

# Halal Certification: Improving Business Quality with Superior Islamic Ethics

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**ABSTRACT** – Providing halal label certification on food products has become an effective means for consumers to more easily choose food that complies with halal principles. This is a form of producer responsibility in running a business and as a protection for consumers. However, consumers have the right to obtain clear and detailed information about each composition or ingredient used in the manufacture of the products they buy. The reason behind this need is because products circulating in the community cannot always be considered safe, especially for Muslim consumers. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is for producers and consumers to have an awareness of the importance of including halal labels and halal certification on every product they market in the community. In writing this article, the author uses a qualitative method of literature study. The results obtained from this writing show that the awareness of producers was initially minimal, and consumers initially did not really consider the importance of halal labels. However, along with the widespread lifestyle that prioritizes halal principles, they began to realize how crucial halal certification is for food products.

Keywords: halal products, halal certification, business ethics.

## A. INTRODUCTION

Islamic law, which is based on the principle of achieving human welfare, both in this world and in the hereafter, is the foundation of law that is considered perfect. Islam, which is described as *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* (mercy to all nature), has the noble goal of shaping the character of a good human personality and upholding benefit and justice. In the Islamic view, justice and problem solving can be realized in life, both in a limited and broader scope of society. The principles of justice in Islam consist of factors such as equal treatment among individuals, human rights, and shared prosperity. Through the implementation of Islamic law, it can create a society that is just,

equitable, and based on high moral values, making a positive contribution to the development of individuals and society (Rajagopal et al., 2011; Othman et al., 2016).

Most of Indonesia's population is Muslim, therefore, attention to the needs in consuming products is very relevant. One way to ensure the feasibility of a product is through halal assurance in accordance with religious sharia principles. With halal product certification, justice, legal certainty, consumer protection, information transparency, and professionalism in the launch of new products can be guaranteed. Halal certification is an important foundation in meeting the needs of Muslim consumers, and also creating an ethical business environment (Wilson & Liu, 2010).

Halal certification and product labeling are two different but interrelated factors. Halal certification is a certificate issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) center or provincial section, discussing the halalness of food, beverage, cosmetics, and medicine products after going through research and observation and getting approval from LPPOM MUI. This certification aims to provide certainty about the halalness of products so that consumers can feel calm and confident when using the products purchased. On the other hand, labeling consists of the process of providing special labels on the packaging of halal-certified products. Consumers can easily identify and choose products that comply with halal principles. Thus, halal certification and labeling work together to provide clarity and confidence to consumers regarding the halal status of a product (Wilson, 2012).

Guarantee of the halalness of a food product can be realized through the establishment of a halal certificate, where the food product must be equipped with a halal label on the packaging. With halal certification, consumers can easily see and distinguish halal products from non-halal ones, so that Muslims can avoid products

that are not in accordance with the principles of halalness and do not harm Muslims. Law Number 18 of 2012 provides an explanation of food as the main basic human need, and its fulfillment is considered part of the human rights of every Indonesian. The articles in the Law elaborate in detail that everything that comes from biological products, whether from agriculture, plantations, forestry, fisheries, and animal husbandry, whether processed or not, is used as food and drink for consumption by mankind. This includes food additives, food raw materials, and other materials used in the process of preparing, managing, or making food or beverages.

The rights of customers or consumers are often ignored by business actors and this needs to be investigated and monitored. In the current era of globalization, economic growth, especially in the field of industry and national trade, has produced a variety of goods and services that can be consumed (Darmawan, 2017). However, on the other hand, life necessities such as food, cosmetics, and medicines distributed by businesses in these fields require a high level of responsibility for the products they market.

The public has the right to clearly understand every composition or ingredient used in the products presented. Before purchasing and consuming products, information about the origin of ingredients, safety, quality, and nutritional content is required to be available, so that people can make decisions based on accurate and correct information (Borzooei & Asgari, 2015). The necessity of halal labeling or halal certification in products is not only an obligation, but also inseparable from sales, trade and economic activities that have reached a global dimension by meeting international quality standards. This aims to build trust and trust from customers or consumers across countries. Therefore, the production and flow of goods, services, capital, and knowledge between countries becomes smoother.

