

INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCE OF HALAL CERTIFICATION ON MARKET ACCESS AND BUSINESS GROWTH FOR MSMEs IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of halal certification on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. The purpose of the research is to assess both the benefits and challenges associated with halal certification for MSMEs, with particular attention to the barriers faced by smaller businesses. A narrative review approach was employed, synthesizing 86 peer-reviewed studies published between 2020 and 2024. The findings reveal that halal certification significantly enhances market access, leading to increased sales, a broader customer base, and improved consumer trust. However, smaller MSMEs encounter substantial challenges, including high certification costs, bureaucratic complexities, and lack of awareness. Government programs, such as those offering subsidies and training, have proven beneficial in addressing some of these barriers, but there is still room for improvement. The review findings are organized into four analytical tables documenting temporal trends, methodological approaches, thematic frequencies, and contextual statistics from official government sources. The study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the specific barriers faced by smaller businesses and the importance of government support in overcoming these challenges. The implications suggest that streamlining the certification process, providing targeted financial assistance, and enhancing awareness programs are crucial for enabling more MSMEs to participate in the halal economy. The study calls for further research to explore the long-term impact of halal certification and the role of digitalization in simplifying the certification process.

Keywords: Halal certification; market access; Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises; financial performance; government support.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji dampak sertifikasi halal terhadap Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) di Indonesia. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menilai manfaat serta tantangan yang berkaitan dengan penerapan sertifikasi halal bagi UMKM, dengan perhatian khusus pada hambatan yang dihadapi oleh pelaku usaha skala kecil. Metode yang digunakan adalah *narrative review* dengan mensintesis 86 artikel ilmiah bereputasi yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2020 hingga 2024. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa sertifikasi halal secara signifikan meningkatkan akses pasar,

yang tercermin dari peningkatan penjualan, perluasan basis konsumen, serta meningkatnya kepercayaan konsumen. Namun demikian, UMKM skala kecil masih menghadapi berbagai kendala, antara lain tingginya biaya sertifikasi, kompleksitas prosedur birokrasi, serta rendahnya tingkat pemahaman mengenai proses sertifikasi. Program pemerintah, seperti pemberian subsidi dan pelatihan, terbukti membantu dalam mengatasi sebagian hambatan tersebut, meskipun efektivitasnya masih perlu ditingkatkan. Temuan kajian ini disajikan dalam empat tabel analitis yang mendokumentasikan tren temporal publikasi, pendekatan metodologis, frekuensi tema penelitian, serta statistik kontekstual yang bersumber dari data resmi pemerintah. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap literatur dengan menyoroti secara spesifik hambatan yang dihadapi UMKM skala kecil serta menegaskan pentingnya dukungan pemerintah dalam mengatasi tantangan tersebut. Implikasi penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penyederhanaan proses sertifikasi, penyediaan bantuan keuangan yang terarah, serta penguatan program sosialisasi menjadi langkah krusial untuk mendorong partisipasi UMKM yang lebih luas dalam ekonomi halal. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk mengkaji dampak jangka panjang sertifikasi halal serta peran digitalisasi dalam menyederhanakan proses sertifikasi.

Kata kunci: Sertifikasi halal; akses pasar; Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah; kinerja keuangan; dukungan pemerintah.

INTRODUCTION

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) or *Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah* (UMKM) sector in Indonesia is a key pillar of the nation's economy, contributing significantly to both employment and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Recent reports indicate that MSMEs accounts for nearly 99.9% of all businesses in the country, absorbing over 96% of the workforce and contributing between 60.51% to 61.97% of national GDP (Gunadi et al., 2021; Tresnasari & Zulganef, 2023). These businesses play a crucial role in fostering economic resilience, particularly during economic downturns, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where they were instrumental in sustaining employment and supporting local economies (Gunadi et al., 2021). Despite their significance, however, MSMEs face numerous challenges, including limited access to capital, technological constraints, and difficulties in market access.

Halal certification has emerged as a vital mechanism for MSMEs, particularly in industries such as food, beverages, and cosmetics, where consumer trust and ethical production standards are paramount. In a predominantly Muslim country like Indonesia, halal certification provides a competitive edge by ensuring that products comply with Islamic dietary laws, thereby increasing consumer confidence and expanding market access. The global halal market, estimated to exceed USD 2.4 trillion, is a significant driver for the growth of MSMEs, offering both domestic and international market opportunities (Sujibto & M, 2023). Nevertheless, the process of obtaining halal certification poses significant challenges for many MSMEs, particularly smaller businesses, due to the costs, bureaucratic complexities, and lack of awareness about the benefits of certification (Dawam et al., 2023).

The primary issue facing MSMEs in obtaining halal certification is the combination of high costs and complex bureaucratic processes. Many small businesses in Indonesia lack the financial resources to navigate the certification process, which requires not only certification fees but also the operational adjustments necessary to meet halal standards. Additionally, the complexity of the halal certification process, including multiple layers of paperwork and regulatory compliance, can be overwhelming for businesses with limited administrative capacities. These barriers hinder the ability of MSMEs to fully capitalize on the economic opportunities provided by halal certification, thus limiting their growth and market reach.

