



Implementation of Halal Certification among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Night Culinary Market of Sungai Penuh City

M. Ibrahim Aziz¹, Khatimul Fitri¹, Muhammad Ridha¹, Arpan Zaman¹, Saadatul Maghfira²

¹Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kerinci, Indonesia

²UIN Mahmud Yunus Batu Sangkar, Indonesia

✉ ibrahiaziz@gmail.com*

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Abstract

Halal certification is an official recognition process to ensure that products comply with halal standards through inspections of ingredients, production processes, and halal assurance systems conducted by LPPOM MUI. This study aims to examine the implementation of halal certification among MSMEs in the Night Culinary Market of Sungai Penuh City, including the socialization and supervision carried out by LPPOM MUI and the understanding of culinary entrepreneurs regarding halal certification regulations. Using a qualitative field research approach, data were collected through interviews and observations with street food vendors and related stakeholders. The findings show that the socialization and supervision conducted by LPPOM MUI and local government agencies have not effectively reached restaurant entrepreneurs in the Night Culinary Market, as the programs mainly target Islamic religious counselors and packaged food producers. As a result, most culinary business actors still have limited understanding of halal certification procedures. Therefore, stronger and more targeted socialization and supervision are needed to improve entrepreneurs' awareness and understanding of halal certification..

INTRODUCTION

Halal certification is the process of obtaining official recognition of a product's compliance with halal standards through a series of inspections of ingredients, production processes, and the halal assurance system in accordance with the standards established by LPPOM MUI. The existence of halal certification aims to ensure the halal status of products as a form of fulfilling consumer rights, particularly for Muslim communities (Agustin et al., 2025). Initially, the application for halal certification was voluntary (optional). However, since the enactment of Law Number 33 of 2014, halal certification has become mandatory, as stipulated in Article 4, which states that all products entering, circulating, and being traded within the territory of Indonesia must be halal-certified (Pemerintah, n.d.).

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This is further reinforced by Law Number 8 of 1999, which emphasizes the importance of transparency of product information for consumers. In the context of the national economy, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), as regulated under Law Number 20 of 2008, play a strategic role in economic growth. Halal certification not only serves as a fulfillment of legal obligations but also functions as an instrument to enhance competitiveness, build consumer trust, and expand market reach (Wahyudi et al., 2025). This indicates that halal certification possesses both religious and economic dimensions that are highly relevant for the development of the halal industry in the present and the future. In general, business actors respond positively to the existence of halal product certification. This is reflected in the enthusiasm of some producers to certify their products. Such enthusiasm is at least driven by two main expectations, namely to increase productivity in the market and to obtain legal security and certainty in conducting their business. On the other hand, the rapid growth of micro enterprises and the increasing variety of food products in society have encouraged the government to strengthen supervision through halal certification and labeling, which now covers not only food products but also cosmetics, food, beverages, and pharmaceuticals. However, field findings also indicate differences in responses among business actors. While some support the policy, others express objections, as halal certification is perceived as not yet providing significant benefits and instead adding administrative burdens in running their businesses.

A number of previous studies have examined halal certification from various perspectives. A study by Muntholip & Setiawan, (2025) in the article “Halal Certification and MSME Competitiveness in Indonesia: A Systematic Literature Review Study” shows that halal certification has a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase intention and increases MSME sales (Muntholip & Setiawan, 2025). This study emphasizes that halal certification can serve as an effective marketing strategy to enhance business competitiveness. Furthermore, a study by Fitri, (2024) in the article “Halal Certification and Its Influence on MSME Performance” found that halal certification affects MSME performance in terms of innovation, market expansion, and financial aspects (Fitri, 2024). However, many MSME actors still lack understanding of the importance of halal certification, indicating the need for government support to raise awareness. Another study by Agung & Santi, (2025) in the article “Halal Certification and Its Challenges for Culinary MSMEs” revealed that the implementation of halal certification in the culinary sector still faces various obstacles, such as limited understanding among business actors, lack of information, and administrative constraints (Agung & Santi, 2025). Although these studies have examined the importance of halal certification and its impact on MSMEs, most of them focus on competitiveness, business performance, and general challenges, and are often conducted at a broader regional scale or based on literature studies. Meanwhile, studies that specifically highlight the implementation of halal certification in terms of socialization, supervision, and the level of understanding among street food vendors in night culinary markets remain relatively limited, particularly in local contexts such as Sungai Penuh City.

