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Islamic Law Practice among East Javanese Chinese Muslims; PITI's Contribution on Its Enforcement

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Abstract:

This qualitative research explores the practice of Islamic law among Chinese Muslims in Indonesia, focusing on the contribution of the Indonesian Chinese Islamic Association, or *Persatuan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia* (PITI) in East Java in three aspects; translating the Qur'an into Mandarin, organizing marriage guidance and religious consultation, and facilitating *halāl* food industry. The primary data collection method involves in-depth interviews with *Islamic leaders* within the

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community, particularly those affiliated with PITI. Secondary data is gathered through an extensive review of literature comprising documents, books, news, and articles related to Islamic law practices among Indonesian Chinese Muslims. Data analysis employs a spiral approach, encompassing content analysis, contextual examination, and critical evaluation. The results of this research show that, specifically, PITI East Java is focused on three areas: arranging marriage counseling, translating the Qur'an into Mandarin, and developing a mentoring program for *halāl* products. Besides, PITI uses a cultural approach to help Chinese Muslims comprehend and follow Islamic precepts while also taking into account their unique background and characteristics. As a result, the Chinese heritage has been influenced by Indonesian and Islamic traditions. This practice is dynamic and still proceeding in the new horizon that needs support from all stakeholders, the government, and other Muslim communities in Indonesia.

Keywords:

Islamic Law Practices; Chinese Muslim; PITI

Introduction

Indonesia is characterized by a diverse Muslim population with various cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and Chinese Muslims are one part of this wide diversity. Chinese Muslims in Indonesia, like other Muslim communities, also observe the five pillars of Islam, which include faith (*shahādah*), prayer, Ramadan fasting, giving alms (*zakāh*), and the pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*). More than that, the practice of Islamic law in the Chinese Muslim community also relates to economic issues, family law, parenting, *mu'allaf* (converts)'s habituation to Islamic teaching, *halāl* food culinary, and other social, political, or cultural issues.¹ As non-inherited Muslim communities,

¹ Rahmawati Rahmawati et al., "Chinese Ways of Being Good Muslim: From the Cheng Hoo Mosque to Islamic Education and Media Literacy," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 8, no. 2 (December 2018): 225-52, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v8i2.225-252>; Yuting Wang, "Between the Sacred and the Secular: Living Islam in China," *Boundaries of Religious Freedom: Regulating Religion in Diverse Societies*, no. April (2023): 253-75, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-27188-5_13; James D. Frankel, "Chinese-Islamic Connections: An Historical and

some Chinese Muslims agreed to build an association to facilitate them in understanding Islamic thoughts while practicing Islamic teachings. The organization is named after the Indonesian-Chinese Islamic Association or PITI.

PITI is an organization that represents Chinese Muslims in Indonesia. In East Java, PITI plays a role in advancing the lives of Chinese Muslims and contributing to the development of interfaith harmony.² Although its roles may vary in different regions, PITI claims to continue developing its role in facilitating and supporting the practice of Islamic law. It aims to support the understanding of Islamic law and facilitate its practice so that Chinese Muslims can worship their God and practice their religious teaching well.³ Likewise, the Indonesian Cheng Hoo Mosque Foundation, which was founded in Surabaya and is fully supported by East Java PITI, also makes a significant contribution to support the practice of Islamic law, especially for converts (*mu'allaf*) through consultation services and other relevant programs. This is mainly because as a specific type of Muslim with most of them not Muslim by birth, Chinese Muslims typically still find difficulties in understanding both Islamic law and teaching.

Studies on Chinese Muslims practicing Islamic law in Indonesia can be said to have received little attention or have rarely been done. However, there are several notes from previous observers concluding that Chinese Muslims in Indonesia often integrate their

Contemporary Overview," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 36, no. 4 (2016): 569-83, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2016.1248175>.

² Musmuallim, Ahmad Yusuf Prasetiawan, and Muhamad Riza Chamadi, "Da'wah of Banyumas Islamic Chinese Ethnicity in the Development of Religious Moderation," *Al-Balagh: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 6, no. 2 (2021): 241-72, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22515/al-balagh.v6i2.3147>; Rr Dewi Anggraeni, "Islamic Law and Customary Law in Contemporary Legal Pluralism in Indonesia: Tension and Constraints," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 23, no. 1 (2023): 25-48, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v23i1.32549>; Ahmad Mukri Aji and Nur Rohim Yunus, "Identity Politics in Cultural and Structural Islam in Indonesia," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 19, no. 1 (2019): 127-40, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v19i1.10860>.

