

# Artikel Khusniati Rofiah

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## Legal Awareness of Halal Products Certification among East Java Business Operators and Society

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**Abstract:** *The number of business operators in East Java increases significantly each year but is unfortunately not accompanied by increased legal awareness. While many business operators are aware of the halal certification obligation, they need to actually comply to it. This research was conducted in East Java on 111 micro and small business operators and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) spread across several cities. A total of 450 respondents of various backgrounds who, at the time of research, had run their business for at least two years were involved in direct interviews and questionnaire surveys. This research focuses on discussing the awareness of business operators and the community in East Java based on Soerjono's legal awareness, Soekanto (understanding, knowledge, obedience, and legal attitudes), and maqashid sharia. Efforts to increase knowledge and understanding of business owners of legal awareness still lacked due to non-existent sanctions and incomprehensive campaign. Meanwhile, in legal culture, there is a perception that food consumed by the community is not necessarily halal-certified. The government strategy to advocate legal awareness of halal product certification includes product acceleration through the halal product information (SIP Halal) system that is easily accessible to MSMEs.*

**Keywords:** Certification, halal product, sharia maqhosid, business operators, society

### Introduction

The Muslim population in Indonesia Indonesia's muslim population in 2023 is 240,622 million, or 63.5% of the total population (Data Indonesia, 2023) and halal product and service expenditures is predicted to increase by 14.9% in 2025 to USD 281.6 billion. This makes Indonesia the largest halal market consumer globally, amounting to 11.34% of global halal production (Kementerian Perindustrian Republik Indonesia, 2023). In 2024, the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag) require three types of halal-certified products: 1) food and beverage products; 2) raw materials, food additives, and auxiliary ingredients for food and beverage products; and 3) slaughter products and services. Previously in 2023, the Ministry of Religion, through the Guarantee Administering Agency Halal Products (BPJPH), opened registration for Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) 2023 for 1 million quota to micro and small enterprises (UMK) at 1,000 points simultaneously in Indonesia (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2023).

34 Halal certification is not only a religious matter but also business and market concerns (Batubara & Harahap, 2022; Hisam Ahyani et al., 2021). Since eating halal food is a form of obedience to Islamic values (Alimusa et al., 2023) and halal food industry is known for its ethical aspects of being healthy, safe, and eco-friendly, the global demand for halal products continues to increase among Muslim population and beyond. This development has sparked customer concerns of sensitivity to halal on consumed products because, according to Alimusa et al. (2023), the halalness of a product without a halal label is doubted (Alimusa et al., 2023).

Research conducted by Puteh et al., (2023) entitled "Analysis Literature on Legal Awareness of Business operators regarding Obligations for Halal Certified Products" revealed that the business operators lack legal awareness of their obligation to product certification due to minimum dissemination of regulations on halal products. Meanwhile, Rahayu et al., (2022) mentioned in their research "Analysis of Legal Awareness and Protection of Business operators for Consumers regarding Ownership of Halal Certificates" lack of legal awareness of halal certificate in Sawce Chicken business operators due to their limited understanding of the content, purpose, and benefits of the halal certificate. Furthermore, Rahayu stated that the assurance of halalness should be perpetuated in the use of ingredients; the series of processing, presenting, and serving the products; the delivery of correct and honest information to the consumers; and the commitment to pay compensation for restaurant's negligence.

The government of Indonesia encourages business operators in the Micro and Small Enterprises (UMK) through the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Body (BPJPH) (Efendi et al., 2023) and the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (Amalia & Hidayati, 2020) to obtain halal certification for their products and services. In East Java business operators of micro, small, medium, and large scales have flourished significantly but unparalleled in legal awareness. The contributing factors to this include different educational backgrounds of business operators, minimum campaign and assistance in halal certification from the government, and low confidence in the benefits of halal certification. Legal awareness requires synergy from multi-parties from governments to business actors, and consumers.

Based on this explanation, this article will discuss awareness law on business operators in East Java regarding halal product certification in awareness theory law and maqashid sharia because the product's halal certificate is guaranteed to increase benefits and achieve the goals of the Islamic religion.

## Literature Review

Laws protect and promote cultural values in a society (Wijatmoko et al., 2023). Building social awareness of the law can strengthen the community and make them perceive the law as a means to support the fulfillment of their needs and to maintain order in the community (Muthaqqin & Baeihaqi, 2022). Ignorance of the law makes people underestimate the rules made by the state. Legal awareness refers to how people interpret the law and legal institutions, which gives them understanding to a person's experiences and actions (Aprita, 2021). Another definition is every legal action and practice that someone studies empirically. In other words, legal awareness interprets law as behaviour instead of rules, norms, or principle (Rogers, 2018).

43 Soerjono Soekanto formulated indicators of legal awareness, namely legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal compliance/attitudes, and legal behaviour (Labetubun, 2021; Soekanto, 2014). These four indicators imply certain levels of legal awareness in its realization. Legal understanding is information a person has about the substances, objectives, and benefits of certain regulations. Legal knowledge describes the relevance of legal problems faced with current legal understanding (Hidayah & Wicaksono, 2020). Legal attitude means the tendency to recognize or reject the law because of appreciation or awareness that the law is beneficial for human life. Lastly, patterns of

legal behaviour are related to the extent of law enforcement and community compliance (Hidayah & Wicaksono, 2020; Labetubun, 2021). Increasing legal awareness should be carried out through regular legal information and counselling based on solid planning.