Sungai Penuh City is a region with relatively dynamic economic development, as indicated by the increasing number of MSMEs in the culinary sector. The majority Muslim population demands assurance of the halal status of the products they consume (Fatimah et al., 2022). The local government has also promoted halal certification through various programs, including free halal certification initiatives. However, the implementation of these policies in practice still faces challenges, particularly among informal culinary business actors such as those operating in the night culinary market. Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by empirically examining the implementation of halal certification among MSMEs in the Night Culinary Market of Sungai Penuh City, focusing on aspects of socialization,

supervision, and the level of business actors' understanding. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic economic law studies, as well as practical contributions for the government in formulating more effective policies. Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the implementation of halal certification among MSMEs in the Night Culinary Market of Sungai Penuh City, with an emphasis on socialization, supervision, and business actors' understanding of halal certification regulations

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of the practice of halal certification registration among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the night culinary market of Sungai Penuh City (Assyakurrohim et al., 2022). This approach is chosen because the study does not merely view law as written norms, but also as a social reality practiced within society. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data are obtained directly from informants through observation and in-depth interviews, while secondary data are collected through literature review, including laws and regulations, the Qur'an and Hadith, books, scientific journals, and official documents related to halal certification. Informants in this study are selected using purposive sampling, a sampling technique based on specific considerations, with the following criteria: MSME actors (restaurants/ampera) located in the night culinary market of Sungai Penuh City, not yet possessing halal certification, still actively operating their businesses, and willing to provide honest and open information (Suriani & Jailani, 2023). The research instruments used include interview guidelines and observation sheets. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner, allowing the researcher to maintain a guideline while also providing flexibility for informants to explain more broadly according to field conditions (Achjar et al., 2023). Data collection techniques involve direct observation of MSME activities and in-depth interviews with business actors regarding their practices and challenges in registering for halal certification. The collected data are then analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques through stages of data reduction, data presentation in descriptive narrative form, and conclusion drawing based on identified patterns and themes (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2014). The analysis is conducted thematically by grouping interview data into relevant themes, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of halal certification practices among MSMEs in Sungai Penuh City.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Theme One, socialization and supervision of Halal Certification by LPPOM MUI

Socialization can be defined as a process through which individuals are educated to recognize, understand, comply with, and appreciate the norms and values prevailing in society (Hamda, 2014). More specifically, socialization includes a process in which individuals learn their culture, develop self-control, and understand their roles within the community (Zainal, 2019). Socialization is one of the important aspects of the social control process, because in order to influence individuals to behave in accordance with applicable legal norms, effective socialization is required (Ali, 2023). Effective socialization can have a positive impact on the functioning of law, enabling it to effectively control and regulate patterns of behavior within society (Busriadi & Saleh, 2025).

The process of socialization can take place through several agents, such as family, government institutions, mass media, and the education system. Mass media, which includes print and electronic media, is identified as a socialization agent that significantly influences public behavior (Komariah & Subekti, 2016). In addition to mass media, the use of new media such as the internet, Facebook, and Twitter has

increasingly attracted public interest as social platforms capable of creating balanced two-way communication (Indrawan & Ilmar, 2020). LPPOM MUI carries out socialization and halal promotion activities to provide education for the public and business actors. Through these activities, it is expected that both society and entrepreneurs can understand the importance of halal products. In this regard, LPPOM MUI has collaborated with several government institutions in Sungai Penuh City:

- a) The Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, Industry, and Trade of Sungai Penuh City.