As a businessman, it is very important to ensure that the products produced have obtained halal certification from BPJH (Halal Product Guarantee Organizing Agency). The obligation to include product halal information on the packaging is a demand that must be met. Non-compliance with this obligation may result in legal sanctions imposed by the authorized legal entity. Therefore, product halalness must comply with sharia legal standards to ensure regulatory compliance and consumer

confidence that prioritizes halal products. This is an important step in maintaining business integrity and building consumer trust (Salindal, 2019).

The importance of the halal factor of a product, especially in businesses based on Islamic values. Halal certification is part of Islamic business ethics, which concerns the legal certainty and convenience of Muslims but also reflects the commitment of producers to moral and ethical values in their business activities. This study will explain the role of halal certification in Islamic business ethics. Then explore its impact on consumer confidence, business transparency, and corporate social responsibility.

## B. METHOD

This writing involves qualitative methods using systematic literature review techniques. Data sources were obtained from various scientific papers, articles, journals, and books that are relevant to the theme of this research and include the results of scientific writing and research that reflects facts in the field. Data was collected through a thorough literature search on various internet sources. After collecting a number of scholarly works that fit the theme, the next step was to analyze the data. This process involves sorting, identification. The data that has been analyzed is then presented in a form that can be understood, and from the results of the analysis, conclusions are drawn. This method provides a systematic framework for extracting information from existing literature and presenting it in a format that generates understanding related to the theme of this research.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Indonesia, as a country with a majority Muslim population, understands the importance of halal assurance on products. For Muslims, the halalness of a product is an important factor. Before deciding to buy a product, Muslim consumers tend to research its halalness first. Even though the product provides positive benefits for the body, the halal factor is a top priority. If a product is known to contain non-halal ingredients, consumers will generally choose to avoid using the product. This means that product halalness is a very meaningful determining factor for Muslims in making their consumption decisions (Djazilan & Darmawan, 2023).

### 1. MUI Standardization of Halal Products

One of the problems that often arises in the community related to food and beverage products is the lack of standardization in accordance with the guidelines set by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM). This condition raises issues related to the uncertainty of the halal status of a product. The demand that arises from consumers is the need for products that are not only recognized as halal by MUI, but have also passed the supervision process from BPOM.

Consumers want certainty that the products they consume not only meet halal standards in terms of the ingredients used, but also guaranteed nutritional quality. In addition, cleanliness in the entire product manufacturing process is highly desirable to maintain consumer health. The ingredients used in making the product must comply with Islamic norms or the provisions contained in the Qur'an. With the halal label on food or beverage products being an option, it becomes an obligation for producers. It is intended that consumers can clearly understand whether a product can be consumed in accordance with the religious principles they adhere to.

Halal certification is an official recognition from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) stating that a product has met halal standards in accordance with Islamic teachings. This process involves the issuance of a fatwa that explicitly stipulates that food and beverage products can be consumed by Muslims. Halal certification is an absolute criterion that is a prerequisite for halal labeling of products, so that they can be accepted and consumed by people who follow Islamic religious norms.

Traders who wish to market their products must undergo a series of procedures and requirements that have been set by MUI. This process involves review and evaluation from the Indonesian Ulema Council, which then issues a written fatwa on the halalness of the product after going through the prescribed stages. This fatwa decision is the basis for granting halal certification to the product concerned. After successfully passing all the processes and obtaining halal certification, traders or manufacturers of food and beverage products will obtain an official halal label from the Indonesian Ulema Council. This label means product conformity with Islamic halal principles. With the halal label, the product

becomes more acceptable in the market and can provide certainty to consumers regarding its halalness and quality in accordance with Islamic religious norms (Bećirović et al., 2023).

The institution responsible for inspecting food or beverage products that have been declared halal is the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). This process consists of packaging products for trade purposes, and Decree No. 525 of 2001 confirms that the Ministry of Religious Affairs, with reference to the Republic of Indonesia Reprinting Corporation, is in charge of printing halal labels that are directly given to products that have received approval from the Indonesian Ulema Council. Guaranteeing the halalness of food and beverage products is a must. However, the halalness of a product cannot be determined by the manufacturer itself, but must be declared by the Indonesian Ulema Council and the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM) through an inspection process by an authorized institution. The decision on the halalness of a product is ultimately taken by the MUI Fatwa Commission. Given that the majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim, the government and business actors are expected to provide comfort to consumers who consume food products through the halal certification process.

