strengthen verification when they improve the continuity and accessibility of information. Reviews of digital technology in halal supply chains identify applications in traceability, monitoring, data exchange, and transparency [6]. Blockchain-based systems have been proposed for end-to-end traceability in the Indonesian halal ecosystem, while recent work on traceability acceptance and QR-enabled information transmission highlights the importance of usability, data quality, and consumer-facing verification [34], [35], [36]. Digitalization should therefore be understood as an enabling governance infrastructure, not as a substitute for auditing, institutional accountability, or business capability.

2.4. Micro and small enterprises, competitiveness, and cross-border recognition

The inclusion of micro and small enterprises is a central policy issue because certification can simultaneously create market value and impose compliance costs. Indonesian studies of self-declaration show the potential of simplified certification to widen access, but they also identify the need for clear eligibility, supervision, and accountability [13], [14]. Business willingness to certify is influenced by knowledge, perceived benefits, and the practical burden of compliance [44]. A proportionate policy approach therefore needs to distinguish between simplification that removes unnecessary administrative barriers and simplification that could weaken assurance for higher-risk products or processes.

At the industry level, halal certification also functions as a market-access and reputational instrument. Malaysia's policy literature emphasizes global positioning and ecosystem development [7], [18], [19], whereas Indonesian policy has increasingly connected domestic product assurance with international cooperation and the recognition of foreign certification arrangements [38]. Research on global recognition and international halal markets further shows that interoperability and credible recognition can reduce repeated verification while preserving confidence in halal integrity [39], [40]. These issues are particularly relevant to Malaysia and Indonesia because both seek stronger roles in regional and global halal trade.

2.5. Comparative analytical gap

The literature is now substantial, but it remains organized around partially separate themes. Reviews and bibliometric studies show strong clusters in certification, halal supply-chain management, sustainability, and technology [15], [16], [17]. Direct comparisons of Malaysia and Indonesia are also available, but they tend to emphasize certification procedure, state-religion relations, or specific shared obligations [25], [28], [29]. Less attention has been given to a structured comparison that treats regulatory orientation, institutional configuration, certification accessibility, industrial support, supply-chain assurance, and external market orientation as connected components of halal food governance. This study addresses that gap by applying the same analytical dimensions to both countries and by interpreting certification as part of a wider food-industry governance system.

3. Methods

3.1. Research design

This study adopts a qualitative comparative policy-analysis design to examine how Malaysia and Indonesia organize halal food governance. The design is appropriate because the research problem concerns institutional architecture, regulatory instruments, certification procedures, and policy orientation rather than the measurement of a single outcome variable. The comparison follows a structured and focused logic: the same analytical questions are applied to both national cases so that similarities and differences can be assessed on equivalent dimensions. The analysis is interpretive and document-based; it does not estimate causal effects or evaluate certification performance through primary field data.

3.2. Units of analysis and comparative scope

The units of analysis are the national halal food governance systems of Malaysia and Indonesia. The scope covers six connected elements: the legal basis of halal assurance; the allocation of institutional authority; certification and verification procedures; support and accessibility for food businesses, particularly micro and small enterprises; supply-chain assurance and digital traceability; and the relationship between certification, industrial development, and external market recognition. The study focuses on food-industry governance and does not attempt to compare all halal sectors such as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, tourism, or Islamic finance except where the literature provides relevant institutional context.

3.3. Data sources and document selection

Primary evidence was drawn from official legal, regulatory, procedural, and strategic documents issued by the relevant authorities in both countries. For Indonesia, the core policy sources include Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal

Product Assurance, Government Regulation No. 42 of 2024, Presidential Regulation No. 153 of 2024, and official BPJPH information concerning implementation and certification obligations [21], [22], [23], [24]. For Malaysia, the core sources include the Halal Industry Master Plan 2030, the New Industrial Master Plan 2030, and the Malaysia Halal Certification Procedure Manual 2020 [18], [19], [20]. These documents were used to establish formal policy provisions, institutional responsibilities, and certification requirements.

Peer-reviewed literature was used as secondary evidence to interpret implementation challenges, governance arrangements, supply-chain integrity, digitalization, micro-enterprise participation, and international recognition. Sources were selected purposively when they directly addressed one or more analytical dimensions and provided traceable publication information. Greater evidentiary weight was given to official primary documents for claims about binding rules and institutional mandates, while peer-reviewed studies were used to contextualize policy operation, compare institutional models, and identify practical tensions. Opinion pieces, duplicate summaries, and sources that did not materially support the comparative questions were not used as the basis for policy claims.