LPPOM MUI collaborates with the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, Industry, and Trade of Sungai Penuh City in conducting socialization on halal certification. This socialization is aimed at business actors to help them obtain halal certification from the Indonesian Ulema Council. In this collaboration, the local government facilitates business actors in processing halal certification free of charge, funded through the Regional Budget (APBD) of Sungai Penuh City. Business actors in Sungai Penuh generally operate at a medium scale, requiring moderate capital. Those who are facilitated typically meet several indicators, such as being operationally ready, having stable business performance and assets, and possessing a well-established market.

To obtain halal certification, business actors are required to pay approximately IDR 2.5 million per product brand. On average, many business actors are unable to afford this cost. Therefore, the local government of Sungai Penuh City, through the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, Trade, and Industry, seeks to facilitate business actors in obtaining halal certification. In this collaboration, the local government invites resource persons from LPPOM MUI to explain the procedures and regulations of halal certification. Afterward, the government facilitates business actors in applying for certification based on the business criteria established by the Department.

Based on the results of field research, the Department of Cooperatives, Industry, and Trade (Diskoperindag), together with LPPOM MUI, facilitates the halal certification process through regional government budget (APBD) funding, particularly for business actors considered to have adequate business readiness, assets, and market potential. However, the findings reveal that the primary target of this program is focused more on packaged snack food industries rather than restaurants or food stalls. As a result, restaurant business owners have not received equal access to socialization programs and guidance. These findings indicate that the halal facilitation policy remains selective and has not yet been implemented evenly.

This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Gustiana, (2023) in the article entitled *“The Effectiveness of BPJPH on Halal Certification of Indonesian UMKM Products”*, which states that the successful implementation of halal certification is strongly influenced by the effectiveness of implementing institutions in conducting socialization, assistance, and equitable access for UMKM actors. The study emphasizes that the main obstacles faced by UMKM are not only related to regulatory aspects, but also costs, understanding, and the distribution of information that are still not optimal. In addition, the study by Nazzriani & Miko, (2024) entitled *“The Influence of Service and Cost on Business Actors’ Decisions to Apply for Halal Certification for UMKM Products at LPPOM MUI North Sumatra”*, found that certification costs and service quality significantly influence business actors’ decisions to apply for halal certification. The higher the costs and the more limited the services, the lower the interest of business actors in obtaining halal certification.

On the other hand, research conducted by Fadinsi Prima Putra, Aep Kusnawan, and Yuliani in *“Marketing Strategies for UMKM Products through MUI Halal Certification”* shows that UMKM businesses that obtain halal certification possess higher competitive advantages compared to those that are not certified, particularly in terms of marketing, consumer trust, and market expansion (Halal, n.d.). This strengthens the argument that halal facilitation programs by local governments should not only focus on certain types of businesses, but should also be expanded to restaurants and food stalls, since this sector is directly related to the daily consumption of society.

From the perspective of Soerjono Soekanto’s theory of legal effectiveness, the condition in Sungai Penuh City demonstrates that the legal factor, namely Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance, has normatively been established. However, the factors related to law enforcement officials and supporting facilities have not functioned optimally. The law has not yet become fully effective because the distribution of socialization, guidance, and policy access has not been equally implemented for all target groups. Therefore, this study differs from previous research because it highlights the inequality in the implementation of halal policies at the regional level, particularly between the packaged food industry sector and restaurants. While previous studies mainly emphasized general effectiveness, costs, and marketing strategies, this research demonstrates that policy equity is an essential factor in achieving substantive legal effectiveness in halal certification implementation.

- b) Collaborating with the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kanwil Kemenag).

The promotion of halal certification has been carried out by the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kanwil Kemenag) of Jambi for Islamic religious counselors across districts and cities in the province. Through these halal promotion activities, it is expected that religious counselors gain sufficient knowledge, which can then be disseminated to the community. Functional and honorary Islamic religious counselors, mosque administrators, and community leaders are expected to provide outreach to the public regarding halal product promotion. This effort is intended to help communities avoid the consumption of non-halal or contaminated food and beverages. With this socialization, it is hoped that religious counselors, particularly in Sungai Penuh City, can further disseminate information to both the community and business actors. However, in practice, their role remains limited due to the lack of funding. As a result, they generally only convey information about halal certification during religious sermons in mosques and prayer rooms. Based on field findings, it would be more effective if the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Jambi, together with LPPOM MUI, conducted direct socialization targeting business actors, especially restaurant owners. Such direct involvement would make the socialization process more effective.

