

Raw Food Consumption And Its Effects On Human Health: An Analysis Of Halalan Toyyiban Concept

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the status of consuming raw food and health effects on the human body by elaborating views of muslims scholars through the concept of halalan toyyiban, as well as to determine the advantages and disadvantages of consuming raw foods from health and food expert. The method that had been used was through information-gathering method; to explain and analyze the related data. This study found that most of muslim jurists agreed to allow the consumption of raw foods as long as those foods come from halal raw meat, slaughtered in accordance with food guidance in Islam.

Keywords: Raw foods, Halalan Toyyiban, haram, Islamic jurists.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia has been recognized as Muslim country and also well known as a place of global halal hub. In this country, Muslims are considered as the major population who consume halal food product. (Nur Ardayanti et al, 2013). The assimilation of different society or community in Malaysia has led to the existence of variation of foods in this country. The attitude of acceptance among Malaysians has been portrayed by accepting much kind of foods which are not belonging to Malaysian and which are not categorized as food traditions of the local community. For that reason, there are some restaurants or eateries springing up in this country like mushrooms after the rain. Those restaurants and eateries come from different countries such as Europe, the Middle East, and the state of the rising sun. Most of the menus provided by those restaurants are non-cooked foods or half-cooked foods. Generally, non-cooked food is also known as raw foods.

Basically, raw foods are known as uncooked or unprocessed foods. According to the Natural Hygiene movement of the 1800s, raw foods are foods that are not heated or cooked at temperatures greater than 115 to 118 degrees Fahrenheit. This is thought to preserve nutrients, enzymes, diminish the energy used for cooking, and keep food in its most natural form. (Ryan Andrews, n.d.). This raw food usually means uncooked foods, or more specifically, foods which in their natural state. In fact, the list of raw foods is quite large and endless. In addition, raw foods can be divided into two categories which are raw foods derived from plants and also animals. Foods derived from plants are fruits and vegetables.

There are many types of raw foods produced from animals. Examples of raw animals derived foods are beef, dairy products (usually derived from cows or goats that are both unpasteurized and not homogenized), butter, milk, yogurt, eggs, fish and other seafood.

2.0 HALALAN TOYYIBAN CONCEPT

As Muslims, what most important is to know whether the foods are halal (permissible) or haram (forbidden) in Islam. This, because of food is definitely human being's most basic need in their life. The meaning of halal food is widely defined nowadays. Halal is an Arabic word which means lawful, legal, licit, legitimate, permissible, allowable, permitted, allowed, admissible, and non-prohibited. (Nor Ardyanti et. al., 2013). In general, halal means everything which is permitted and permissible for human's use and surely give benefit to them. Meanwhile, in Islamic jurisprudence, haram is defined as any act that is forbidden by Allah and totally and typically prohibited in the religious texts of the Quran and the Sunnah. This means that nothing is considered as forbidden unless it is prohibited and stated in the Quran and explicit Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him). Therefore, it can be said that a person can eat or consume anything that he or she wants as long as it is not haram in Islam. Allah s.w.t has stated in the Holy Quran:

“O you People! Eat of what is on earth, Halal and pure, and do not follow the footsteps of the Satan; Indeed for he is to you an open enemy”. (al-Baqarah 2: 168)

Besides, there is also stated in another surah in the Holy Quran relating to the halalan toyyiban concept with means

“Then eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.” (Al-Qur’an. al-Nabl 16:114)

“He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (Al-Qur’an. al-Nabl 16:115)

Furthermore, Islam also urged Muslims to choose foods and drinks which are considered as halalan toyyiban. (Khoiruddin Syaari, 2013). Basically, it is a crucial and essential prerequisite to the halal concept itself and it is further strengthened with the presence of the word toyyib which means good and pure. (Anas Bin Mohd Yunus et al, 2010). Halalan toyyiban means allowed and permissible for consumption with relation to Syariah law as long as they are safe and not harmful.

Moreover, it is also stated in the Hadith regarding halalan toyyiban concept:

“Halal (the Lawful & Permissible) is clear and Haram (the Unlawful & Impermissible) is clear. Between Halal and Haram lays some doubtful things. Many people do not know whether it is permissible or not. Whoever leaves out these doubtful things in order to protect his religion and honor, and then he is safe. Whoever indulges in these doubtful things/matters it is very possible that he will fall into Haram, similar to a person who grazes his animals near the royal pasture it is very possible that one day he will graze in the royal pasture. Behold! Every king has a royal pasture and the royal pasture of Allah is those things which have been made impermissible.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

There are few important and essential elements in halalan toyyiban concept, namely the foods be must be clean, health and suitable for human body and not cause any harm or lead to danger. (Musfirah Syahida et al. 2015). Clean foods means that the foods is safe to eat by a person. The cleanliness of foods is actually should be emphasized at the first stage, which is the food preparation stage. During the preparation stage, foods that have been chosen must be in fresh condition, not wither, change its colour and did not smell bad. Those foods also should be free from insects. This means that halal also equal to clean foods.