3.4. Analytical dimensions and coding framework

The document analysis used five principal coding categories that were retained consistently across both cases. Legal basis captured the statutory and regulatory foundations of halal assurance. Institutional arrangement identified the authorities responsible for administration, religious determination, inspection, supervision, and industrial development. Certification mechanism covered application routes, audit or inspection requirements, self-declaration or simplified pathways, documentation, and post-certification control. Industrial and micro-enterprise support captured facilitation, digital services, capacity building, and policy measures intended to improve business participation. Market orientation covered domestic consumer protection, industrial competitiveness, export strategy, and cross-border recognition. Supply-chain traceability was treated as a cross-cutting theme because it intersects with certification, institutional accountability, and market credibility.

3.5. Data analysis procedure

Analysis proceeded in four stages. First, each policy and scholarly source was read for passages relevant to the predefined analytical categories. Second, evidence was summarized within each country to construct a within-case account of regulatory orientation, institutional roles, certification procedures, business support, and market strategy. Third, the two within-case accounts were compared through a cross-case matrix to identify convergences, differences, and implementation tensions. Fourth, the comparative patterns were synthesized into policy implications concerning regulatory credibility, accessibility for smaller firms, supply-chain integrity, digitalization, industrial competitiveness, and regional recognition. The tables in the Results and Discussion section present this cross-case synthesis rather than new quantitative data.

3.6. Credibility and trustworthiness

Credibility was strengthened through source hierarchy, triangulation, and claim-source matching. Formal legal provisions were checked against official government documents, procedural claims were linked to certification manuals or institutional information, and interpretive claims were compared with peer-reviewed research. Evidence that qualified or complicated the dominant interpretation was retained, particularly regarding certification burdens, institutional coordination, digital capability, and self-declaration. The analysis also distinguishes formal policy design from implementation outcomes so that the presence of a regulation or program is not treated as proof of effectiveness in practice.

3.7. Methodological boundaries

The study examines policy design and institutional architecture through documentary evidence. It does not include interviews, surveys, direct observation, audit records, or business-level outcome data. Consequently, the findings support conclusions about how the two governance systems are structured and what policy tensions are visible in the documentary record, but they do not establish the comparative effectiveness, cost, speed, or user experience of certification in practice. These boundaries are considered again in the limitations subsection when interpreting the policy implications.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1. Comparative results

The comparison shows that Malaysia and Indonesia both use halal certification as an instrument of public assurance, but they embed it in different policy logics. Malaysia connects certification to a long-standing industrial and internationalization agenda. HIMP 2030 frames Halal Malaysia around global visibility and industry development, while NIMP 2030 places halal within a broader strategy for industrial competitiveness [7], [18], [19]. This creates a model in which certification credibility, industrial promotion, investment, and export positioning are designed to reinforce one another.

Indonesia's policy architecture places stronger emphasis on statutory product assurance. Law No. 33 of 2014 established halal product assurance as a legal framework, Government Regulation No. 42 of 2024 updated its implementation, and Presidential Regulation No. 153 of 2024 strengthened BPJPH as the state institution responsible for halal product assurance [21]–[23], [42]. The resulting model is more explicitly state-led, linking certification to consumer protection and the progressive expansion of mandatory compliance.

Institutionally, Malaysia presents a comparatively consolidated arrangement centered on JAKIM and state Islamic authorities, with HDC supporting industry development [8], [20], [26]. Indonesia distributes functions among BPJPH, Halal Inspection Bodies (LPH), the Indonesian Ulema Council in halal determination, and supporting actors involved in facilitation and assistance [9], [14], [23], [25]. Functional specialization can broaden capacity, but it also increases the importance of coordination, interoperable information, and consistent service standards.

Certification procedures reflect these institutional differences. Malaysia's MPPHM 2020 sets requirements for ingredients, premises, processing, storage, personnel, sanitation, documentation, and halal management [20], [26]. Indonesia combines regular certification with a self-declaration route for eligible micro and small enterprises, intended to widen access while preserving proportionate controls [13], [14], [24]. The staged implementation of mandatory certification illustrates the need to align legal obligations with certification capacity and business readiness.