LPPOM MUI has not yet conducted specific socialization on halal certification for restaurants, as it tends to wait for initiatives from district or city governments. In the process of socialization, LPPOM MUI needs to collaborate with relevant regional institutions and encourage local governments, particularly in Sungai Penuh City, to establish strong synergy so that socialization efforts become more effective. This is important because access to information and education on halal certification is a right of business actors. According to Law Number 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance, Article 23 concerning business actors, it is stated that business actors have the right to: (a) obtain information, education, and socialization regarding the Halal Product Assurance (JPH) system; (b) receive guidance in producing halal products; and (c) obtain services for halal certification

that are fast, efficient, affordable, and non-discriminatory. This provision clearly affirms the rights of business actors, and therefore they are entitled to receive proper socialization from LPPOM MUI in order to understand halal certification and subsequently be able to apply for it.

Based on field data, limited funding has caused religious counselors to only deliver information regarding halal certification in a simple manner through sermons in mosques or prayer rooms, without providing technical guidance, administrative assistance, or direct socialization to restaurant and food stall business owners. This condition indicates that the socialization pattern implemented remains indirect, passive, and has not addressed the practical needs of business actors as the primary subjects of the policy. From the perspective of legal socialization theory, the successful internalization of legal norms cannot rely solely on the delivery of general information, but requires direct, intensive, structured, and continuous communication so that the target community can understand, accept, and implement legal provisions effectively. Therefore, the minimal direct involvement of restaurant business owners in socialization programs has become one of the main factors contributing to their limited understanding of halal certification regulations.

This finding is in line with the research conducted by Qomaro et al., (2019) entitled *“Empowerment of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in the Food Sector in Improving the Local Economy through Halal Certification Assistance in Tragah District, Bangkalan”*, which shows that the success of halal policies largely depends on synergy among institutions, government support, and direct educational strategies for business actors. The study emphasizes that the delivery of information that is merely formal without technical support is insufficient to improve legal compliance among business communities. Furthermore, the study by Utama, (2021), entitled *“The Role of Religious Counselors in Increasing Public Legal Awareness”*, explains that religious counselors hold a strategic position as agents of legal socialization, but their effectiveness is highly dependent on financial support, policy backing, and systematic communication methods. Without such supporting facilities, religious counselors function only as conveyors of normative information, which is not strong enough to encourage changes in public legal behavior.

Thus, previous studies reinforce the finding that the socialization of halal certification in Sungai Penuh City through religious counselors has not yet been optimal because it still relies on passive and indirect approaches. The distinction of this research lies in its specific focus on the weak synergy between the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kanwil Kemenag), LPPOM MUI, and local government in reaching restaurant and food stall business actors. While previous studies mainly emphasized general effectiveness, services, and guidance, this study demonstrates that a direct socialization model targeting restaurant and food stall business actors is an urgent necessity in order to fulfill the rights of business actors as stipulated in Article 23 of Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance. In other words, the effectiveness of halal certification law depends not only on the existence of regulations, but also on the equal distribution of information access and the quality of policy implementation at the regional level.

- c) Collaboration with the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kantor Kemenag) of Sungai Penuh City.

The Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) of Sungai Penuh City, together with LPPOM MUI, had previously collaborated in the form of religious guidance programs related to halal products, particularly concerning halal slaughtering practices for communities directly involved in such activities. This guidance program was aimed at chicken slaughterers in traditional markets,

slaughterhouse workers, and mosque administrators. The program was considered important because these groups are directly connected to the process of providing food consumed by Muslims; therefore, understanding slaughtering procedures in accordance with Islamic law became a fundamental necessity. The materials delivered included slaughtering techniques according to Islamic law, procedures for storing animals after slaughter, and general understanding of other halal products. This program demonstrates that the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sungai Penuh City paid attention to halal aspects within the basic context of food production, especially at the initial stage of ensuring the halal status of food ingredients.