³ Achmad Muhibin Zuhri and Winarto Eka Wahyudi, "Social Theology of Chinese Muslim: From Islamic Inclusivism Towards Social Movements," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat* 18, no. 2 (2021): 171-96, <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v18i2.3826>.

cultural practices with Islamic teachings and law.⁴ It is obvious that Chinese cultural traditions have a significant impact on their religious lives. Furthermore, the practice of Islamic law in the Indonesian Chinese Muslim community is known to be influenced by some factors that manifest in a combination of religious teachings, cultural traditions, and the country's legal framework.⁵

Practically, Chinese cultural norms and Islamic teachings sometimes clash, leading to a unique syncretic approach to religious devotion that encompasses everything from ancient rites to familial practices. Chinese Muslims have successfully reconciled their cultural heritage and religious beliefs by adapting Islamic ceremonies such as ancestor reverence. It demonstrates that the core of effectively implementing Islamic teachings still revolves around family matters. Chinese people initially had their own culture in addition to familial issues. They typically have business-related jobs. It is evident that Chinese individuals run stores in every Indonesian city and occupy strategically important locations, such as the city center or the capital. Compared to the Indigenous people, this phenomenon shows a big discrepancy while Indigenous people mostly stay in the suburban part of the city. Therefore, their original culture cannot be separated from their Islamic lives. This leads to the existence of PITI playing an important role in assisting Chinese Muslims to understand both Islamic law and Islamic teaching.

Some research about PITI and Chinese Muslims has been conducted. Wahidah,⁶ Burhanuddin,⁷ Hasanah,⁸ Yunariono,⁹ and

⁴ Musmuallim, Prasetiawan, and Chamadi, "Da'wah of Banyumas Islamic Chinese Ethnicity in the Development of Religious Moderation"; Muhammad Mutawali, "The Dialectics of Customary Law and Islamic Law: An Experience from Dou Donggo Customs of Bima, Indonesia," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 21, no. 1 (2021): 45-64, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v21i1.19825>.

⁵ Esther Kuntjara and Chang Yau Hoon, "Reassessing Chinese Indonesian Stereotypes: Two Decades after Reformasi," *South East Asia Research* 28, no. 2 (2020): 199-216, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0967828X.2020.1729664>; Daguo Li, "Out of the Ivory Tower: The Impact of Wider Social Contact on the Values, Religious Beliefs and Identities of Chinese Postgraduate Students in the UK," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 15, no. 2 (2012): 241-58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2011.585339>.

⁶ Wahidah Zein Br Siregar and Moh Fathoni Hakim, "Zhong Yong and Moderation of Chinese Muslims in Indonesia," *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (TURCOMAT)* 12, no. 2 (2021): 646-56, <https://doi.org/10.17762/turcomat.v12i2.918>.

Machali,¹⁰ for example, found that Chinese Muslims have a strong eagerness to upgrade their knowledge about Islam. Even though they are a minority, it does not become an obstacle for them to improve their religious understanding and faith. Besides, those researchers found that Islamic law interpreted and applied in the context of the Chinese Muslims community in Indonesia reflects variations and adaptations depending on several factors, including the community's culture and history. That research mostly explores sociological and anthropological aspects of how Chinese Muslims exist and survive under their minority position. Meanwhile, the pivotal role as the main guide which serves well in facilitating their survival has not been explored.

In contrast to other studies, the goal of this paper is to fill the void left in PITI's efforts to help Chinese Muslims populations comprehend Islamic principles and legislation. Consequently, the purpose of this research is to investigate how the PITI in East Java contributes to the dissemination of Islamic teachings and Islamic law practice. To delve deeper, we intend to examine three of its most pivotal roles in translating the Qur'an into Mandarin as the foundation for Islamic law instruction, organizing Islamic law guidance and consultation programs for marriage and everyday life, and initiating business and working activities help programs.

⁷ Nunu Burhanuddin and Dodi Pasilaputra, "Social, Political and Religious Roles of Chinese Muslims in Indonesia: Experiences of West Sumatran Piti," *Hamdard Islamicus* 43, no. 2 (2020): 334-53, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.57144/hi.v43iSpecial%20Issue.248>; Gusti Muzainah and Firqah Annajiyah Mansyuroh, "The Integration of Islamic Law and Banjarese Customary Law in the Distribution of Inheritance to the Chinese Muslim Community in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan," *Samarah* 6, no. 2 (2022): 678-702, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v6i2.12386>.

⁸ Eva Putriya Hasanah et al., "Cheng Ho Mosque and Social Status: A Study on the Existence of Chinese Muslim Within Sociocultural Relations in Surabaya, Indonesia," *Harmoni* 21, no. 2 (2022): 201-16, <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v21i2.637>.

⁹ Bastian Yunariono and Retno Andriati, "The Construction of Chinese Muslim Identities in Surabaya," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 28, no. 1 (2020): 65-86, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.28.1.6264>.

¹⁰ Imam Machali et al., "Informal Islamic Education for Minority Muslims: Lessons from Chinese Ethnic Minority Muslims in Yogyakarta," *Ulumuna* 27, no. 2 (2023): 598-623, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v27i2.539>.