A common solution to these challenges is the implementation of government initiatives aimed at subsidizing halal certification and providing training programs to educate MSMEs owners about the process. For instance, the SEHATI program, which offers free halal certification to eligible businesses, has been instrumental in reducing the financial burden on small enterprises. These government-backed programs, along with training and outreach efforts, help bridge the knowledge gap and facilitate the certification process for MSMEs (Khasanah et al., 2024). However, despite these efforts, the efficacy of these programs remains limited by a lack of awareness and outreach, particularly among businesses in underserved regions. Furthermore, the bureaucratic inefficiencies in the certification process remain a significant obstacle, suggesting that further streamlining and digitalization of the process could enhance accessibility for MSMEs.

In line with these concerns, previous studies have suggested that improving financial access and reducing the complexities of the certification process are critical to enabling more MSMEs to obtain halal certification. For example, research by Priantina et al. (2024) and Sudarmiati et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of simplifying bureaucratic procedures and providing financial support to reduce the barriers to certification. Additionally, studies have highlighted the need for more targeted training and educational programs to raise awareness among MSMEs about the benefits of halal certification and the procedures involved (Rafiuddin et al., 2024). By focusing on these areas, policymakers can increase the participation of MSMEs in the halal economy, leading to greater economic inclusion and growth for small businesses across Indonesia.

Beyond the literature gap, there exists a significant social and economic phenomenon that warrants urgent attention. Despite MSMEs representing 99.9% of all businesses in Indonesia and contributing over 60% to national GDP, only 387,568 MSMEs (approximately 0.6% of the total

64.2 million MSMEs) have obtained halal certification as of 2024, according to data from the Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal (BPJPH). This stark disparity reveals a critical disconnect between the potential benefits of halal certification and its actual adoption among Indonesian MSMEs. Furthermore, preliminary observations indicate that many MSME owners, particularly in rural and underserved areas, remain unaware of the certification's benefits or perceive the process as prohibitively complex and expensive. This social reality characterized by low certification rates, limited awareness, and persistent barriers underscores the practical significance of this research beyond theoretical gaps in the literature.

The existing literature indicates a significant gap in understanding the specific barriers faced by smaller MSMEs in obtaining halal certification, particularly those in rural or underserved areas. While previous studies have examined the economic benefits of halal certification, there is limited research on the challenges specific to smaller businesses, particularly those without access to the resources necessary for certification. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that evaluate the effectiveness of government initiatives, such as the SEHATI program, in facilitating halal certification for MSMEs. This gap in the literature highlights the need for more research on how to address the financial, bureaucratic, and knowledge barriers to halal certification, especially for smaller and resource-constrained businesses.

This study aims to fill the research gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and benefits of halal certification for MSMEs in Indonesia, with a particular focus on smaller businesses in various sectors. The novelty of this research lies in its exploration of both the economic advantages and the specific barriers to halal certification, providing a more nuanced understanding of the issues faced by MSMEs. The study also seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of government policies, such as subsidies and training programs, in reducing these barriers and enhancing the participation of MSMEs in the halal economy. By addressing these issues, the study contributes to the broader discourse on economic inclusion and the role of certification in fostering business growth in Indonesia's halal sector.

The primary objective of this study is to assess the impact of halal certification on MSMEs market access, financial performance, and consumer trust, while also identifying the specific challenges faced by smaller businesses in obtaining certification. By examining both the benefits and barriers associated with halal certification, the study will provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and business practitioners seeking to improve the

certification process for MSMEs. This research will contribute to a better understanding of how halal certification can serve as a tool for promoting economic inclusion, enhancing market access, and fostering sustainable business growth for MSMEs in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design and Rationale

This study adopts a narrative review design to explore the role of halal certification in enhancing market access and business growth among micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. The narrative review approach is most suitable for examining multidimensional socio-economic phenomena that require an interpretive synthesis of diverse perspectives (Bayram et al., 2023; Bennell et al., 2022). Unlike systematic or scoping reviews that follow rigid protocols, this design prioritizes conceptual depth, allowing for the integration of qualitative and quantitative insights across multiple disciplines. Its flexibility enables an inductive exploration of historical, cultural, and policy narratives that define halal certification within Indonesia's economic context (Louder & Wyborn, 2020). This interpretive approach aligns with the study's aim to identify patterns, contradictions, and theoretical underpinnings that shape MSMEs participation in halal markets.

Scope and Objectives of the Review

The review focuses on studies published between 2010 and 2025 that investigate the intersection of halal certification, market expansion, and policy support for MSMEs. The primary objective is to synthesize existing evidence on how halal certification affects market access, consumer trust, and financial outcomes. Secondary objectives include exploring barriers such as administrative complexity and cost and evaluating governmental interventions that mediate these challenges. This scope is justified by the policy relevance of halal certification as both a religious and economic instrument (Fadlallah et al., 2019). By emphasizing thematic breadth over methodological restriction, the review integrates multiple knowledge domains entrepreneurship, law, religion, and social policy within a coherent analytical framework.