However, based on field interview results, the guidance program was limited in scope and not sustainable. After the implementation of halal slaughtering guidance, there were no follow-up programs specifically targeting restaurant or food stall business owners regarding halal certification. Neither the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sungai Penuh City nor the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) had ever conducted special socialization programs concerning halal certification for restaurants and food stalls because the issue was considered to be more within the authority of the Department of Cooperatives, Industry, and Trade (Diskoperindag) or LPPOM MUI. In fact, according to one KUA staff member, socialization activities could only be conducted if there were direct instructions from the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kanwil Kemenag) or related institutions. In practice, even when socialization activities existed, they were limited only to the distribution of brochures or circular letters due to limited funding and the absence of direct technical guidance programs. Until the time this research was conducted, there had been no specific instructions from either Kanwil Kemenag or LPPOM MUI to implement halal certification socialization programs for restaurants and food stalls in Sungai Penuh City.

Data regarding the development of halal certification in Sungai Penuh City also indicate that halal certification is generally pursued only by packaged food industries, while no restaurants or food stalls have applied for halal certificates. This condition suggests that the low participation of restaurants in halal certification is not merely caused by the unwillingness of business actors, but also by the lack of socialization, weak institutional coordination, and unclear division of authority among institutions. Ultimately, the collaboration between the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Sungai Penuh City and LPPOM MUI became more focused on halal slaughtering guidance rather than on the broader implementation of halal certification for the restaurant and food stall sector.

These findings indicate the existence of fragmentation of authority among institutions, in which each institution tends to wait for instructions or assumes that the responsibility for socialization belongs to another institution. Such conditions have resulted in weak supervision, education, and comprehensive implementation of halal policies. In the context of Article 23 of Law Number 33 of 2014, business actors actually have the right to obtain information, education, socialization, guidance, and halal certification services that are fast, efficient, affordable, and non-discriminatory. However, the reality in the field demonstrates that these normative rights have not been fully fulfilled for restaurant and food stall business owners in Sungai Penuh City.

These findings are consistent with the study by Astiwara, (2024), "Mandatory Halal 2024 for Food UMKM: Readiness and Adaptation Strategies," which shows that halal certification in small food businesses is highly influenced by institutional support, administrative education, and local government involvement (Astiwara, 2024). The study emphasizes that without a clear implementation structure, small business actors tend to lack adequate access to halal certification. Another study

by Hartati, (2019), entitled “The Role of the State in the Implementation of Halal Product Assurance,” also explains that the Ministry of Religious Affairs holds a strategic role in guiding Muslim communities, but its effectiveness depends on program sustainability, financial support, and vertical coordination with regional offices and halal certification institutions (Hartati, 2019). When this role is limited only to general guidance without sustainable technical programs, its impact on the legal awareness of business actors becomes low.

From the perspective of Lawrence M. Friedman’s legal system theory, the condition in Sungai Penuh City demonstrates that the legal substance has actually been established through Law Number 33 of 2014, but the legal structure as the policy implementer has not functioned optimally, while the legal culture among business communities has also not been strongly formed due to the lack of direct education. Friedman emphasizes that legal effectiveness can only be achieved when legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture operate synergistically. In this case, the legal substance is already clear, but the implementation structure remains weak due to fragmented authority, limited programs, and minimal inter-agency coordination. As a result, the legal culture of restaurant and food stall business actors regarding the importance of halal certification has not developed optimally.

Therefore, this study demonstrates that the main problem in Sungai Penuh City lies not only in the existence of halal regulations, but also in the weak integration of policies among implementing institutions. While previous studies mainly highlighted the importance of halal industry development strategies and institutional support in general, this research specifically shows that the unclear division of authority between the Ministry of Religious Affairs, KUA, LPPOM MUI, and local government has become a significant factor hindering the effectiveness of halal certification socialization for restaurants and food stalls. Therefore, a more assertive, integrated, and sustainable coordination model is needed so that business actors’ rights to halal information and guidance can be fulfilled substantively.