Methods

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, facilitating an in-depth exploration and comprehension of the subject matter, namely the practice of Islamic law within the Indonesian Chinese Muslims community. It relies on primary data obtained from insights shared by key informants and various stakeholders within the community. The identity of the informant can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Identity of Informant

No	Name	Identity
1	Syaikunie Ong	Chairman of PITI Surabaya Period 2022 - 2025
2	Haryanto Satryo	East Java PITI Leader
3	HMY. Bambang Sujanto	Founder Cheng Hoo Mosque
4	Haryono Ong	<i>Takmir</i> Cheng Hoo Mosque
5	Abdurrahman	Muslims Activist in Surabaya
6	KH Moh Hasan Mutawakkil Alallah	East Java MUI Leader
7	Liem Fuk Shon	PITI Surabaya
8	Tan Mei Hwa	Chinese Muslimah activist
9	Supriyanto	<i>Halāl</i> expert in Surabaya
10	Chak Hoo	a Chinese Muslim with culinary business owner

Besides those informants in Table 1, researchers also use secondary data sources such as books and articles concerning Islamic law practices, alongside additional literature that bolsters the research framework. Spanning approximately two years from 2022 to 2023, the research data collection process encompasses interviews, observations, document analysis on PITI's efforts, and other qualitative data collection techniques, such as narrative inquiry, visual methods, and surveys/questionnaires.¹¹ Furthermore, the research furnishes a detailed description aiming at offering a comprehensive and lucid depiction of the phenomenon of Islamic law practices within the Chinese Muslims community in Indonesia.

¹¹ Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, Revision (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018); Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif Dan R&D* (Bandung: PT. Alfabet, 2016).

Result and Discussion

There are three main programs held by PITI to educate Chinese Muslims about Islamic law. Those programs consist of providing Mandarin-translated Qur'an as the basic source to study Islamic law, conducting guidance and consultation programs for marriage and daily life, and assisting programs for *halāl* food business and industry.

Providing Mandarin-Translated Qur'an to Help Understanding Islamic Law

PITI has a good initiative in translating and publishing the Qur'an in Mandarin. Although PITI still provides some parts of the translated Qur'an, which is only in *juz* 30, they commit to translate the other remaining parts of the Qur'anic *juz*. This is a part of the good news from Indonesia program for Chinese Muslims.¹² HMY. Bambang Sujanto stated as follow:

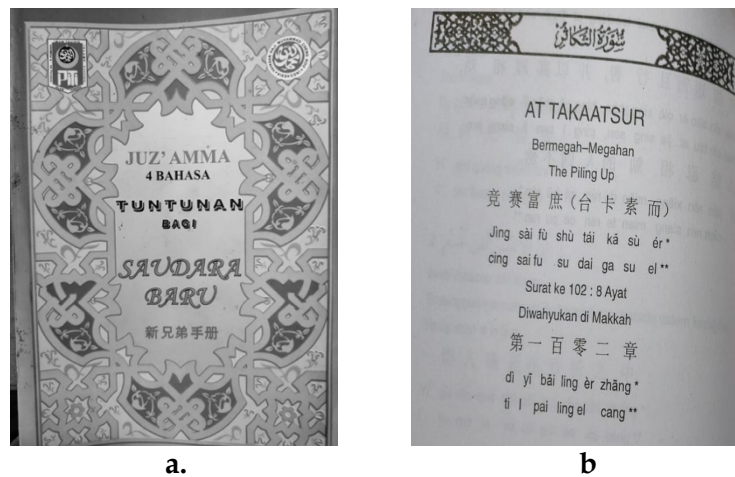
“Publishing the Qur'an in Mandarin could significantly facilitate the understanding and practice of the Islamic religion among Chinese Muslims and converts to Islam (*mu'allaf*). It's a crucial step that can have multiple positive effects and impacts. This can lead to a greater appreciation and implementation of Islamic principles, including those related to Islamic law.”¹³

It can be seen from the transcript that the existence of translated Qur'an into Mandarin potentially helps Chinese Muslims a lot in understanding Islamic law. It can facilitate them to study Islamic law using their mother language. Mainly for those who are more comfortable with Mandarin, it provides a valuable resource to understand and study the Qur'an in their native language. This initiative can help cope with language barriers and empower Chinese Muslims to engage more actively with their faith. Beyond its immediate benefits for the Chinese Muslims community, publishing

¹² Bambang, “Yayasan Cheng Hoo Terbitkan Alquran Empat Bahasa,” Antara Kantor Berita Indonesia, 2007.

¹³ HMY. Bambang Sujanto, Interview, Surabaya, July 18, 2023.

the Qur'an in Mandarin can contribute to fostering greater religious understanding and harmony in Indonesian society as a whole. By publishing the Qur'an in Mandarin, PITI aims to broaden access to Islamic religious knowledge among the Chinese community. Mandarin-translated Qur'an can be seen in Figure 1.