Search Strategy and Literature Selection

Although narrative reviews are not strictly bound by pre-defined protocols, transparency and reproducibility were maintained through a structured search procedure. Major databases such as Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar were searched using combinations of keywords including "halal certification," "MSMEs," "market access," "Indonesia," and

“Islamic economy.” Selection emphasized diversity across disciplines and methodologies, allowing inclusion of empirical, conceptual, and policy-based studies. Studies were excluded if they lacked relevance to Indonesia or failed to address implications for MSMEs. Following Faggion et al. (2019), all selection processes and search strategies were documented to enhance replicability and ensure comprehensive coverage. The resulting corpus included 86 peer-reviewed articles and policy documents that formed the analytical basis of synthesis.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria were defined to maintain analytical focus and quality. Eligible studies met three key conditions: (1) relevance to halal certification processes, policies, or market dynamics; (2) focus on MSMEs or comparable small business contexts; and (3) empirical or theoretical insights into market, trust, or performance outcomes. Exclusions applied to opinion pieces, editorials, or works lacking verifiable data or conceptual grounding. As Costa et al. (2021) emphasize, rigorous selection criteria are essential for ensuring coherence between the review’s objectives and included studies. This selective process enabled an integrative yet focused assessment of how halal certification shapes socio-economic realities across micro-enterprise sectors.

Data Extraction and Organization

Each selected study was subjected to an analytical extraction protocol capturing (a) authorship and publication year, (b) methodological design, (c) thematic focus, (d) major findings, and (e) theoretical or policy implications. The extraction process mirrored methodological standards recommended in the SANRA framework (Faggion et al., 2017). Extracted data were categorized according to central analytic dimensions market access, consumer trust, regulatory frameworks, and institutional barriers to facilitate efficient synthesis. This systematic organization allowed pattern detection across quantitative and qualitative findings, providing a structured foundation for subsequent thematic and conceptual interpretation.

Following extraction, data were organized into thematic matrices to facilitate cross-study comparison. Four analytical tables were constructed to synthesize findings: (1) Temporal Distribution Table – documenting the year-wise frequency of publications to identify trends in research attention; (2) Study Characteristics Matrix capturing methodological details, sample characteristics, and focal themes across representative studies; (3) Thematic Frequency Table – quantifying how often key benefits and barriers were discussed across the 86-study corpus; (4)

Contextual Data Table integrating official statistics from government sources (BPS, BPJPH, Kementerian Agama) to ground the literature review in empirical reality. This tabulation strategy enabled both qualitative synthesis and quantitative mapping of thematic prevalence, consistent with best practices in narrative review methodology (Byrne, 2016a; Patro & Misra, 2020).

Data Synthesis and Tabulation

Analytical and Conceptual Frameworks

This review integrates several analytical frameworks to enhance interpretive depth. Thematic analysis, as described by Guerrero & Castañeda-Trujillo (2024), was applied to identify recurrent themes and divergences across sources. Analytical narrative (AN) methods were incorporated to map causal relationships between institutional mechanisms, entrepreneurial behavior, and certification outcomes (Mongin, 2016). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) supported examination of power relations embedded in policy narratives and stakeholder discourses (Kuenzler & Stauffer, 2023). Additionally, the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) guided the analysis of how policy stories and state interventions construct public understanding of halal certification (Kuenzler & Stauffer, 2023). The integration of these frameworks allows for interpretive triangulation, strengthening analytical rigor while preserving the flexibility inherent to narrative reviews.

Synthesis and Interpretation of Findings

Synthesis proceeded inductively through iterative reading and conceptual mapping. Studies were grouped thematically according to how they conceptualized certification as an economic, cultural, or moral instrument. Following Adeel et al. (2023), each thematic cluster was analyzed for convergence, tension, and contradiction to reveal both consensus and debate within the literature. Narrative synthesis enabled cross-comparison of findings across time and context, illuminating the evolving perceptions of halal certification from compliance-driven regulation to strategic market positioning. The analysis balanced descriptive and interpretive lenses, integrating empirical results with sociocultural interpretations. This interpretive synthesis produced a comprehensive narrative explaining how certification enhances market legitimacy while exposing systemic barriers that restrict smaller enterprises.

Ensuring Credibility and Transparency

Credibility was ensured through methodological transparency and critical reflexivity. The review process was guided by best practices for narrative reviews as outlined by Byrne (2016b) and Patro & Misra (2021), emphasizing clarity in objectives, search transparency, and explicit

acknowledgment of biases. Documentation of search terms, inclusion criteria, and analytical decisions was maintained to facilitate reproducibility (Hall & Leeder, 2024). Triangulation across conceptual frameworks served to mitigate researcher bias and validate thematic interpretations. Furthermore, quality appraisal of included studies was conducted using established evaluative criteria, assessing methodological soundness, contextual relevance, and theoretical contribution. This approach aligns with Kuipers et al. (2022) in reinforcing the methodological integrity of narrative reviews in social science contexts.

Limitations and Ethical Considerations

While narrative reviews permit depth and interpretive flexibility, they are also susceptible to subjective bias and potential omission due to non-systematic data gathering (Fioretti et al., 2016). The study acknowledges these limitations and strives to maintain balanced representation across perspectives. Limitations are addressed through reflexive writing practices, transparency in data synthesis, and open acknowledgment of interpretative boundaries. Ethical considerations were also observed by ensuring accurate representation of cited works and maintaining the intellectual integrity of original sources. Following Hurdawaty and Tukiran (2024), this reflective rigor enhances credibility and minimizes ethical risks associated with secondary synthesis.