Theme Two, culinary entrepreneurs’ pnderstanding of Halal Certification Regulations

a. Legal Knowledge of Restaurant Entrepreneurs Regarding Halal Certification Regulations

To measure the indicators of legal knowledge among culinary business actors, the author classifies them into several indicators as follows:

Table 1: Knowledge

No	Knowledge of Restaurant Indicators	Field Findings	Category
1.	Knowledge of Halal Certification	Some restaurant entrepreneurs are aware of the existence of halal certification; however, their knowledge is limited to information obtained from social media, the internet, and examples of restaurants that have already obtained halal certification.	Low
2.	Knowledge of the Content of Halal Certification Regulations	None of the restaurant entrepreneurs are familiar with the content of halal certification regulations, including the	Low

		procedures and requirements for obtaining halal certification	
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Based on the interview data presented in the table above, it can be explained that some restaurant business owners in Sungai Penuh City are already aware of the existence of halal certification; however, their knowledge remains very limited and general in nature. The information they obtain generally comes from social media, the internet, or observations of several large restaurants that already possess halal certificates. Thus, their knowledge has not originated from a systematic process of legal education, but merely from indirect exposure to information. Therefore, their level of knowledge regarding the existence of halal certification can still be categorized as low.

Furthermore, regarding the indicator of knowledge about halal certification regulations, the research findings show that none of the restaurant business owners specifically understood the contents of the regulations, procedures, administrative requirements, or legal provisions for obtaining halal certification as stipulated in Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance. Business actors were unfamiliar with registration mechanisms, authorized institutions, official costs, or the legal obligations attached to restaurant businesses in relation to halal certification. This condition indicates that their legal knowledge remains superficial and has not yet reached a normative understanding of the applicable regulations.

Nevertheless, restaurant business owners possess a basic understanding of the concept of halal food from the perspective of Islamic teachings. Their understanding focuses more on substantive religious aspects, such as avoiding prohibited ingredients like pork oil, ensuring that animals are slaughtered while reciting the *basmalah* and facing the *qibla*, properly cleaning animal blood, maintaining the cleanliness of food ingredients, storing ingredients properly, and using seasonings or flavor enhancers that carry halal labels. This demonstrates that business actors understand halal more within the context of daily religious practices rather than within the framework of formal halal certification law. In other words, there is a distinction between understanding halal according to Islamic law (*sharia*) and understanding halal as a formal administrative obligation imposed by the state.

These findings are consistent with the study by Gustiana, (2023), entitled “*The Effectiveness of BPJPH on Halal Certification of Indonesian UMKM Products*,” which also found that the low level of business actors’ knowledge regarding regulatory content constitutes one of the main obstacles to the implementation of halal certification in the UMKM sector. The study emphasizes that most business actors only understand the term halal in a general sense, but do not comprehend the legal system, administrative procedures, and legal benefits of halal certification itself. Similarly, the research conducted by Nazzriani & Miko, (2024), entitled “*The Influence of Service and Cost on Business Actors’ Decisions to Apply for Halal Certification for UMKM Products at LPPOM MUI North Sumatra*,” reinforces this finding by explaining that the low level of legal understanding among business actors is closely related to inadequate information services and limited assistance. Limited legal knowledge causes business actors to lack strong motivation to pursue halal certification.

Based on Soerjono Soekanto’s theory of legal awareness, legal knowledge is the first indicator in shaping public legal awareness. Soekanto explains that individuals cannot effectively comply with the law if they are unaware of the existence or substance of the law itself. In the context of this study, the low level of knowledge among restaurant business owners regarding halal certification regulations indicates that the process of legal socialization has not been implemented optimally. Business actors only understand the concept of halal in general terms, but do not yet comprehend halal certification as an instrument of state law. This condition reflects a gap between the community’s legal culture, which is based on religious values, and the formal legal structure established by the state.