Source: researchers' documentation

Figure 1. Translated the Qur'an into Mandarin

It can be seen in Figure 1 that the Qur'an is translated into four languages (scripts). Those consist of Arabic written in Latin script, Indonesian language, *pin yin* (official system of the Chinese language alphabet), and *hanzi* (Chinese language), as can be seen in Figure 1b. In its cover, Figure 1a, the author used the term *Saudara Baru* (new brothers). This represents that all Chinese Muslims are called new brothers. The new brothers are dedicated to those who newly converted to Islam as *mu'allaf*. Meanwhile, those who originally embraced Islam as their birth religion are called *saudara lama* (older brothers). This term refers to Muslims from *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), Muhammadiyah, and so on. Even though it sounds awkward, Chinese Muslims keep using this term to express who embraces Islam first as their religion without concern with the other meaning.

The concept of acculturation among culture and religion becomes the basis of this translated Qur'an. KH Moh Hasan Mutawakkil Alallah, for example, appreciated the publication of the

Qur'an in Mandarin version. This initiative can serve as a positive step towards maintaining and deepening the faith and practice of Indonesian Chinese Muslims in accordance with Islamic law and their own traditions.¹⁴ By providing access to religious texts in languages familiar to them, Chinese Muslims can be empowered to engage more actively with their faith and heritage. This initiative also has the potential to encourage linguistic diversity within the Indonesian Muslims community, particularly among Chinese Muslims. Awiskarni et al¹⁵ stated that the use of mother tradition should not be neglected in teaching Islamic law. Islamic law is applicable in a variety of social and cultural contexts because of its adaptable conceptual framework, which makes it easier to incorporate regional cultural norms into legal practice.¹⁶ The integration process helps to maintain social harmony while simultaneously protecting local cultural distinctiveness in the face of globalization by reducing tensions across cultures and strengthening community cohesion.¹⁷ Furthermore, compared to using the concept of Islamic law alone, the combination of culture and Islamic law will lead to a strong understanding.

As the strong correlation between culture and Islamic teaching understanding, PITI realized that using Mandarin can be a starting point for educating *saudara baru* about Islamic law. Recognizing and accommodating the linguistic needs of different ethnic and cultural groups, can demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity and respect for diversity.¹⁸ Moreover, it highlights the shared values of tolerance and mutual respect between religions in Indonesia. Ultimately, promoting

¹⁴ KH. Moh Hasan Mutawakkil Alallah, Interview, Surabaya, August 2, 2023.

¹⁵ Awiskarni et al., "Acculturation of Religious Rituals for Chinese Muslim Minorities in West Sumatra," *IJNI: International Journal of Nusantara Islam* 12, no. 1 (2024): 19-30, <https://doi.org/10.15575/Ijni.v12i1.33779>; Achmad Ubaedillah, "The Minority and the State: Chinese Muslims in the Modern History of Indonesia," *Al-Jami'ah* 61, no. 1 (2023): 107-36, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2023.611.107-136>.

¹⁶ Nur Insani et al., "Islamic Law and Local Wisdom: Exploring Legal Scientific Potential in Integrating Local Cultural Values," *Kanun: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 26, no. 1 (2024): 101-24, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24815/kanun.v00i0.00000>.

¹⁷ Syaifullah MS and Hairuddin Cikka, "Review of Islamic Law on Customary Law Values in Community in North Lore Utara And Lore Peore, Poso-Indonesia," *Sociological Jurisprudence Journal* 7, no. 1 (2024): 61-66, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22225/scj.7.1.2024.61-66>.

access to religious texts in various languages contributes to building a more harmonious and inclusive society.¹⁹

In regard to this, Tan Mei Hwa expressed his impression which he deemed to represent insight from the Chinese Muslim community from the grassroots circle on the Mandarin Qur'an as follows:

"The Mandarin translation of the Qur'an has had a significant impact on the Chinese Muslim community, providing a means for better understanding, cultural integration, and personal spiritual growth. However, it also brings challenges related to maintaining the integrity of the original text and balancing tradition with modern accessibility. Overall, the testimonies reflect a positive reception with an acknowledgment of the complexities involved."²⁰

Based on the above statement, it is clear that the Qur'an in Mandarin is believed to help Chinese Muslims easier to worship, such as by praying and reading the Qur'an. It provides better accessibility to primary sources of religious teachings. The publication of the Qur'an in Mandarin by PITI demonstrates their commitment to meeting the spiritual needs of members of the Chinese community who speak Mandarin or still choose it as their language of communication.

From an Islamic law perspective, the dissemination and understanding of the Qur'an in a language understood by the community is very important based on the following principles:

Firstly, da'wah, or spreading religious teaching is an obligation for every Muslim as stated in the Qur'an surah Al-Nahl verse 125. By translating the Qur'an into Mandarin, PITI fulfills this principle in an effective way, considering that the majority of Chinese people in Indonesia may be more fluent in Mandarin than in Arabic.