Justification of Narrative Review for This Study

The narrative review design is particularly justified in exploring the multidimensional socio-economic nature of halal certification within Indonesia's MSMEs ecosystem. This subject intersects cultural identity, entrepreneurship, and public policy domains that demand contextual interpretation rather than empirical generalization (Waring et al., 2020). As (Celebi & Yilmaz, 2025) observe, narrative frameworks illuminate power relations and stakeholder experiences that quantitative designs may overlook. Moreover, the fast-evolving policy landscape surrounding halal certification requires an adaptable and integrative method responsive to dynamic social realities (Akedda & Muslim, 2023). Hence, a narrative review not only synthesizes diverse knowledge but also situates halal certification within the lived experiences and policy evolutions shaping Indonesia's halal economy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Table 1. Secondary Data from Official Sources (Context for Analysis)

Indicator	Value/Data	Source
Total MSMEs in Indonesia (2024)	64.2 million	BPS (2024)
MSMEs with Halal Certification	387,568 (0.6%)	BPJPH (2024)
Halal Market Value (Indonesia)	USD 218.8 billion	State of Global Islamic Economy Report (2023)
Average Certification Cost	IDR 5-8 million	MUI & BPJPH (2024)
SEHATI Program Beneficiaries (2022-2024)	142,389 MSMEs	Kementerian Agama RI (2024)

Note: This secondary data provides official context for the literature review findings. All data are from verified government and international sources as of 2024.

To contextualize these literature findings, Table 1 presents secondary data from official Indonesian sources. These statistics reveal that despite the presence of 64.2 million MSMEs in Indonesia, only 387,568 (0.6%) hold halal certification, highlighting a significant gap that underscores the relevance of addressing identified barriers.

Table 2. Synthesis of Benefits and Barriers from Literature Review

Category	Description	Frequency in Literature
BENEFITS		
Enhanced Market Access	Access to domestic and international halal markets	45 studies (52.3%)
Increased Revenue	Average sales increase of 20-35%	38 studies (44.2%)
Consumer Trust	Higher brand loyalty and repeat purchases	42 studies (48.8%)
BARRIERS		
High Certification Costs	IDR 3-10 million for small businesses	28 studies (32.6%)
Bureaucratic Complexity	Average 6-12 months processing time	31 studies (36.0%)
Low Awareness	Only 43% aware of certification benefits	22 studies (25.6%)

Note: Frequency represents the number and percentage of studies (out of 86) that discussed each theme.

The synthesis of 86 studies revealed six dominant themes, categorized into benefits and barriers. Table 2 presents the frequency with which these themes appeared across the literature. Benefits such as enhanced market access (52.3% of studies) and increased revenue (44.2%) were most frequently discussed, while barriers including high certification costs (32.6%) and bureaucratic complexity (36.0%) were also prominent concerns.

Table 3. Characteristics of Selected Key Studies (Sample of 5 from 86)

Author(s) & Year	Method	Sample Size	Main Focus	Key Findings
Izzuddin & Adinugraha (2022)	Literature Review	N/A	Market Access & Certification Benefits	Enhanced market credibility and expansion
Fitri et al. (2023)	Quantitative Survey	150 MSMEs	Financial Performance	Significant increase in sales (avg 23%)
Rafiuddin et al. (2024)	Mixed Methods	85 MSMEs	Implementation Barriers	High costs and bureaucratic complexity
Khasanah et al. (2024)	Evaluation Study	200 SEHATI participants	Government Program Effectiveness	67% success rate in certification uptake
Pratikto et al. (2023)	SEM Analysis	312 MSMEs	Behavioral Intention	Trust and awareness significantly affect intention

Note: This table presents a representative sample of the 86 studies reviewed. Full study characteristics are available in the complete literature database.

The methodological approaches varied across studies, with 42% employing quantitative methods, 31% using qualitative approaches, and 27% adopting mixed-methods designs. Table 3 provides a representative sample of five key studies, illustrating the diversity in research methods, sample sizes, and focal areas within the reviewed corpus.

Table 4. Distribution of Reviewed Studies by Publication Year (2020-2024)

Publication Year	Number of Studies	Percentage (%)
2020	8	9.3%
2021	12	14.0%
2022	15	17.4%
2023	28	32.6%
2024	23	26.7%
TOTAL	86	100%

Note: The data shows an increasing trend in halal certification research, with peak publications in 2023 (32.6%), indicating growing academic interest in this area.

This narrative review synthesized findings from 86 peer-reviewed studies published between 2020 and 2024. Table 4 presents the temporal distribution of the reviewed literature, demonstrating a notable increase in research attention, particularly in 2023 (32.6% of all studies). This trend reflects growing academic and policy interest in halal certification as a tool for MSME development in Indonesia.

Overview of Reviewed Literature

The research highlights several key findings regarding the economic benefits of halal certification for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. The data collected from various studies show that halal certification plays a crucial role in enhancing market access, improving sales growth, fostering consumer trust, and providing a competitive advantage for MSMEs. The findings also shed light on the role of government interventions, challenges in the certification process, and the relationship between halal certification and financial institutions.

Enhanced Market Access

Halal certification significantly contributes to expanding the market access of MSMEs, particularly in a Muslim-majority country like Indonesia. According to Izzuddin & Adinugraha (2022), halal certification serves as a prerequisite for businesses that aim to enter markets with substantial Muslim populations, both domestically and internationally. The research indicates that halal certification opens doors to broader markets, providing MSMEs with the opportunity to increase their customer base and sales volume. In international trade, halal certification is

increasingly becoming a requirement for many regions, especially in the Middle East, Asia, and other parts of the world with growing Muslim populations. This facilitates the internationalization of MSMEs products, increasing their visibility in the global market (Rafiuddin et al., 2024).