According to the Indonesian Ulema Council, Law No. 7 of 1996 on food states that food produced or imported into Indonesia must have a label indicating its halalness. This is the legal basis used by the Indonesian Ulema Council to defend its authority. Prior to the law, President Soeharto had issued Presidential Instruction No. 2 of 1991 which addressed food containing its halalness. The Presidential Instruction was delivered to the Coordinating-Minister for People's Welfare, and the task was then transferred to seven ministers, including the Departments of Religious Affairs (Depag) and Health (Depkes), as well as eight governors. The Presidential Instruction then stipulates that food that has been assured of its halalness will be under the supervision of the Coordinating-Minister for People's Welfare, who then refers it to the Indonesian Ulema Council to issue halal certification for a product.

Halal certification has the aim of providing convenience and providing information to people who will consume the product, showing that the product that has been packaged is really safe for consumption. In addition, halal certification on products also functions as a

form of protection to consumers against the halalness of a product. When a product has received halal certification written by the Indonesian Ulama Council, it indicates that the product has been tested for halalness by the MUI institution, which is considered a fatwa that has been recorded in writing. This procedure can only be carried out by the Indonesian Ulama Council in a product. As a consequence, products that already have halal certification in accordance with Article 4 of the Law, which emphasizes that products that have entered, then circulated and traded in the territory of Indonesia must be halal certified.

There are many laws that discuss the halalness of a product. Therefore, with the guarantee of halal products, business actors have the opportunity to increase added value in producing and selling their products. However, it should be noted that the main requirement is that the ingredients used in halal products must comply with the principles of Islamic law. Thus, products that have obtained halal certificates can also benefit, such as increasing the competitiveness of halal products in the global market. This then makes a positive contribution to the country's economic growth, considering that halal products have a significant market share and can be a factor in increasing competitiveness.

## **2. Trading Standardization Based on Islamic Business Ethics**

Islamic business ethics have existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW was born. The Prophet Muhammad SAW was sent to perfect morals including the business aspect. The Prophet Muhammad himself, from the age of 12, started a trading business with his uncle, Abu Talib, on foot to the country of Sham. At the age of 17, the Prophet Muhammad SAW began to run his own trading business. Prophet Muhammad SAW traded while spreading Islam, especially to Islamic traders. The Qur'an also warns against the misuse of wealth. At the time of the Prophet, trade was considered a very strategic activity to seek sustenance in fulfilling the needs of life. The Qur'an and As-Sunnah were used as the basis of business ethics and economic theory by the caliphs. Ethics in business is a moral thought that becomes a reflection of what should be done or not done (Darmawan et al., 2022). Business ethics in Islam are basic values that help business people in dealing with moral issues for business practices. Islamic business ethics provides

guidance for business people to carry out their business activities with integrity and fairness, in accordance with the teachings of Islam.

The development of Islamic business ethics is oriented towards Islamic economics. This is done with the aim of obtaining maximum results and benefits in Islamic trade. Islamic trade is considered a response to the failure of economic systems in both capitalism and socialism. In exploring the basic values or business ethics in Islam, which discusses trade or business, taken from the Qur'an and As-Sunnah, is considered good behavior. By thinking so, business people can involve themselves in business practices that are in accordance with Islamic teachings, so that they can achieve blessings and get good deeds in doing business.

A business that violates religious principles and business ethics, such as dishonesty, manipulation or imitation of other people's products, trade monopoly, and waste, can result in long-term business disruption. Management that does not care about the application of ethics or religious values and only focuses on short-term profits will jeopardize business continuity (Khasanah et al., 2010; Gunawan et al., 2012; Mardikaningsih & Al Hakim, 2017). Mardikaningsih and Darawan (2019) stated that guaranteeing the quality of a product and its halalness is very important. Therefore, many commandments emphasize the importance of a good production process to obtain satisfactory results. Violations of Islamic business ethics can not only harm the company's reputation but also weaken the industry's competitiveness in the international market (Darawan, 2021). The behavior of business actors who underestimate general business ethics can have serious repercussions, especially in globalization where business ethical standards are increasingly appreciated. Therefore, upholding the values of Islamic business ethics is key to achieving business sustainability and good competitiveness in the industry.