Secondly, the principle of making worship easy (*taysir*) emphasizes convenience and does not make it difficult for Muslims to carry out their worship (Al-Baqarah verse 185).

¹⁹ KH. Moh Hasan Mutawakkil Alallah, Interview, Surabaya, August 2, 2023.

²⁰ Tan Mei Hwa, Interview, Surabaya, August 2, 2023.

Thirdly, correct understanding of Islamic teachings and laws is the key to proper practice. Islamic law (*fiqh*) requires a deep understanding of religious texts. If these texts were only available in Arabic which is not understood by the majority of Chinese Muslims, understanding and application of sharia could be ineffective.

Fourthly, the publication of the Qur'an in Mandarin shows that Islam respects and accommodates the linguistic needs of various ethnic groups, thereby supporting a more harmonious society.²¹

Fifthly, this is also in accordance with the views of several great scholars, such as Imam Nawawi, who emphasized the importance of understanding the meaning of the Qur'an even through translation.

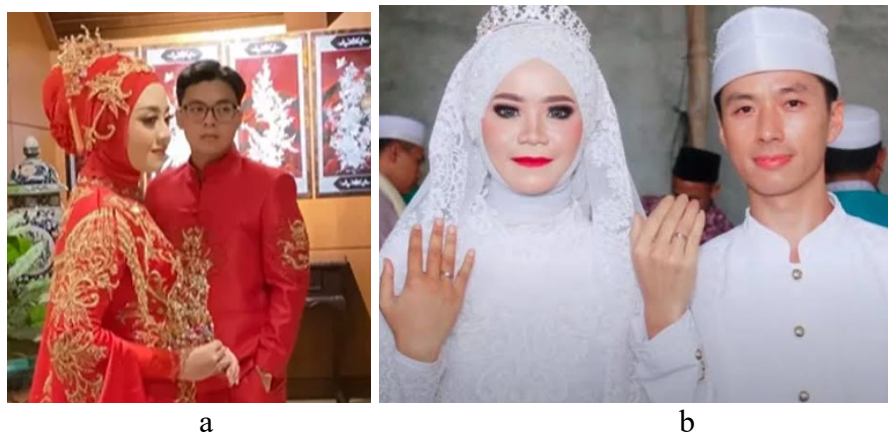
Organizing Guidance and Consultation Programs about Marriage and Daily Life Cases

Besides facilitating an authoritative understanding of Islamic law's source, PITI also conducts a guidance and consultation program for marriage and daily life cases. It seems that PITI considers marriage as of significant importance within the Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia. Therefore, they make themselves serve as a cornerstone of both legal and moral frameworks for building harmonious relationships in the family circle on other larger scales. Relating to this, Haryono Ong stated so:

“... Many Chinese become *mu'allaf* or Muslims who have not fully understood the procedures and laws of marriage in Islam. PITI provides guidance and assistance to ensure that their marriage is carried out in accordance with Islamic law. Besides, PITI helps to integrate elements of Chinese culture into an Islamic wedding, thereby respecting and celebrating their cultural identity....”

²¹ Achmad Muhibin Zuhri, Winarto Eka Wahyudi, and Abdulloh Hamid, “Chinese Muslims' Ways of Being Nationalist: Combining Islamic Cosmopolitanism, Acculturation and Social Roles,” *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 9, no. 2 (December 2021): 279, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v9i2.9649>; Yordan Gunawan et al., “Does the Protection of Minority Groups in Xinjiang Fail?,” *Sriwijaya Law Review* 4, no. 2 (2020): 205–20, <https://doi.org/10.28946/slrev.Vol4.Iss2.432.pp205-220>.

Interestingly, as we observed, in certain aspects, Chinese Muslims in Indonesia also bring cultural traditions into their wedding ceremonies along with any Islamic symbols they prefer. One of which can be seen in the dress code or nuance consisting of red color interpreted as the color of luck with white color believed as the symbol of purity. Certainly, they also wear *kopyah* (Muslim head costume) for men and *hijab* (veil) for women. While adhering to the basic principles of Islamic culture, they also incorporate cultural elements, making the wedding ceremony unique. The expression of the Chinese Muslim marriage costume is presented in Figure 2 below:



Source: researchers' documentation and dream.co.id

Figure 2. Chinese Muslims Marriage Costumes

It can be seen from Figure 2 that Chinese Muslim marriage is a bit different from Indonesian Muslim marriage ranging from costume and pattern, surrounding properties and accessories, to the whole nuance. It can be seen in Figure 2a that the bride and groom wear red costumes with gold accessories implying the cultural viscosity of the Chinese. Meanwhile, the bride wears a jilbab (scarf) to cover her hair as a Muslim woman. Similar to Figure 2a, Figure 2b shows that the groom wears *kopyah* as the cultural identity of Indonesian Muslim men.