The positive correlation between halal certification and market access is further supported by the studies of Priantina et al. (2023), which demonstrated that halal-certified businesses had an expanded reach within both local and international markets. Certification not only helps in expanding market opportunities but also ensures that products meet consumer expectations and standards, fostering a better reputation among consumers.

Increased Revenue and Sales Growth

One of the most prominent findings of the research is the direct link between halal certification and increased revenue for MSMEs. The data collected show that businesses with halal certification experience a notable increase in sales and overall revenue. For instance, Fitri et al. (2023) found that halal-certified businesses observed a significant improvement in their financial performance. This can be attributed to the fact that halal certification enhances the marketability of products, making them more appealing to consumers, particularly those who prioritize halal compliance in their purchasing decisions.

The impact of halal certification on sales growth is not limited to the food sector but extends to other industries, including cosmetics and services, where consumers seek assurance of ethical production (Sari et al., 2020). Studies indicate that halal-certified products tend to enjoy higher consumer interest, leading to greater sales and higher profit margins for MSMEs (Ab Talib et al., 2017). Furthermore, the increased consumer trust associated with halal certification encourages repeat purchases, thus ensuring long-term financial stability for businesses (Dawam et al., 2023).

Consumer Trust and Brand Loyalty

Halal certification has a significant impact on building consumer trust and fostering brand loyalty, especially in the food and beverage sector. In Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim country, consumers prioritize halal products, which they perceive as meeting both religious and health standards. This perception of safety and trustworthiness enhances the consumer's willingness to purchase from certified businesses, as highlighted by Abdulraof (2024) and Identiti et al. (2024).

Research conducted by Rasdi et al. (2023) also corroborates this view, demonstrating that halal certification helps establish consumer confidence, leading to a stronger relationship

between businesses and their customers. Halal-certified businesses experience higher consumer satisfaction rates and tend to build a loyal customer base that trusts the brand's commitment to quality and ethical practices. This trust is particularly important in the food sector, where the consequences of non-compliance with halal standards can have long-lasting reputational damage. Therefore, the presence of halal certification is seen as a safeguard, encouraging consumer loyalty and retention.

Competitive Differentiation

In highly competitive markets, halal certification serves as a key differentiator for businesses seeking to stand out. Studies by Giyanti et al. (2020) and Pratikto et al. (2023) highlight that halal-certified MSMEs benefit from a competitive edge, as certification signals a commitment to ethical business practices, product integrity, and quality control. This differentiation becomes crucial in sectors where businesses are vying for attention in saturated markets, such as the food, beverage, and tourism industries.

Furthermore, halal certification is not just a tool for attracting Muslim consumers but also resonates with non-Muslim consumers who are increasingly conscious of the ethical and sustainability implications of their purchasing choices. The ethical appeal of halal products, which emphasizes transparency, quality, and safety, enables MSMEs to reach a broader demographic and strengthen their position in the marketplace (Fachrurazi et al., 2023). As a result, halal certification not only enhances the credibility of MSMEs but also increases their market competitiveness, enabling them to differentiate themselves from non-certified counterparts.

Operational Benefits and Efficiency

The process of obtaining halal certification often leads to operational improvements for MSMEs. This certification encourages businesses to adhere to strict production and quality control standards, thereby streamlining their operations. According to Giyanti et al. (2021), many businesses that pursued halal certification were compelled to refine their supply chains, enhance product traceability, and improve overall management practices. This focus on quality and operational efficiency can result in cost savings, better resource utilization, and a more effective supply chain, all of which contribute to the long-term success of MSMEs.

Moreover, certification can foster better management practices, as businesses are required to document processes and implement standardized procedures to comply with halal guidelines. This leads to improved internal operations, which, in turn, enhances the overall business

performance (Fitri et al., 2023). The emphasis on operational compliance as part of the certification process can thus benefit MSMEs beyond simply meeting consumer demand it also drives long-term operational efficiencies.

Government Support and Empowerment

The role of government initiatives in supporting halal certification cannot be overstated. Programs such as SEHATI (Sertifikasi Halal Gratis) provide crucial financial and educational support to MSMEs, enabling them to overcome the economic barriers to obtaining halal certification. As noted by Khasanah et al. (2024), these subsidies have resulted in an increase in halal certification uptake among MSMEs. Government efforts to streamline the certification process and provide free or subsidized services have significantly empowered small businesses to participate in the halal market, thus enhancing their market access.

The findings suggest that government policies aimed at reducing the financial burden associated with halal certification are instrumental in increasing the number of MSMEs pursuing certification. Moreover, government-sponsored training programs help business owners understand the certification process, improve compliance, and ultimately benefit from the advantages of halal certification (Priantina et al., 2023). These interventions foster economic inclusion by ensuring that even smaller and resource-constrained businesses can participate in the halal market.

Improved Risk Management and Resilience

Halal certification also contributes to improved risk management and resilience among MSMEs. Businesses that obtain halal certification tend to be more adaptable to changing market conditions and consumer preferences. According to Giyanti & Indriastiningsih (2019), certified businesses are better positioned to navigate fluctuations in consumer demand and economic downturns. By adhering to halal standards, MSMEs not only meet market expectations but also ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks that protect consumer rights and safety.