Obedience to the law is influenced by many factors (Ma et al., 2023; Soekanto, 2014), such as 1) Compliance based on the desire for rewards and efforts to distance oneself from discipline that will be imposed if someone blames them for using the provisions of the law; 2) Identification which means compliance in carrying out the law, so that we maintain good relations; 3) Internalization which makes someone obey legal rules because rewards accompany it; and 4) Citizen interaction guaranteed by the existing legal system. Legitimate public awareness influences legal compliance both directly and indirectly. Direct compliance may include keeping hygiene and halalness during product manufacturing, while indirect compliance is the one emerges due to regulation, such as the mandatory halal label. Individuals obey the law because they are aware that they need the law and takut terhadap sanksi yang akan diterima. Law No. 33/2014 of the Republic of Indonesia stipulates that halal products comply with Islamic sharia (principles). For the Muslims, the word of Allah QS. An-Nisa: 59 states that a leader is a person entrusted with taking care of people's affairs, and that obedience to Ulil Amri (leader) means obedience to Allah Swt. Therefore, they must adhere to leaders' policies in establishing laws, especially halal certification in this context.

Consciousness is a fundamental part of human existence (Amalia & Hidayati, 2020) that conveys human perception and cognitive reactions to the conditions of what humans eat, drink, and use. Consciousness plays a role in shaping halal culture in which consumers have the ability to identify and adhere to halal goods in various circumstances (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020). According to Al-shami & Abdullah (2023), halal cultures contribute to consumers' confidence of halal products, that in turn, increases sales of halal products; therefore, halal certification is crucial to boost consumer's confidence (Harwati & Yunita Pettalolo, 2019). Halal certification brings two-pronged benefits. First, it aims to serve the interests of Muslims and support them in practising the teachings of their religion (Qurtubi et al., 2023). Secondly, halal certification helps producers get a wider range of consumers, seize opportunities, and expand their business (Dian Luthviati & Jenvitchuwong, 2021), potentially leading to the growth of food products (Qurtubi et al., 2023). On a side note, awareness of registering a halal certificate is influenced by knowledge about halal, perceived benefits, and perceptions of procedures (Amalia & Hidayati, 2020). Therefore, accelerating the realization of halal certification in Indonesia requires synergy between government agencies, business operators, and halal product partners (PPH).

Halal-certified products instill a sense of trust and assurance for the buyers that the food products comply with Sharia law (Amalia & Hidayati, 2020). Muslims' awareness of consuming halal products is potentially driven by their religious beliefs, exposure to certification logos, and health reasons (Kurniawati & Savitri, 2019). Halal standardization protects the health and safety of consumers, workers and the community, as well as realizing the quality of products and/or services produced by increasing efficiency in the quality system management process (Krisharyanto et al., 2019). More specifically, halal certification is a continuation of the standardization process and a form of formal recognition and proof or guarantee that a product has been processed per the required standards (Kusumaningtyas et al., 2022).

Halal constitutes the substances (dzat<sup>hi</sup>), the nature of the substance, the process, the processing place, processing equipment, product storage, product distribution, and presentation (Sucipto et al., 2022). Carcasses, blood, pork, and/or halal animals (e.g., chickens, cows, goats, etc.) that are slaughtered in ways that are not Islamic Sharia are all considered non-halal (haram) materials (Harwati & Yunita Pettalolo, 2019). In addition, non-halal materials include intoxicating plants or drinks, health-harming materials, and microbes contaminated with non-halal materials. Religious knowledge about halal includes laws of what Muslims are permitted to eat, drink, and use, as explained in the Qur'an and Hadith (Adnani et al., 2023). In the Al-Quran Surah (chapter) 2

(Al Baqarah) ayah (verse) 173 Allah says that all foods are generally allowed except those from prohibited animals such as pigs, dogs, and carrion, and foods and drinks containing alcohol and other poisonous or dangerous substance Slaughter must be carried out according to sharia in the name of God<sup>12</sup>

Each supply chain must implement a halal guarantee system, which regulates materials, production processes, products, human resources and procedures to maintain the continuity of the halal production process, namely halal policy (Abdul Kadir Jaelani et al., 2023), halal management team, training and education, materials, products, production facilities, written procedures for critical activities, tracking, procedures for handling products that do not meet the criteria, internal audits and management reviews (Wahyuni et al., 2021; Wijatmoko et al., 2023). Halal supply chain management is halal network management which aims to expand halal integrity from the source to the point of consumer purchase so that every SME that produces halal products needs to measure its supply chain management performance by consider halal criteria from upstream to downstream (Wahyuni et al., 2021).