Micro and small enterprises are therefore a particularly important policy concern in Indonesia. Their administrative capacity, ingredient documentation, and ability to absorb compliance costs can differ markedly from those of larger firms [13], [14], [24], [44]. Malaysia also faces business-inclusion questions, but its policy system has been oriented earlier toward industrial standardization and international market positioning [5], [7], [26]. The main differences are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Halal Food Industry Policies in Malaysia and Indonesia

Aspect	Malaysia	Indonesia
Policy orientation	Industrial development, certification reputation, and export positioning	Product assurance, consumer protection, and expansion of mandatory compliance
Main regulatory framework	Trade Descriptions Act 2011, halal-related orders, MPPHM 2020, and supporting Malaysian Standards	Law No. 33/2014, Government Regulation No. 42/2024, Presidential Regulation No. 153/2024, and BPJPH technical provisions
Main authority	JAKIM with MAIN/JAIN, supported by HDC for industrial development	BPJPH, MUI, LPH, PPH assistants, and relevant ministries/institutions
Certification	MYeHALAL application, document review, audit, certification decision, and monitoring	Regular certification and self-declaration for eligible MSEs through the BPJPH system
Industry support	HIMP 2030 and NIMP 2030 support halal hubs, investment, internationalization, and innovation	MSE certification facilitation, halal-ecosystem strengthening, service digitalization, and phased implementation
Main challenges	Maintaining audit consistency, global reputation, supply-chain integrity, and international recognition	Scale of implementation, compliance costs, halal literacy, inspection capacity, and inter-institutional coordination

4.2. Discussion

The central finding is that Malaysia and Indonesia do not represent competing versions of the same policy model; they represent different ways of combining religious assurance, state authority, and industrial strategy. Malaysia's strength lies in the continuity between certification governance and industry internationalization, whereas Indonesia's recent reforms create a broad statutory platform for domestic assurance [7]–[11], [28], [29]. Policy learning should therefore focus on institutional functions—credibility, accessibility, traceability, and recognition—rather than copying an entire national arrangement.

Institutional design matters because certification is a sequence of administrative, technical, and religious decisions. A more concentrated structure can simplify coordination but may place heavy operational demands on the central authority; a distributed structure can create specialization but requires interoperable information and consistent service standards [25], [26], [30]. For Indonesia, the governance question is how effectively BPJPH, LPH, MUI, and assisting actors exchange information and maintain consistent decisions. For Malaysia, the continuing challenge is preserving audit quality and confidence as the system supports an expanding international network.

The regulatory comparison also reveals two routes to legal certainty. Malaysia emphasizes control over recognized halal certification and claims, while Indonesia combines product assurance with phased mandatory certification [20]–[23], [27], [42]. Neither route is self-executing. Legal certainty depends on whether businesses can understand requirements, obtain services through workable administrative pathways, and maintain compliance when ingredients, suppliers, or production processes change.

For food businesses, procedural clarity is therefore as important as the legal rule itself. Certification systems need transparent requirements for ingredients, process changes, certificate validity, supplier documentation, and post-certification responsibilities. Studies of certification barriers and digitalization show that complexity, information gaps, and limited administrative capacity can reduce participation, especially among smaller firms [12]–[14], [26], [44]. A proportionate approach is necessary: simplification should reduce unnecessary administrative burden without weakening controls over products with more complex or higher-risk ingredients.

Halal integrity is also inseparable from supply-chain governance. Cross-contamination, ingredient substitution, supplier changes, and weak documentation can arise outside the final manufacturing site. Halal supply-chain research consequently emphasizes segregation, traceability, risk management, coordination, and

information continuity from sourcing to distribution [2]–[4], [30]–[33]. This shifts policy attention from one-time certificate issuance toward continuous assurance across the product life cycle.

Digitalization can support that shift, but online registration alone is insufficient. Effective systems should enable certificate verification, ingredient and supplier records, audit histories, status monitoring, and information exchange among responsible institutions. Blockchain-based traceability, QR-enabled information transmission, and other digital technologies can improve visibility and verification, although their usefulness depends on data quality, interoperability, and usability for small firms [6], [34]–[36]. Digital reform should therefore be assessed by the reliability of information and the reduction of verification friction, not simply by the existence of an online portal.

Food innovation adds another layer of complexity. Enzymes, microbial cultures, functional ingredients, alternative proteins, fermentation-derived inputs, and other process innovations can make source verification more technically demanding [37]. Halal governance therefore requires collaboration between religious authorities, food scientists, laboratories, auditors, and industry. This is especially important when product innovation develops faster than certification guidance or when imported ingredients pass through multiple suppliers.