This enhanced risk management enables MSMEs to respond more effectively to external challenges, such as economic recessions, supply chain disruptions, or shifts in consumer preferences. As a result, halal certification supports the long-term viability of businesses by enhancing their ability to weather unforeseen challenges (Rafiuddin et al., 2024)

DISCUSSION

Halal Certification and Market Access

The results of this study underscore the significant role that halal certification plays in enhancing market access for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. The data demonstrates a clear relationship between halal certification and expanded market opportunities, both domestically and internationally. Halal certification serves as a gateway for MSMEs to tap into local and global markets, particularly in regions with substantial Muslim populations. This finding supports earlier research indicating that halal certification is increasingly essential for businesses seeking to compete in competitive markets (Izzuddin & Adinugraha, 2022). As the halal industry grows globally, certification provides businesses with the credibility necessary to attract Muslim consumers and those who value ethical production practices. The study shows that halal-certified businesses enjoy broader customer bases, increased sales, and expanded market reach, proving the substantial impact of certification on business growth.

This finding is consistent with the literature on halal certification's role in improving market access. Several studies have reported that halal certification increases consumer trust and facilitates entry into both local and international markets (Priantina et al., 2024). For instance, research by Rafiuddin et al. (2024) shows that halal certification improves the competitiveness of businesses, allowing them to expand into international markets where halal compliance is crucial. Furthermore, studies like those by Fitri et al. (2023) emphasize the operational advantages that come with certification, including improved product visibility and consumer confidence. However, it should be noted that some studies, such as by Dawam et al. (2023), indicate that while halal certification enhances market access, the costs and complexities involved in obtaining certification can act as significant barriers for smaller businesses, particularly in underserved regions.

The implications of these results extend to several theoretical, practical, and policy dimensions. From a theoretical perspective, this research reinforces the understanding that halal certification functions as a crucial enabler of market inclusion for MSMEs, aligning with broader theories on market access and consumer behavior (Hasan et al., 2020). Practically, businesses seeking to enhance their market presence should consider halal certification as an essential strategy, particularly when entering regions with significant Muslim populations. On the policy front, the findings suggest that government initiatives promoting halal certification, such as the

SEHATI program, play a vital role in reducing barriers for MSMEs, facilitating their market access (Khasanah et al., 2024). Policymakers should consider expanding such programs and addressing the complexities associated with certification to ensure more MSMEs can leverage this opportunity for economic growth.

Economic Benefits of Halal Certification

The study highlights the significant economic benefits of halal certification, particularly in terms of increased revenue and financial performance for MSMEs. The analysis shows that businesses with halal certification experience a notable rise in sales and revenue, supported by higher consumer trust and a larger market share. This positive economic impact is consistent with earlier findings that halal certification improves business profitability by aligning products with consumer demands for ethical and religiously compliant products (Fitri et al., 2023). In particular, halal certification enhances consumer confidence, leading to repeat purchases and long-term customer loyalty. MSMEs that have adopted halal certification report not only improved sales figures but also a competitive advantage in saturated markets. These findings confirm that certification contributes substantially to the economic viability of businesses, particularly in sectors like food and beverages, where consumer trust is critical.

Supporting literature consistently demonstrates the economic advantages of halal certification. Studies by Giyanti et al. (2021) and Rasdi et al. (2023) indicate that halal-certified businesses enjoy better financial outcomes, including increased sales volumes and customer loyalty. The impact of halal certification on financial performance is particularly evident in the food sector, where certification enhances consumer confidence and increases marketability. However, it is important to note that other studies, such as by Sudarmiatin et al. (2020), suggest that while certification can provide financial benefits, the costs and operational adjustments required to meet halal standards may offset the short-term economic gains, particularly for smaller businesses. This highlights a need for further exploration into the cost-benefit ratio of halal certification for MSMEs.

The implications of these findings are multifaceted. Theoretically, the results confirm that halal certification is an important factor in explaining business performance and profitability in the context of ethical consumption (Sari et al., 2023). Practically, businesses in Indonesia and other Muslim-majority countries can use halal certification as a key strategy to boost their revenue and strengthen consumer loyalty. For policymakers, these results emphasize the importance of supporting MSMEs through programs that reduce the cost burden associated with

certification, such as subsidies and training initiatives. Governments can further assist MSMEs by facilitating smoother certification processes and promoting the long-term economic benefits of certification, especially in markets where halal compliance is becoming increasingly essential.

Consumer Trust and Brand Loyalty

The study reveals that halal certification significantly contributes to building consumer trust and fostering brand loyalty, two crucial factors for the success of MSMEs. Halal certification assures consumers that products adhere to Islamic dietary laws, providing confidence in the quality and integrity of the product. This trust is a key driver of consumer behavior, especially in Indonesia, where a majority of consumers prioritize halal products. The results of this study corroborate previous research, which found that halal certification enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty, ultimately leading to improved sales performance (Abdulraof, 2024). By offering products that align with consumers' ethical and religious preferences, businesses can build long-term relationships with customers, ensuring sustained demand and repeat purchases. The study also indicates that halal certification is not only important for Muslim consumers but also for a growing segment of non-Muslim consumers who are increasingly interested in ethically produced products.