Allah has stated in the Holy Quran:

Say, "Not equal are the evil and the good, although the abundance of evil might impress you." So fear Allah, O you of understanding, that you may be successful. (Al-Maidah 5: 100).

Moreover, halalan toyyiban concept also focuses on the safety of foods. It means that the foods that will be consumed must not give any danger to human. In order to make sure that those foods is safe; they should be cooked in a proper, complete and perfect way. Complete cooking will make sure that dangerous bacteria are properly killed. This concept ensures that human are consuming good foods. It has been mentioned in the Holy Quran:

“They ask you what is lawful for them. Say: “Lawful unto you are At-Tayyibat (the good things).” (Al-Maidah 5: 4).

Besides, halalan toyyiban concept also concerns about the importance of taking or consuming foods which are not lead to dangerous illness and negative effects. This is because contaminated foods may lead to the food poisoning. (Musfirah Syahida et al., 2015). In Islam, Muslims are called on to avoid themselves from getting stuck and involve in danger and anything that will lead to destruction.

Allah has mentioned in the Holy Quran:

And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. (Al-Qur'an. An-Nisa'4: 29).

Therefore, it can be concluded that halalan toyyiban concept that is preferred in Islam is very important and crucial in order to protect a person himself. The guideline that has been derived in Islam is the best guideline to be followed by the human being in order to achieve the goodness in their life.

3.0 JURISTS OPINION REGARDING THE CONSUMPTION OF RAW FOOD

3.1 Raw Meat

The first examples of raw food that will be discussed are raw meat which is eaten by people without cooking it at first instance. For this issue, the Hanbali scholars have given different opinions and views on the laws relating to eating raw meat, whether it is considered as mubah or makruh. Basically, mubah is an Arabic word which means permitted and has been technically used in Islamic law and Islamic jurisprudence. In the other words, mubah is defined as any act that is left to the personal decision and to individual liberty. This means that it is up to the person whether a person wants to do it or not.

.Ibn Muflih in al-Furuc said:

This means that it does not matter to eat raw meat, as it is narrated from Muhana (Imam Ahmad student). And it is also permissible to eat meat that has been smelly, as has been narrated from Abul Harits. While a group of *Hanbali* scholars said about the raw flesh and flesh that smell: is considered as *Makruh*. Muhammad (Muflih Shamsuddin Al Muqdas, et al., 2003).

In addition, a stronger opinion regarding the issue of eating raw meat is the opinion which saying that it is considered as halal, while consuming raw meat is not dangerous and permissible. This is based on the second opinion that has been confirmed in *Syarb Muntaba al-Iradat*. It is stated that:

"Not makruh to eat raw meat, and which is stale, based on the firm statement of Imam Ahmad." (Mansur bin Yunus bin Idris. 1993).

Furthermore, it is also discussed by referring to the Malikiyah scholar's opinion. This can be used as evidence based on the statement in *al-Kharsy's Syarb Mukhtasbar Kbalil*. It has been provided that the description of the author 'to raw meat' means that a person can eat it. The meaning of the word mubah is that which is permissible and not *makruh*. (Al-Kharsy Abu Abdullah, n.d).

Thus, if the meat to be consumed is meat that is halal to be eaten, such meat must be considered as suitable in accordance with *Shariah*. The animal carcass that is halal in Islam is fish carcass.

By referring to the Shafie School, there is no specific explanation regarding the law of consuming raw meat. The scholars of Shafie School only explain that as long as the animal has been slaughtered with a slaughter that fulfills the predetermined requirements in Islam, the meat is permissible to be eaten by Muslims. From the absolute explanation by the Shafie scholars, it can be understood and concluded that the meat of the slaughtered animal may be eaten even if it is still raw and has not been cooked yet.