The treatment of micro and small enterprises reveals a broader question of policy proportionality and economic inclusion. Simplified routes can lower entry barriers, but they should be matched to product and process risk rather than applied indiscriminately [13], [14], [24], [44]. Assistance has greater long-term value when it builds capability in ingredient control, documentation, hygiene, supplier management, and post-certification compliance. In this sense, certification can function as an upgrading mechanism rather than merely an administrative requirement.

Industrial competitiveness is strengthened when certification produces credible market value. Malaysia's ecosystem illustrates how certification reputation can be linked to industry promotion and international positioning [7], [8], [18], [39]. Indonesia has the opportunity to connect its expanding certification base more directly to product upgrading, export readiness, recognized traceability, and consumer confidence [11], [12], [34], [40]. The objective is not to replace consumer protection with market promotion, but to make credible assurance economically meaningful for compliant firms.

Regional cooperation is important because different halal procedures can create additional verification costs in cross-border trade. Complete legal uniformity is neither necessary nor realistic because halal systems are embedded in different religious and administrative arrangements. More practical mechanisms include recognition of competent certification bodies, exchange of certificate data, joint auditor development, and equivalence-based arrangements that preserve national regulatory authority [25], [27]–[29], [38], [39]. Table 2 translates these findings into a policy-strengthening agenda for the two countries.

Table 2. Halal Food Industry Policy Strengthening Agenda

Agenda	Malaysia	Indonesia	Relevance to the Food Industry
Standards alignment	Expand certificate recognition and international cooperation	Accelerate mutual recognition and alignment with export requirements	Reduce duplicative verification and improve market access
Digital services	Strengthen MYeHALAL, certificate databases, and traceability links	Integrate BPJPH, LPH, MUI, and PPH-assistance information flows	Improve service visibility, verification, and accountability
MSE support	Use proportionate compliance support for small-scale businesses	Expand certification facilitation, ingredient literacy, and documentation support	Promote sustainable compliance, formalization, and consumer trust
Supply-chain assurance	Strengthen audits of logistics, warehouses, and international suppliers	Develop interoperable ingredient, supplier, and certificate information	Maintain halal integrity from raw materials through distribution

4.2.1 Limitations

This study is based on regulations, official policy documents, certification guidance, government information, and academic literature. It therefore evaluates policy design and institutional architecture rather than the field-level effectiveness of certification. No interviews, surveys, or direct observations were conducted with business actors, auditors, certification bodies, consumers, or policymakers. In addition, halal regulation continues to evolve, particularly in Indonesia during the transition toward wider mandatory certification. Future research should test the policy mechanisms identified here using business-level evidence, comparative implementation studies, certification-cost analysis, and longitudinal assessment of compliance and market outcomes.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that Malaysia and Indonesia have developed complementary models of halal food governance. Malaysia links certification credibility to industrial development and international positioning, whereas Indonesia has strengthened a state-led framework centered on statutory product assurance and the progressive expansion of mandatory certification. The comparison indicates that neither regulatory breadth nor international reputation alone is sufficient. Effective halal governance depends on the interaction of clear rules, credible institutions, workable certification procedures, supply-chain assurance, and business accessibility.

The study's main contribution is an integrated policy perspective that connects certification governance with industrial strategy, micro and small-enterprise inclusion, digital traceability, and cross-border recognition. For

Malaysia, the policy priority is to preserve audit consistency and global confidence while widening inclusive participation. For Indonesia, the priority is to translate a broad legal mandate into coordinated, proportionate, and accessible implementation. For both countries, stronger data interoperability, continuous supply-chain assurance, technical capability, and recognition mechanisms can improve halal integrity while supporting a competitive regional food industry.

Author contribution statement

Conceptualization, methodology, document identification, comparative policy analysis, interpretation of findings, and critical revision of the manuscript were undertaken collaboratively by Nur Ain Sofiyah Binti Mohamed, Arroyan Na'im, and Robert Edy Sudarwan. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript and agree to be accountable for the integrity of the work.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this article.

AI-assisted technologies disclosure

AI-assisted language tools were used solely for English-language editing, grammar checking, and readability during manuscript preparation. They were not used to generate research data, formulate policy findings, or alter the interpretation of the documentary evidence. The authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript and remain responsible for its content, accuracy, and integrity.

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