These findings are consistent with other studies that have explored the relationship between halal certification and consumer behavior. For instance, research by Hasan et al. (2020) suggests that consumers are more likely to trust and purchase from halal-certified businesses because of the assurance of product safety and ethical practices. Additionally, Pratikto et al. (2023) emphasize that halal certification acts as a signal of quality, which builds brand trust and enhances consumer loyalty. However, some studies, like those by Dawam et al. (2023), argue that while halal certification can boost consumer trust, businesses must also focus on other factors such as product quality and customer service to maintain long-term loyalty. This suggests that halal certification alone is not enough to guarantee customer retention; it must be part of a broader strategy focused on customer satisfaction.

Theoretical implications of this finding reinforce the role of consumer trust in driving purchasing decisions within the context of ethical consumption theories (Jaiyeoba et al., 2019). From a practical standpoint, businesses should prioritize halal certification as a means to establish consumer trust and differentiate themselves in competitive markets. By doing so, businesses can cultivate strong brand loyalty and secure a consistent customer base. For policymakers, these findings highlight the need to promote halal certification not just as a regulatory requirement, but

as a tool for businesses to enhance customer relationships and foster economic growth. Efforts to increase awareness and streamline the certification process will be crucial in helping MSMEs maximize the benefits of certification and strengthen their position in the market.

Government Support and Policy Implications

The study also emphasizes the critical role of government support in facilitating halal certification for MSMEs. Government initiatives, such as the SEHATI program, which provides free halal certification, significantly reduce financial barriers for smaller businesses. The results demonstrate that such programs have a positive impact on increasing the number of halal-certified MSMEs, allowing them to access broader markets and improve their financial performance. However, while government support is crucial, the study also points to the need for further improvements in policy design and implementation. For instance, many MSMEs still face challenges in understanding the certification process, and there is a gap in the dissemination of information regarding government initiatives. Additionally, bureaucratic inefficiencies and high certification costs remain significant obstacles for some businesses.

This finding aligns with existing literature that stresses the importance of government interventions in promoting halal certification. Priantina et al. (2024) and Khasanah et al. (2024) highlight that government support programs are essential for reducing the barriers to certification, particularly for smaller MSMEs with limited resources. However, some studies also note that the effectiveness of these programs is limited by lack of awareness and access to information (Bobby & Rahmadani, 2024). The government's role in facilitating the certification process and ensuring that it is accessible to all MSMEs is critical for the success of these initiatives. Without further streamlining and awareness campaigns, many businesses may miss out on the opportunity to certify their products and expand into lucrative markets.

The implications of these results are significant for policymakers. From a theoretical standpoint, these findings reinforce the importance of institutional support in enabling small businesses to thrive in competitive markets. Practically, policymakers should focus on expanding and improving government programs such as SEHATI, ensuring that they reach a wider audience and are accessible to businesses in all sectors. This could involve offering additional training, simplifying certification processes, and increasing awareness of government subsidies and support. By doing so, the government can further empower MSMEs, enabling them to participate fully in the halal economy and contribute to broader economic growth.

Challenges in the Certification Process

The study also identifies several challenges faced by MSMEs in obtaining halal certification, such as the complexity of the certification process, the high costs associated with compliance, and the lack of knowledge about the benefits and requirements of certification. The results indicate that while halal certification offers significant economic benefits, the process is often perceived as bureaucratically cumbersome, with multiple layers of paperwork and regulatory compliance (Priantina et al., 2023). Many small businesses struggle to navigate these complexities, which can delay certification and hinder market access. Additionally, the financial burden of certification fees and the costs of adapting operations to meet halal standards are significant obstacles for MSMEs, particularly for those operating on tight budgets.

These challenges are consistent with the findings of previous studies, which have highlighted the barriers to halal certification for MSMEs. Research by Sudarmiati et al. (2020) and Dawam et al. (2023) suggests that the high costs and administrative complexity associated with certification are among the primary deterrents for small businesses. Furthermore, studies by Oemar et al. (2023) point out that many MSMEs owners lack awareness about the certification process, making them hesitant to pursue it. This lack of knowledge further exacerbates the challenges faced by businesses, limiting their ability to participate in the halal market. As such, addressing these challenges requires not only financial support but also comprehensive education and outreach programs to inform MSMEs about the benefits and processes of halal certification.

Theoretical and practical implications of these findings suggest that reducing bureaucratic complexity and the financial burden of certification should be a priority for policymakers. Streamlining the certification process and providing additional financial incentives, such as subsidies and tax breaks, would encourage more MSMEs to pursue certification. Moreover, increasing awareness through targeted campaigns and offering training on the halal certification process would empower business owners to navigate the system more effectively. Ultimately, these improvements would enable MSMEs to fully capitalize on the benefits of halal certification and enhance their participation in the growing halal economy.

CONCLUSION

This research successfully addresses its primary objective of assessing the impact of halal certification on MSMEs' market access, financial performance, and consumer trust, while identifying specific challenges faced by smaller businesses in obtaining certification. The

findings confirm that halal certification serves as both an economic enabler and a source of competitive advantage, though its benefits remain inequitably distributed due to persistent financial, bureaucratic, and awareness barriers. The study contributes to the existing literature by synthesizing diverse evidence across 86 studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of both the opportunities and challenges associated with halal certification for Indonesian MSMEs, and offering actionable recommendations for stakeholders at all levels.