Therefore, the low level of legal knowledge among restaurant business owners regarding halal certification regulations in Sungai Penuh City demonstrates that the main issue does not lie in the rejection of the halal concept itself, but rather in the lack of access to information, legal education, and regulatory guidance. While previous studies mainly emphasized the importance of halal certification from the perspective of consumer protection and business competitiveness, this research highlights that improving the legal knowledge of business actors is the primary foundation for achieving the comprehensive effectiveness of halal certification implementation. Consequently, more direct, systematic, and sustainable legal socialization is required so that restaurant business owners understand halal not only as a religious obligation, but also as a legal obligation.

b. Restaurant Entrepreneurs' Understanding of Halal Certification Regulations

Legal understanding in this context refers to the comprehension of the substance of halal certification regulations as well as the procedures for obtaining halal certification, both of which constitute integral parts of the regulatory framework.

Table 2: Understanding

No	Indicators	Field Finding	Category
1	Understanding of the Existence of Halal Certification	Out of five entrepreneurs, only two are aware of the existence of halal certification for restaurants.	Low
2	Understanding of the Content of Halal Certification Regulations	Entrepreneurs do not have a specific understanding of the regulations and assume that halal certification only applies to packaged food and beverage products.	Low
3	Understanding of the Concept of Halal Food	Entrepreneurs understand the basic concept of halal, such as avoiding prohibited ingredients, ensuring proper slaughtering according to Islamic law, maintaining cleanliness, and using halal-labeled ingredients.	Medium
4	Perception of the Obligation of Halal Certification	Entrepreneurs assume that halal certification is not yet mandatory and is not considered an urgent necessity.	Low
5	Obstacles in Obtaining Halal Certification	The process is perceived as complicated, time-consuming, costly, and hindered by a lack of understanding of the procedures.	High
6	Influence of Socialization	Entrepreneurs have never received socialization from LPPOM MUI, which contributes to their low level of understanding.	Low

7	Reasons for Not Applying for Halal Certification	Entrepreneurs believe their products are already halal due to operating in a predominantly Muslim environment, perceive no strict obligation, and prefer to wait for clear regulations and sanctions from the government.	High
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Based on the table above, it can be explained that among the five restaurant business owners in Sungai Penuh City, their level of understanding regarding halal certification regulations is generally still low. Out of the five respondents, only two business owners were aware that halal certification also applies to restaurants and food stalls, while most of the others assumed that halal certification was intended only for packaged food and beverage products. This condition indicates that the business actors' understanding is still limited to general perceptions and has not yet reached a comprehensive legal understanding.

In terms of understanding the content of the regulations, restaurant business owners do not specifically understand the legal provisions, administrative procedures, or regulatory foundations of halal certification as stipulated in Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance. They do not realize that restaurants, as food business actors, are also subjects required to pay attention to halal certification aspects. Instead, business owners understand halal mainly from the perspective of basic religious practices, such as avoiding prohibited ingredients (for example, pork oil), ensuring slaughtering processes comply with Islamic law, maintaining cleanliness of ingredients and processing areas, and using additional ingredients that carry halal labels. Therefore, their understanding of the halal concept can be categorized as moderate, while their understanding of halal as a legal regulatory system remains low.

Restaurant business owners also perceive halal certification as not yet being an urgent obligation because they do not experience or clearly understand any strict legal requirements in their daily business practices. They believe that as long as the food they sell is substantively halal according to Islamic teachings and is operated within a predominantly Muslim environment, their businesses have already fulfilled halal standards. This perception reflects a traditional legal culture that emphasizes socio-religious trust more than compliance with the formal legal system of the state. Consequently, halal certification is not viewed as an urgent business necessity, but merely as an administrative option. In addition, the main obstacles faced by restaurant business owners in obtaining halal certification are the assumptions that the process is complicated, time-consuming, expensive, and bureaucratically difficult. These perceptions are further reinforced by the absence of direct socialization from LPPOM MUI or related institutions. All respondents admitted that they had never received specific socialization regarding halal certification procedures for restaurants. This lack of socialization significantly affects their low level of legal understanding. Business owners even stated that if there were clear, simple, and affordable socialization programs, they would be more interested in considering halal certification for their businesses.