Islam provides guidance on work and earning a living. Islam does not allow Muslims to earn a living in a way that is arbitrary or involves deceiving, cheating or harming others. Rather, Islam establishes a dividing line between what is permissible and what is not in the pursuit of livelihood. The principle is to provide benefits and ensure the common good. Islam encourages businesses and buyers to transact voluntarily, without any party feeling disadvantaged. The



principle of mutual liking and mutual benefit in business transactions becomes the foundation, so that there are no acts of oppression and losses between the parties involved (Mardikaningsih, 2017). Thus, transactions are considered permissible in Islam because there is no element of harming other parties. Some transactions that are forbidden by Islam and are included in the category of transactions that are prohibited and disliked by Allah SWT can be explained as follows:

#### A. Usury

In Islamic law, usury is strictly prohibited because it is considered detrimental to the other party. Riba, which literally means addition or excess, occurs when a person imposes an additional burden of money on a party who has incurred a debt. Islam asserts that this practice is not only unfair, but also creates inequality and financial suffering for the individuals involved. Usury is considered to violate the principles of economic justice and teaches Muslims to apply fair and mutually beneficial economic principles in every financial transaction.

#### B. Gharar

Gharar is a term in Islamic law that refers to transactions that contain an element of uncertainty about the product being sold, with the aim of harming one of the parties to the transaction. In practice, gharar is a situation where there is excessive uncertainty or speculative elements that can cause harm to one of the parties. Islam emphasizes fairness and prudence in economic transactions, so practices that contain gharar are avoided to prevent unfair losses and protect the common interest.

#### C. Broker (Middleman)

Brokers in business transactions play an important role as a link between business owners or buyers and the market. However, when business owners or buyers do not actively conduct transactions in the market or even dismiss traders who are supposed to sell in the market, this can have an impact on price discrepancies with the actual market price. This phenomenon is a serious concern for Muslims, as it involves upholding moral and ethical values in business, especially in the life of trading in the market. Business actors are expected to realize the consequences of such actions in order to maintain the fairness and sustainability of the market by adhering to the principles of business ethics.

#### D. Something Haram

In the Qur'an, there are explanations of things or types that are forbidden, such as eating pork, trading with pigs, consuming carrion, drinking intoxicants, and so on. Islam prohibits these things because they have the potential to harm health and can cause other negative impacts. These laws are enacted in order to protect Muslims from the potential harm that can arise from such behavior, as well as to guide them in maintaining prosperity and morality in their daily lives.

#### E. Masyir

Masyir is a type of transaction that contains elements of gambling and is speculative for the parties involved in it. These transactions are forbidden in Islam because they involve elements of gambling that can lead to uncertainty and harmful speculation. Islam encourages its people to engage in transactions that are fair, clear, and free from gambling elements in order to maintain fairness and sustainability in economic life.

### 3. Essentiality of Halal Product Certification

Regulations related to halal certification for products, such as food, medicine, and cosmetics, are an important factor in consumer protection, especially for those who hold Islamic religious beliefs. The principles of Islamic law teach people to always consume halal products. Therefore, as a solution, producers can provide assistance to consumers by including halal certification on their products.

Halal certification is concrete evidence that a product has met all halal requirements, and has been recognized by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). Products that have obtained halal certification are considered to meet the strict standards set by MUI, so they are allowed to be traded in the community. The process of obtaining halal certification involves strict stages, starting from the production process until the product reaches consumers. All of these stages involve strict assessment and supervision to ensure the halalness of the product. Thus, the existence of halal certification provides certainty to consumers and is also part of the manufacturer's efforts to maintain the quality and halalness of its products.

The concept of halal in food and beverages can be explained that halal food and beverages are good (thayyib) on various factors, including health, cleanliness, hygiene, and moral

suitability. Halal food and beverages not only fulfill religious requirements, but also include quality standards that create a positive impact on various aspects of life. The inclusion of halal labels on food is an effective means for consumers to choose halal products more easily. The halal label is not only an indication of the halalness of a product, but also creates a sense of security and trust for consumers. With halal certification, consumers can be sure that the products they buy and consume are guaranteed halal. This is a religious principle to create a sense of comfort and eliminate concerns regarding the quality and halalness of the products they choose. As a result, the inclusion of halal labels on food and beverages plays an important role in building consumer trust and ensuring the selection of products that are in accordance with the principles of halalness and goodness (Wilkins et al., 2019).