Relating to the Chinese wedding reception, Syaukanie Ong mentioned that it is a means to fulfill both religious and social

obligations. "Aligning marriage celebration with Islamic law practices is heavily emphasized in our community as it represents a solemn agreement between a man and a woman," said Ong.²² The excerpt implies how Chinese Muslims try to merge cultural requirements and religious obligations when organizing a wedding reception.

In a broader context, marriage life itself is no less challenging among Chinese Muslims due to their double status as both Chinese and Muslim at one time living in a specific area like Indonesia with abundant local culture. This situation makes PITI initiatively facilitate Chinese Muslims to deal with the issue of acculturation between Islamic law and Chinese customs in both marriage life and social life at general. Therefore, they hold such consultation and guidance programs regularly in a routine schedule. They furthermore organize online programs available on Instagram as can be seen in Figure 3.



Source: accessed from PITI's Instagram @chenghoosby

Figure 3. PITI's Scheduled Program to Understand Islamic Law

Figure 3 shows two flyers of PITI programs to facilitate guidance and consultation among Chinese Muslims. If the first picture is exclusive for new converts, then the second one targets

²² Syaukanie Ong, Interview, Surabaya, August 18, 2023.

more general audiences as well as wider reach due to its online availability. However, both show that the program is not organized once only. Instead, it is available almost every week, indicating how important this program is for both PITI and Chinese Muslims in general. Did it catch a few audiences, for instance, it would not be organized that routine. This is in line with the statement of Haryono Ong on the potential benefits of providing Islamic law consultation services for the Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia as proposed by PITI. Among others, he mentioned so:

“... PITI has been exploring the idea that offering Islamic law consultation services could be a valuable step in supporting the legal needs of Chinese Muslims in Indonesia. This service is believed to provide a better understanding and offer guidance in navigating specific situations and conditions related to practicing Islamic law within the community...”²³

Further, he informed several aspects on Islamic law as the discussion or consultation themes in the program as follows:

“These consultation services offer a platform for Chinese Muslims to seek guidance on various legal matters pertaining to Islamic law. The issue ranges from family law, inheritance, and business transactions, to personal life. Having access to knowledgeable experts can help individuals make informed decisions in accordance with Islamic principles. Additionally, it can foster a deeper understanding of Islamic legal concepts and empower individuals to uphold their religious obligations in their daily lives.”²⁴

Abdurrahman noted that the data implies how PITI's consultation services have become a valuable resource for Chinese Muslims in Indonesia in addressing their daily issues.²⁵ Feedback

²³ Haryono Ong, Interview, Surabaya, June 16, 2023.

²⁴ Haryono Ong.

²⁵ Abdurrahman, Interview, Surabaya, June 16, 2023.

from grassroots audiences of PITI's programs highlights the practical support and guidance these services provide, assisting Chinese Muslims in navigating both religious and cultural challenges.

Based on the data, it is clear that PITI's Islamic law consultation services are a valuable resource as they provide essential support for Chinese Muslims in Indonesia, helping individuals navigate religious and cultural challenges in their daily lives. We also believe that it helps them face legal challenges with more confidence and better understand their rights in the context of Islamic law and national law. Not only does it provide solutions to concrete problems, but it also provides general education about the principles and practices of Islamic law. It can furthermore improve the community's broad understanding of law aspects relevant to their lives.

Organizing Assistance Program for *Ḥalāl* Food Industry and Business

As time goes by, PITI also assists the business activities of the Chinese Muslim community, mainly after the requirements to get a *ḥalāl* certificate for the culinary business sector became compulsory. Among others, cuisine is one of the most prevalent businesses of Chinese communities worldwide, including that of Indonesian Muslims. Therefore, it makes very much sense why PITI considers this specific aspect important so that they arrange a special program to fulfill this critical need.²⁶ Particularly, it becomes urgent because Chinese cuisine is among the most popular and favorite ones but as most of them are non-Muslims, *ḥalāl* status of Chinese cuisine, including that of Muslims, is in question. In fact, Muslim Chinese do understand the rule of foods in Islam as confirmed by Haryono Ong as follows:

“...In the context of dietary practices, the Qur'an provides clear guidelines about what is permitted (*ḥalāl*) and what is prohibited (*ḥarām*) regarding food and drink. Therefore,

²⁶ Dwi Agustina Kurniawati and Hana Savitri, 'Awareness Level Analysis of Indonesian Consumers toward Halal Products', *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 11.2 (2019), 522-46, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-10-2017-0104>.