3.2 Raw Fish

Another example of raw food is raw fish. Raw fish is defined as fish which is eaten without cooking it either by way of frying it or steaming it. Korean-style-foods such as sushi usually used raw fish like salmon as their menu and most of Muslims nowadays love to eat that dish. Many sushi dishes contain seafood that has been cooked. However, raw fish is also being used as one of the dishes. Raw fish is known as one of the traditional sushi ingredient. Regarding the legal Islamic rule on the consumption of raw fish, it has been explained in several Hadith:

“A man asked the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w): Messenger of Allah, we travel on the sea and take a small quantity of water with us. If we use this for ablution, we would suffer from thirst. Can we perform ablution with sea water? The Messenger (s.a.w) replied: its water is pure and what dies in it is lawful food.” (Sunan Abi Dawud).

It is clear that not even the blood of fish, but fish carcasses also permissible and lawful to be eaten. In addition, the permissibility to eat fish carcasses is strengthened with another narrated Hadith. The narrated Hadith is as follow:

“Ibn Umar (r.a) narrates that Rasulullah (s.a.w) said, “Two dead animals (carrions) and two bloods are made lawful for us. The two dead animals are the fish and locust and the two bloods are liver and spleen. – (Ibn Majah, Ahmad)

Therefore, eating or consuming fish blood or fish carcasses is permissible. The legal Islamic rule of eating fish carcasses is halal (lawful) and permissible in Islam. Even though that fish is still raw and uncooked, it still can be eat as the norm of Japanese society. Even if a person feels disgusting because he or she not used to eat raw fish, the disgust feeling does not change the hukm or the legal Islamic rule of the consumption of that raw fish. The hukm is halal but when there is a problem regarding the appetite or taste of someone, it cannot be forced for them to consume and eat it.

3.3 Raw Egg

Referring to the book of Asna al-Matalib, it is explained that the animal eggs are sacred and clean except the eggs that are produced from both dogs and pigs and whatever come from it (if both lay eggs). Imam Rofi'I stated that it is *sunnah* to wash and clean it. Meanwhile, the eggs that have not become hard yet that comes from the carcasses are considered as unclean. (Zakaria ibn Muhammad, 2010).

The second book that can be referred is the book of al-Iqna^c. This book explained that the legal Islamic rule regarding the sperm and eggs of animals are sacred and clean apart from dogs and pigs or anything from both wombs. The reason is because the animal comes from the sperm, so when the animal is considered as sacred and clean, then the sperm is also sacred. While the eggs of animals that are permissible to be eaten and not permissible to be eaten are viewed as sacred, it also includes that the eggs of carcass (eggs found on the carcass) and the eggs silkworm (silk material) and eggs that have turned into blood is sacred. (Al Khatib, 2004).

Moreover, explained that if the egg is damaged and if it cannot produce a child of animals then the Islamic legal considered it as unclean. But if it turned into blood but still able to produce a child of animals then the law is sacred and clean. (al-Dumyatiy, 1997). In addition, consuming raw eggs may be permissible in Islam. Even some doctors also said that raw eggs are

beneficial to human health. In order for a person or an individual to eat the eggs, whether the raw or uncooked eggs or boiled eggs, there are some requirements that need to be fulfilled:

1. The first requirement that need to be followed by a person is that the eggs must come from the animals that are considered as halal (permissible) to be eaten in Islam, such as chicken or birds.
2. The second requirement that must be followed is that the contents of the egg consumed must have not changed its shape from the original condition, by becoming blood or something like that.

Then, it can be said that there are some contradictions of opinions among the Islamic jurists regarding the Islamic legal rules relating to the consumption of raw eggs of the animals whose eat majority foods from dirty or unclean objects. Meanwhile, the stronger opinion stated that eating the eggs of the halal (permissible) animals is considered as lawful, since the origin of the law considered everything as lawful, as long as there is no proposition that diverts from this original law.

4.0 EFFECTS OF CONSUMING RAW FOODS

The consumption of raw foods or uncooked foods may probably give some effects or implications to human health; whether the effects are beneficial or dangerous to human. According to science, eating raw foods has its own pros and cons. Generally, some people nowadays prefer a raw foods diet because of the potential health benefits and advantages. This is due to the people awareness to protect their health as they believed that raw foods will give them positive effect. Most of the people who prefer raw foods diet often include vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, and sprouts. Those foods are eaten raw or uncooked. According to the former research that has been made, raw foods have less processing and fewer added ingredients. Thus, this is a great advantage and benefit to the person who choose this kind of raw foods as their dishes.

