

QUALITY ELEMENTS OF RICE PROCESSING; RICE MILLERS VIEW ON QUALITY DURING RICE PRODUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - Rice is one of the important crops in the world. It is also one of the daily foods for more than half of total humanity in this world or two-third of the world population (Singha, 2013). In Malaysia, rice is the staple food which is consumed daily food for almost all of the Malaysian. The study shows that every Malaysian consumed two and half plates of rice per day (Rajamoorthy et al., 2015). There are a few types of rice produced in the Malaysian market based on the quality specifications set by BERNAS, the first one is Super Tempatan 15% (ST15) which contains 85% of head rice and 15% of broken rice. The second one is, Super Tempatan 10% which contains 90% of head rice and 10% of broken rice and lastly is Super Tempatan 5% which contain of 95% of head rice and another 5% of broken rice (Chung, Arshad, Noh, & Sidique, 2016).

PadiBeras Nasional Berhad or BERNAS is given the right to import and distribute rice until 2021 (Rittgers & Wahab, 2017). One of its responsibilities is to ensure that the paddy industry in Malaysia does not face any problem related to consumption of rice. Thus, BERNAS must promote market stability and maintain a stabilized rice price so that it is affordable by the consumer. In addition, BERNAS is also responsible to ensure the supply of rice is sufficient and accessible for all citizens in Malaysia (Muhammad, 2013). Hence, as spelled out in *The Review of Paddy and Rice Industry in Malaysia* (2004), the main objective of BERNAS is to ensure food security for paddy and rice industry, raise the income and productivity of the paddy farmers and to make sure that the food supply to consumers is fair and the price is stable.

Most consumers express their satisfaction based on the quality of products (Chamhuri & Batt, 2015). As such, the rice produce by rice miller need to follow the specifications of quality set by BERNAS to ensure that the quality of rice that entered the market is guaranteed and could satisfy the customer in the market. However, there are several issue related with quality of rice reported recently. Among them are, local rice is contaminated with artificial substances and plastic elements (Malay Mail, 2017; Star Online, 2017). Furthermore, Halal issues are also being reported related to the processing of rice (Yap, 2017).

Hence, this paper aims to explore quality elements in the rice production among rice millers registered under BERNAS. This study further explores the Halal related issues in the rice processing.

Methodology - In order to achieve the objective of the study, a qualitative approach has been used to collect the data. The rice millers that are registered with BERNAS were selected as respondents of the study. There were five open ended prepared for the interview session. The researchers employed six step of data analysis as suggested by Piaw (2013) which are, collecting data, transcribing data, pro-scanning data, coding data, developing a holistic view of the phenomenon and presentation of data.

Findings - The findings of this pilot interview reveal the attributes of quality elements for rice processing among rice millers. This study also confirms that BERNAS is concern about HALAL guideline and ensure that the HALAL procedure is fulfilled.

Keywords: rice miller, quality, Halal, qualitative research, rice.

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