PITI tries to adhere to these guidelines by consuming what is *ḥalāl* and avoiding what is *ḥarām*.²⁷

In line with him, Liem Fuk Shon explained that the Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia seeks to comply with the prohibition as a part of the commitment to practice Islamic teaching while complying with its law. Therefore, according to him, applying the *ḥalāl* certification process contributes to ensuring compliance with Islamic dietary laws as the following excerpt shows:

“The *ḥalāl* certification process involves thorough examination and verification to ensure that the production and handling process of food and beverage products adhere to Islamic standards. By obtaining *ḥalāl* certification, Chinese Muslims in Indonesia will be confident that the items they consume or sell align with Islamic dietary laws, thus upholding their religious obligations and maintaining their commitment to practicing Islamic law.”²⁸

In this context, through religious education and awareness programs, Chinese Muslims receive information about the principles of *ḥalāl* foods. It includes an understanding of food sources, the importance of *ḥalāl* certification, and compliance with Islamic food laws.²⁹ Not long ago, as many as 52 Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs/ UMKM) participated in training and assistance in the process of applying for *ḥalāl* and NIB (business master number) certification organized by the Indonesian Haji Muhammad Cheng

²⁷ Haryono Ong (PITI and Takmir Cheng Hoo Mosque), Interview, Surabaya, June 16, 2023.

²⁸ Liem Fuk Shon, Interview, Surabaya, July 19, 2023.

²⁹ Arifeen Yama, Kittisak Jermsittiparsert, and Antomi Saregar, “Impact of Halal Food Certification on Restaurant Business in Indonesia: The Mediating Role of Ethical Compliance,” *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 9, no. 7 (2019): 306–22; Much Djunaidi et al., “Perception and Consumer Behavior of Halal Product Toward Purchase Decision in Indonesia,” *Jurnal Teknik Industri* 22, no. 2 (August 2021): 171–84, <https://doi.org/10.22219/jtiumm.vol22.no2.171-184>.

Hoo Foundation, the PITI in East Java, and the Surabaya Chinese Community Association. The training took place in Surabaya.³⁰

Regarding the program, Supriyanto, a *ḥalāl* expert stated as follows:

“...During training sessions, participants are provided with direct assistance in applying for *ḥalāl* certification through the *sihalal* account on the ptsp.halal.go.id website and registering for the *Sehati* 2023 program.”³¹

Haryanto Satryo, on the other hand, also explained that PITI ensures the quality of *ḥalāl* food and beverages from the start to the end, particularly regarding cross-contamination as the following excerpts:

“PITI, as a Chinese Muslim community organization, emphasizes the importance of ensuring that *ḥalāl* food and drinks remain uncontaminated by *ḥarām* substances throughout the preparation, cooking, and serving processes. Attention to avoiding cross-contamination is paramount in *ḥalāl* practice. Many Chinese Muslims in Indonesia actively seek out *ḥalāl* restaurants and eateries to guarantee that their meals adhere to Islamic guidelines. Adhering to Islamic law practices regarding *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām* is viewed as an act of obedience to Allah and a way to maintain both spiritual and physical well-being.”³²

Those excerpts clearly show that the application scheme for *ḥalāl* certification does not only relate to those who sell Chinese culinary but also to Muslim Chinese in general as consumers. It also turns out that PITI assists Chinese Muslims in expanding their *ḥalāl* industry and business through a collaboration with *Swakarta* Ministry

³⁰ Editors, “Organisasi-Organisasi Tionghoa Gelar Pelatihan Sertifikasi Halal dan NIB Untuk UMKM,” *Chenghoo.Co*, 2023, <https://chenghoo.co/2023/03/26/organisasi-organisasi-tionghoa-gelar-pelatihan-sertifikasi-halal-dan-nib-untuk-umkm/>.

³¹ Supriyanto, Interview, Surabaya, July 19, 2023.

³² Haryanto Satryo, Interview, Surabaya, July 18, 2023.

of Religious Affairs (a Digital platform for accelerating *halāl* products) as illustrated in Figure 4.



Source: accessed from PITI's Instagram at @chenghoosby

Figure 4. Swakarta Program to Assist *Halāl* Product

It can be seen in Figure 4 that PITI builds a collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs in assisting the certification of *halāl* products for Chinese Muslims. This program is called the *Swakarta hub Hulu-Hilir*. It implies how PITI seriously accompanies, assists, and facilitates the justification of *saudara baru's* business to be a *halāl* product. This program, the *Swakarta*, besides providing and assisting *halāl* product, also assists the *halāl* capital, business skills, and accelerating *halāl* products.