These findings are consistent with the study by Ningrum, (2023), entitled "*Halal Awareness and Perceptions of Halal Certification among Micro Culinary Business Actors in the Snack Sector*," which found that the low level of business actors' understanding regarding halal regulations is strongly influenced by perceptions of high costs, complicated services, and limited procedural information. The study showed that business actors tend to postpone halal certification when regulations are not clearly understood. Likewise, the research conducted by Andini, (2022), entitled "*Legal*

Protection for Muslim Consumers Regarding Product Halalness,” also emphasizes that many business actors in Indonesia understand halal merely as a moral and religious obligation, rather than as a formal administrative legal obligation. As a result, the level of compliance with formal certification remains low even though substantively they believe their products are halal.

Based on Soerjono Soekanto’s theory of legal awareness, legal understanding is an advanced stage following legal knowledge in shaping public legal awareness. A person may know that a law exists, but without understanding its content, objectives, and benefits, compliance will not be formed optimally. In the context of this study, restaurant business owners in Sungai Penuh City already possess basic knowledge about halal concepts, but they do not yet understand halal certification regulations as instruments of formal state law. This indicates that their legal awareness remains at a partial stage.

Therefore, the low level of understanding among restaurant business owners regarding halal certification regulations is not caused by rejection of halal principles, but rather by the lack of socialization, limited procedural information, negative perceptions regarding costs and bureaucracy, and the absence of strong legal enforcement at the implementation level. While previous studies mainly highlighted factors such as costs, services, and consumer protection, this study adds that the legal understanding of restaurant business actors is strongly influenced by the social construction that “halal” is sufficiently fulfilled through religious compliance without needing to be proven through formal certification. Therefore, more intensive, educative, and direct socialization programs targeting restaurant business actors are needed so that their understanding shifts from merely substantive halal toward halal with formal legal certainty.

Based on the research findings, the reasons why restaurant business actors have not yet applied for halal certification are as follows:

1. Restaurant entrepreneurs assume that their food products are already halal, as they operate within a predominantly Muslim community and run their businesses in Sungai Penuh, where the majority of the population is Muslim.
2. They perceive the process of obtaining halal certification as complicated and lengthy, which is largely due to their lack of understanding of halal certification regulations.
3. Halal certification is still viewed as a recommendation from the government rather than a strict obligation, and there is no perceived requirement for business actors to obtain it.
4. Most of the interviewed restaurant entrepreneurs stated that they would apply for halal certification only if there were clear government regulations accompanied by sanctions for non-compliance.
5. There has been no socialization or outreach conducted for restaurant entrepreneurs regarding halal certification to date.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of socialization and supervision of halal certification in Sungai Penuh City has not been carried out optimally and has not reached all business actors, particularly restaurant entrepreneurs in culinary markets. The findings reveal that the socialization conducted by LPPOM MUI in collaboration with government institutions is still limited to Islamic religious counselors and producers of packaged food and beverages, leaving restaurant entrepreneurs largely untouched. Similarly, supervision has primarily focused on packaged products rather than culinary businesses such as restaurants. This condition has resulted in a low level

of understanding among restaurant entrepreneurs regarding halal certification regulations, with most of them not even being aware of the procedures and processes required to obtain halal certification. Therefore, this study confirms that the lack of socialization and supervision is the main factor contributing to the low awareness and understanding of business actors regarding the importance of halal certification.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that LPPOM MUI, in collaboration with local governments and related institutions, enhance their synergy to expand socialization and supervision efforts, particularly by directly targeting restaurant entrepreneurs in culinary markets. In addition, restaurant business actors are encouraged to pay attention to the indicators outlined in halal certification regulations, even if they have not yet obtained certification, and to actively seek information regarding halal programs and promotions organized by LPPOM MUI. This study can also serve as a reference for future researchers to further examine issues related to halal certification using different approaches and contexts, thereby contributing more broadly to the development of policies and practices of halal certification in Indonesia.

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