The broader implementation of halal certification across Indonesian MSMEs would yield significant social and economic benefits at multiple levels. For consumers, increased halal certification enhances product safety, quality assurance, and alignment with religious and ethical values, while expanding consumer choice in both domestic and international markets. For producers (MSMEs), certification provides access to the USD 218.8 billion domestic halal market and the estimated USD 2.4 trillion global halal economy, fostering business sustainability, job creation, and entrepreneurial growth. At the macroeconomic level, widespread halal certification strengthens Indonesia's position as a leading player in the global halal industry, promotes export competitiveness, and contributes to the government's economic inclusion agenda by empowering small businesses. Furthermore, the certification ecosystem stimulates auxiliary economic activities, including training services, consulting, auditing, and technology development, thereby creating a multiplier effect throughout the economy.

Social and Economic Benefits

For MSMEs seeking to obtain halal certification, this study underscores the importance of viewing certification not merely as a regulatory requirement but as a strategic investment in business growth. MSMEs should prioritize halal certification as part of their business development strategy, particularly when targeting Muslim-majority markets or seeking to differentiate their products in competitive environments. Business owners are encouraged to leverage government support programs, participate in training workshops, and engage with local business associations to navigate the certification process more effectively. The research demonstrates that despite initial costs and administrative challenges, the long-term benefits—including enhanced market access, increased consumer trust, and improved operational efficiency substantially outweigh the barriers.

Practical Implications for MSMEs

Based on the research findings, several policy interventions are recommended to enhance MSME participation in the halal economy: (1) Scale up government subsidy programs such as

SEHATI, which has successfully certified 142,389 MSMEs between 2022-2024, targeting a goal of reaching at least 2-3% of MSMEs by 2027; (2) Implement digitalization initiatives to streamline the certification process, reducing bureaucratic complexity and processing time from the current 6-12 months to 2-3 months; (3) Establish regional halal certification centers in underserved and rural areas to improve accessibility for geographically dispersed MSMEs; (4) Develop comprehensive awareness campaigns targeting MSMEs in sectors beyond food and beverages, including cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and tourism; and (5) Create tiered certification frameworks that accommodate the varying capacities and resources of micro, small, and medium enterprises.

Policy Recommendations

This narrative review of 86 peer-reviewed studies demonstrates that halal certification serves as a critical catalyst for MSME growth in Indonesia, significantly enhancing market access, financial performance, and consumer trust. The synthesis reveals that halal-certified MSMEs experience substantial benefits, including average sales increases of 20-35%, expanded access to both domestic and international markets, and strengthened brand loyalty. However, these benefits remain inaccessible to the vast majority of Indonesian MSMEs, with only 0.6% (387,568 out of 64.2 million) currently holding halal certification.

This study highlights the critical role of halal certification in enhancing the market access, financial performance, and consumer trust of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that halal certification offers substantial economic benefits, including increased sales, a broader customer base, and enhanced brand loyalty. However, MSMEs, particularly smaller businesses, face significant challenges in obtaining halal certification, including high costs, complex bureaucratic procedures, and a lack of awareness about the certification process. Government initiatives like the SEHATI program have proven effective in alleviating some of these barriers, but further improvements are necessary.

The research contributes to the existing literature by filling a gap in understanding the specific challenges faced by smaller MSMEs in obtaining halal certification, particularly in underserved regions. While previous studies have examined the benefits of halal certification, there has been limited focus on the barriers faced by smaller businesses or the effectiveness of government support programs. This study highlights the need for more targeted policies and streamlined procedures to facilitate halal certification for MSMEs. By addressing these issues, this research provides actionable recommendations for policymakers and business practitioners.

This study provides valuable insights into how halal certification can promote economic inclusion and support sustainable growth for MSMEs in Indonesia. It underscores the importance of addressing both the financial and bureaucratic barriers that hinder small businesses from obtaining certification. Future research should explore the long-term impact of halal certification on business sustainability and profitability, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of different government programs in facilitating certification. Additionally, studies focusing on the role of digitalization in simplifying the halal certification process could provide valuable insights for further improvements in the certification landscape.

While Indonesia's halal certification process shares similarities with other Muslim-majority countries, the specific challenges and benefits identified in this study may vary in other contexts. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data from MSMEs owners, which may introduce biases, as respondents may overstate the benefits of halal certification or underreport the difficulties faced during the certification process.

Another limitation is the sample size, which, while diverse, may not fully capture the experiences of all MSMEs in Indonesia, particularly those in rural or remote areas. The data collected may not be representative of the broader population of small businesses, as some businesses may have been excluded due to their limited resources or lack of access to digital

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could focus on examining the long-term impact of halal certification on the sustainability and profitability of MSMEs. This would involve conducting longitudinal studies to track the performance of businesses over time and assess the ongoing benefits and challenges of halal certification. Such studies would provide deeper insights into how halal certification contributes to the long-term growth of MSMEs and whether the initial economic benefits are sustained in the face of evolving market conditions and consumer preferences.

Additionally, further research could explore the role of digitalization in simplifying the halal certification process for MSMEs. With the increasing use of technology in business operations, investigating how digital tools and online platforms can streamline the certification process and reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies would be valuable. Research in this area could provide practical solutions for policymakers and certification bodies to enhance the accessibility of halal certification for small businesses, particularly those in underserved regions. Moreover, comparative studies between different countries could offer insights into how various regulatory

frameworks impact the halal certification process and its effectiveness in promoting business growth.

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