From the previous description, it is clear that the Indonesian Chinese Muslim community is an active part of the broader economic ecosystem, namely the *halāl* food market. In essence, consuming *halāl* food and drink is a fundamental Islamic practice, while the Chinese is good at the cooking skills and the culinary business sector. This situation leads them to negotiate these two things with one another; their skills in cooking or their running culinary business and their religious belief's rule on *halāl* and *haram*. Obviously, this reflects a commitment to complying with Islamic law, ensuring that they align every part of their daily life with Islamic principles. Further, cultural diversity within the Chinese Muslim community possibly contributes

to giving birth to unique *halāl* culinary items that combine Islamic requirements with Chinese cultural influences in Indonesia. This can be seen, among others, in a *halāl* moon cake which has been certified by the Ministry of Religious Affairs as a *halāl* food. This traditional Chinese cake usually uses pork oil but Indonesian Chinese Muslims replace the oil with coconut milk.

East Java PITI particularly has a different concept of culinary transformation. They tend to educate Chinese Muslims to sell non-risky products. PITI suggests they change their culinary business products into a non-risky one. Through interview with Chak Hoo,³³ We found how he changed the food menus he sells in his restaurant after realizing how important *halāl* products for Indonesian Muslims are. He accentuated that the change is mainly for business, but instead for complying with Islamic law while providing *halāl* foods for Muslims in general, ranging from Chinese to Indonesians. Following is Table 2 enlisting old menus and new menus in a restaurant he runs his business in;

Table 2. The Change of Food Menu in Chak Ho's Restaurant

No	Old Menu	New Menu	Change
1	<i>Jiaozi</i> (typically filled with pork)	<i>Halāl</i> Chinese Dumplings (Indonesian <i>siomay</i>)	Pork to chicken or beef
2	<i>Bak Kut Teh</i> , a pork rib soup	<i>Halāl</i> <i>Bak Kut Teh</i> (Indonesian <i>Sop Buntut</i>)	Pork to chicken or beef
3	Mooncakes (containing pork oil)	<i>Halāl</i> Chinese Mooncakes (Indonesian <i>Kue Lumpur</i>)	Pork oil to coconut milk
4	Hot Pot	<i>Halāl</i> Chinese <i>Hot Pot</i> Indonesian Soto	Pork to chicken or beef

Source: researchers' data

It can be seen from Table 2 that the new form of Chinese Muslims' culinary business faced some changes from the use of pork-based to beef or chicken based. Moreover, the changes are inspired by Indonesian traditional cuisines. These examples highlight how the Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia has adapted traditional

³³ Chak Hoo, a Chinese Muslim with culinary business owner, Interview, 2023.

Chinese dishes to meet *halāl* requirements while maintaining their distinct cultural flavors, resulting in unique culinary practices that differ significantly from traditional Indonesian dishes and original Chinese culinary considered as *harām* among Muslims.

In detail, PITI's efforts and significant role in supporting and facilitating *halāl* practices within the Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia are as follows;

Firstly, *halāl* certification guidance. Here, PITI works with Chinese Muslim-owned businesses to ensure that their products meet *halāl* standards. This includes providing guidance on sourcing *halāl* ingredients, proper handling and processing techniques, and navigating the certification process through recognized *halāl* certification bodies like the Indonesian Council of Ulama (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*), the government's *halāl* guarantees agency or other *halāl* certification institution. PITI also conducts workshops and seminars to educate business owners and the community about the importance of *halāl* certification and the specifics of Islamic dietary laws.

Secondly, cultural integration. PITI promotes the development and popularization of *halāl* Chinese-Indonesian fusion cuisine. This includes adapting traditional Chinese recipes to meet *halāl* requirements while incorporating Indonesian flavors and ingredients.

Thirdly, religious and community support. PITI provides religious guidance to Chinese Muslims on various aspects of daily life, including dietary practices. This ensures that community members are well-informed about maintaining *halāl* practices.

Fourth, supporting entrepreneurs. PITI supports Chinese Muslim entrepreneurs by providing business training and networking opportunities. This helps them to thrive in the *halāl* food industry, contributing to economic empowerment within the community. Through these multifaceted efforts, PITI plays a crucial role in supporting the Chinese Muslim community in Indonesia, ensuring that they can maintain their cultural heritage while adhering to *halāl* rules.

Conclusion

This research reveals that the practice of Islamic law in the Indonesian Chinese Muslim community has uniqueness and diversity as well as a combination of culture, tradition, and character in the

spirit of a harmonious society. PITI East Java, in particular, concerned with three things, namely translating the Qur'an into Mandarin, organizing marriage daily life guidance, and mentoring programs for *halāl* products. This implies how PITI uses a cultural approach to make Chinese Muslims understand and implement Islamic laws along with their special background and characteristics. The Chinese tradition has therefore been modified and combined with Indonesian and Islamic traditions. This paper is limited to analyzing, in general, several aspects of Islamic law practice enforcement in the Indonesian Chinese Muslim community in an organization, namely PITI in East Java. Therefore, it provides a description of the practice of Islamic law as practiced and enforced in one limited community. Due to these limitations, researchers suggest other researchers do more detailed research about PITI's contribution, challenge, or opportunities in facilitating Islamic law enforcement in other areas or in comparative study schemes.

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