Another benefit that can be found through consuming raw foods is that the enzymes contained in those foods can be preserved. Enzymes are defined as the protein molecules which is found in plants and also made by the human body. The act of cooking the foods is believed to destroy the enzymes found in it. Generally, many of the people who support raw foods diet believe there are health benefits of eating foods with the preserved enzymes. Furthermore, some scientific studies do show and prove that raw and uncooked vegetables can help reduce the risk of various cancers. Examples of cancer that can be reduced by the consumption of raw foods are cancers of the mouth and throat and also breast cancer.

However, some people also believe that eating raw food may give negative impacts to their health. So, they prefer to cook that food rather than eating it without cooking. According to the research made in the year of 2009 by The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, cooking those raw foods can kill many harmful and dangerous bacteria in foods. Thus, it is safe for them to eat that food.expression.

4.1 Raw Meat

There is scientific research which proved that consuming raw foods, i.e. the raw meat may give negative impacts on human health. Factually, a large body of research has been conducted on the high risk for pathogenic bacterial contamination of raw meat diets and the

potential risks posed by this problem. Like any raw meat products we encounter at home or in restaurants, raw meat diets actually have the potential to carry pathogenic bacteria or dangerous microorganism (*Raw Meat Diets*, 2012). Bacteria cannot be seen by the naked eye; therefore, it is dangerous for us as a human being. In addition, recent scientific studies have proved that nearly all raw meat diets whether commercial or homemade are having the high chances or possibilities to be contaminated with bacteria. Some of those bacteria are unlikely to have negative effects on health, but others can have serious consequences if they were transmitted to human.

The first example of bacteria that may exist when people consume raw meat in their diets is *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*). *E. coli* is usually found mainly on the surface of the meat. The main cause of the existence of this bacterium is because of the undercooked ground beef. This kind of bacterium can cause several symptoms including diarrhea, vomiting and stomach cramps (Henritz E., 2017). Usually, those symptoms will occur between two and eight days after eating contaminated food or raw food and those symptoms can last for up to a week. When a person gets infected with this bacterium, it takes about seven to ten days for a person or an individual to recover.

Other type of bacteria that may exist from the consumption of raw foods or raw meat is *Salmonella*. For instance, studies have shown that between twenty to forty four percent of commercial raw meat diets are contaminated with *Salmonella* (*Raw Meat Diets*, 2012). The increasing factor of the risk of becomes infected with the infection of *Salmonella* bacteria is caused by the consumption of undercooked or raw poultry or red meat. When people get infected with *Salmonella*, the symptoms include abdominal cramps, fever and diarrhea and begin within 12 to 72 hours after consuming the contaminated raw food or meat. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, these symptoms can last up to a week and may be severe enough to cause death if a person or an individual has a weak immune system. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that up to 8 percent of people with *Salmonella* food poisoning develop invasive disease, in which the bacteria spreads from the intestines to other parts of the body, such as the bloodstream, joints or bones.

Besides, consuming raw meat may expose a person to the *Listeria*. *Listeria* is commonly caused by undercooked meat, poultry or seafood. Furthermore, the most common symptoms that caused by this bacteria include fever and muscle aches. Plus, *Listeria* could also cause an individual to suffer from diarrhea and nausea. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Listeria* can cause miscarriage or other severe problems such as preterm delivery, stillbirth or infection of the baby to the pregnant women. Thus, pregnant women need to be more careful and take several precautions in order to avoid getting infected with *Listeria*. This is because pregnant women are 20 times more easily to develop *Listeria* than non-pregnant women.

Moreover, eating raw meat may cause a person to suffer from other food-borne illness. The other bacteria can potentially contaminate beef and cause food poisoning if the meat is eaten raw. Viruses, such as the hepatitis A virus can also be contracted from contaminated and raw meat. Besides, consuming undercooked or raw beef or meat also increases the risk for being infected by parasitic infections, such as beef tapeworm.

Therefore, it can be concluded that consuming or eating raw meat will expose a person or an individual to the health risks. This is because raw meat contains a lot of dangerous bacteria that will affect our health. Those bacteria are very dangerous and people should avoid themselves from being infected by them. Avoid from eating raw meat and it is better if people nowadays consume cooked meat rather than the raw meat. Once people suffer from infection, there is a probability to be infected with other illness. Thus, a person should prevent himself or herself from including the raw meat in his or her diet.