Every producer is responsible for fulfilling the needs and rights of consumers, including Muslim consumers. This responsibility is regulated by laws, such as Law No. 8/1999 on Consumer Protection and Government Regulation No. 69/1999 on Food Labeling and Advertising. One of the articles in these laws regulates the obligation of producers to check the halalness of their products before putting on the "halal" label. This provides assurance to consumers that the products they buy have gone through an inspection process and meet the established halal standards. With the existence of consumer protection regulations, consumers do not need to worry because they have the right to report producers for any inconvenience or unsuitability of the products they consume. This reporting process provides security and fairness for consumers, so that they can obtain assistance or resolution to problems that arise in relation to the products they purchase. It creates a clear channel of communication between consumers and producers, promotes transparency, and provides a legal basis for protecting consumer rights. For this reason, there are several advantages of halal product certification, including:

1. There is a growing interest in halal-labeled products, especially among Muslim consumers. With a significant Muslim population in the world, this is a great opportunity for business people. In Islamic law, Muslim consumers are required to consume food that is clearly halal. Awareness of this makes Muslim consumers more selective in choosing food, by tending to choose products that have guaranteed halalness. The high number of Muslim population who understand and apply the principle of halalness in product selection is a major factor in the increasing demand for halal products. This creates a potential market for manufacturers who apply halal certification to their products. Along with the increasing awareness of Muslim consumers of the halalness of products, business opportunities related to halal products are growing and attracting broad market attention.
2. The existence of halal labeling and certification on a product provides a guarantee of safety, health, and halalness. The process of halal labeling involves guaranteed supervision in accordance with the legal regulations in the country, so that the product is considered safe, guaranteed, and avoids all forms that can deviate and be considered haram in the view of Islam. Consumers feel more trust and confidence in products with halal labels, because the certification process involves competent authorities and follows established standards. This creates consumer confidence in the quality, safety and halalness of the products they consume.
3. The inclusion of halal certification in a food product not only provides benefits for consumers, but also becomes a strategic advantage for the producer. Halal labeling on product packaging can increase product opportunities in market competition. Products that have guaranteed halalness tend to have higher competitiveness compared to similar products that do not have halal certification. In addition, producers can take advantage of the opportunity to compete in the global Muslim market, where the significant Muslim population is a great opportunity. Thus, the inclusion of halal labeling as a form of compliance with religious values and marketing strategies that can increase product competitiveness on a national and international scale.
4. Consumer trust is the main foundation in the success of business activities. With the inclusion of halal certification on products, producers can build consumer confidence in the halalness of these products. Clarity regarding halalness through halal certification gives consumers confidence that

the product has met the halal standards set by religious authorities. Thus, consumers tend to have more trust and confidence in the quality and halalness of these products. By gaining consumer trust, producers can build long-term relationships, increase customer loyalty, and create a positive reputation in the market (Tieman, 2020).

Awareness of the importance of halal labeling on products is still lacking among some producers, especially those operating on a small scale. Some food products even include a halal label without obtaining an official halal certificate, indicating that the initiative arises from the producer alone. However, such actions are not in accordance with the correct procedure in granting halal certification licenses, which should be carried out by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) in accordance with its stipulations. This situation creates one of the weaknesses and challenges in Indonesia's food industry, as some producers and consumers consider halal food label certification to be of little importance. This view sees halal certification as a complement, not as an obligation. To overcome the concerns of some people who have this view, MUI, which has the authority in certification, should carry out strict and continuous control of food products, especially those that have received halal certification.

The development of the food industry and increased education on halal life has increased consumer awareness of the importance of halal certification on products. Consumers are becoming more selective in their decision-making, especially as halal life is heavily promoted in social and electronic media. This makes the Muslim community more informed about halal certification of products, which in turn encourages entrepreneurs to develop halal industries and markets. This serves as an effort to protect consumer interests through legal certainty. Legal security includes all efforts based on the law to empower consumers in choosing the goods and / or services needed and protect their rights in the event of a loss due to the behavior of business actors providing consumer needs.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Ba From the above description, it can be concluded that halal food label certification in food products has great importance, especially for Muslim consumers. This certification is an

effective means of communication between producers and consumers, in line with the obligation in Islamic law to consume halal food from the beginning of the production process to distribution. The government provides a platform and legal protection for producers to obtain halal certification as an effort to ensure the halalness of these products. However, there are still many producers who consider halal certification only as a complement without importance. Therefore, it is necessary to increase awareness of the importance of halal certification so that it can be a driving force to achieve mutual benefit, both for consumers and producers. This increased awareness will ensure that people can understand how important the role of halal certification is in maintaining compliance with the principles of Islamic law and providing certainty to consumers regarding the halalness of the products they consume.

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