4.2 Raw Fish, Sushi and Sashimi

Nowadays, most of Malaysia citizens prefer to eat raw foods. Some people fore instance, in their life style, love to stop by the sushi restaurant just for the sensational Japanese's meal. This restaurant serves multiple choices of cooked and uncooked dishes in their menu. An example of raw foods that has been served for several years until today in that restaurant is sushi and sashimi. When talking about sushi and sashimi, this kind of food fan will know what is sushi and sashimi. Basically, Sushi is known as the generic term used to refer to the fish or seafood (cooked or raw) or vegetables rolled around or placed on acidified rice and seaweed. Usually, the raw fish that is often used in the menu is Salomon fish. Meanwhile, sashimi is typically known as a dish consists of raw fish or seafood only.

According to the scientific research, sushi is considered as potentially hazardous even though it may not always contain raw or partially raw fish or seafood. On the other hand, the health risks which related to sushi arise from the raw seafood products used in its preparation and the acidified sushi rice. This, because of sushi has the characteristics that could support microbial growth that can cause foodborne illness. Moreover, eating raw fish and seafood may increase the risk of human disease from microbes that are actually can be destroyed by cooking only. This food actually supports rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms.

Furthermore, another effect that may arise when people consume raw fish is people will expose to the parasite which is found in the raw fish. This parasite exists in the form of worms. These worms can only be destroyed through the process of cooking and heating. If the food is being cooked, an individual or a person will not infect by that worms. This is because only insufficiently and inadequate cooked infected fish can transfer the live worms to human being. In United States, there were about thirty cases of illnesses occurred which are caused by the presence of parasites in sushi and sashimi. Those cases were reported in the year of 1986. (Hicks D, 1987).

4.3 Raw Egg

In this modern day, there are still a numbers of people that consume raw egg in their diet. It cannot be denied that eggs are the sources of protein, fats and micronutrients that play an important and crucial role in basic nutrition for well-being. However, by referring to the scientific finding, raw eggs may contain specific bacteria called Salmonella Enteritidis (SE). This kind of pathogen is caused by the contamination of the raw eggs and this microbial pathogen of the genus Salmonella actually can cause the foodborne illness. This kind of case happened in the United States. In fact, this kind of Salmonella pathogen may lead to several illnesses such as abdominal pain, frequent diarrhea, vomiting and also fever. Besides, in fact, between 1993 and 2002, 9364 food-borne illnesses were reported in Spain, 4944 (52%) of which were caused by Salmonella and 3546 (37.8%) of which were associated with egg product. (Miranda J.M, 2015).

Based on the history, the total number of annual Salmonella Enteritidis infection cases among children and adults in the United States has increased from about 140,000 cases to 300,000 cases since the 1970. Scientifically, eggs can become contaminated with the Salmonella pathogen before laying and before the shell is formed. The Salmonella pathogen can actually be found in the egg yolk or egg white. Therefore, consuming the raw eggs may increase the chances of getting infected by Salmonella pathogen. Proper cooking of eggs until both white and yolk is firm can greatly and efficiently reduces the chances of human infection.

So raw eggs are not preferable even though some people consider that it is good for human health. This is because raw eggs have more possibility to give infection to human being. Thus, cooked-eggs are better than raw eggs. Eating raw eggs are exposing people to the

dangerous illness. A person or an individual should avoid himself from consuming raw eggs as prevention is better than cure.

5.0 CONCLUSION

It concluded that there are many types of raw foods produced from animals. The examples of raw foods that most of the people nowadays have consumed in their diet are raw meat, raw fish and raw egg. Islam also had prepared the guideline for Muslims throughout the world for the safe guidance in consuming foods in their diet. That guideline is based on the *halalan toyyiban* concept. This *halalan toyyiban* concept is the most important and essential concept to know whether the foods are halal (permissible) or haram (forbidden), or healthy in Islam. This concept also preferred that Muslims should take or consume the foods that are clean, suitable for human body and do not cause any harm or danger to the body. The Islamic jurists also had given their own opinions regarding the consumption of raw meat, raw fish and raw eggs.

Furthermore, there are also scientific studies which stated the effects of consuming those raw foods. The findings stated that those raw foods i.e. raw meat, raw fish, and raw egg are exposed to danger. This means that those raw foods or uncooked foods will give harm and helath effects to human being if they consume those foods. The findings are based on the case reported in some countries which recorded the percentage of the people getting infected with the infection of dangerous bacteria when they consume raw foods. Thus, as a Muslims, we should avoid ourselves from consuming those raw foods as they may expose our life to danger. On the other hand, Muslims should follow the *halalan toyyiban* concept in order to make sure that our foods or dishes are safe to eat and free from any contamination.

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