The halalness of a product is an obligation in science maqashid sharia, especially if the product is consumed or used by a Muslim. Maqashid sharia is divided into two topics: maqashid, which means intention or purpose, and the plural of maqsud (Ichsan & Dewi, 2020) from the syllable qasada, which means will or intention (Hadi & Baihaqi, 2020). According to sharia, maqashid sharia means the path to a water source or source of life (Fakhruddin et al., 2024). It can also be interpreted as the goal of Islamic law contained in every rule (Hadi & Baihaqi, 2020). Sharia is established to realize human welfare in the world and carried out through productive, dynamic and flexible thinking. That said, maqashid sharia is a concept for knowing wisdom, namely maslahah or goodness and welfare of humanity (Ichsan & Dewi, 2020). The way to achieve these benefits is to fulfil primary needs (dharuriyat), perfect secondary needs (hajiyat), and tertiary needs (tahziyah). Maqashid sharia establishes legal actions as the objectives of Islamic law, which consist of hifdz al-din (keeping religion), hifdz al-nafs (keep the soul), hifdz al-'aql (keep your wits about you), hifdz al-mal (guard property), and hifdz al-nasab (protecting offspring) (Susanti et al., 2022). Religious, social, and economic practices of humans are expected to achieve prosperity (falaah) in this world and the hereafter (Ichsan & Dewi, 2020).

## Methodology

Valid data was obtained through field studies with a qualitative approach using observation, interviews and documentation (Yusuf et al., 2022) to explore the flow of halal certification in Indonesia. To understand the community legal awareness of halal products, we distributed an online questionnaire through WhatsApp group chats. We managed to randomly collect 111 business operators who, at the time or this research, have run their business for at least two years regardless of being halal-certified or not. The questionnaire was built on a Google Form with four close-ended questions and one open-ended question as follows:

1. Does your business have halal certificate?
2. If you have applied or are currently applying for halal certification, what are the challenges that you face?<sup>41</sup>
3. What is your reason to apply for halal certification?
4. What is the application process of halal certification?
5. How much is the fee for applying for halal certification?

The survey was conducted from May to July 2023 to groups of business owners in some big cities, and interviews was done with 50 business owners between 2022-2023. These business operators were 15 in Jember, 23 in Malang and Batu, 35 in Surabaya, 10 in Sidoarjo, 13 in Pasuruan,

5 in Madura, 17 in Ponorogo, and 11 in Madiun. The business scales of these operators varied from large (35), medium (37), and small and micro (39).

Furthermore, to identify public legal awareness of halal products, we developed a questionnaire using a Google Form and distributed it through WhatsApp group chats using a snowball method. The questionnaire contained four close-ended questions as follows:

1. Do you always pay attention to the halal label when purchasing a product?
2. Do you always use products bearing halal label?
3. What is most important when purchasing a product – price, brand, or halal label?
4. Is it necessary for the street vendors, restaurants, cafes, and food carts to have a halal certificate?

This survey was conducted between May and June 2023, aiming to evaluate the community awareness of using or consuming halal products. We used general sampling without criteria, and managed to gather 450 respondents from different cities like Jember, Surabaya, Malang, Pasuruan, Madiun, and Ponorogo and with diverse background, namely 171 housewives, 180 students (high school and university), and 99 mixture of teachers, lecturers, state apparatus, and private employees. The education backgrounds were 90 junior high school, 144 high school, 180 bachelor's degree, 90 master's degree, and 19 doctoral degree.

Interviews were conducted to the staff of halal centre institutions selected from universities, especially PTKIN in East Java, namely UINSA, UIN Malang, and IAIN Ponorogo whom we asked to answer questions about halal certification that allowed us to probe deeper into business owners and community's legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitude, and legal culture. The data were subjected to qualitative descriptive analysis, which involved conceptualization processes and resulted in the formation of classification schemes (Hardani et al., 2020). It also describes the characteristics of a symptom or problem under study; this study also focuses on the basic question of 'how' when trying to obtain and convey facts clearly, thoroughly and completely without many unimportant details (Soekanto, 2014).

Secondary data were collected from publications, namely books, journals, letters, news, websites and policy documents related to the issues discussed. Data analysis uses an inductive approach, namely by applying the approach reasoning with steps of thinking that moves from specific observations to generalizations and broader theory, so informally, this approach in research is referred to as approach bottom up, namely from bottom to top (Hardani et al., 2020).

## Results and Discussion

### Level of Legal Awareness of Halal Product Certification among Business Operators and the Community in East Java regarding Halal Product Certification

According to Soerjono Soekanto, the concept of legal awareness can be seen from four aspects: legal knowledge, understanding of the law, legal obedience/attitude, and legal behaviour. Our findings on legal awareness of halal certification among business operators in East Java are summarized in the table below:

**Table 1.** Legal Awareness of Business operators and the Community regarding Halal certification

Legal Awareness	Description
Legal Knowledge and Legal Understanding	<b>Business Actors</b> Most business operators in East Java (58%) have exercised legal awareness of halal certification and labelling. Their reason is the product is <b>45</b> ier to market and has a higher selling value. Meanwhile, <b>23%</b> are still in the halal certification process because

they already know and understand the halal obligations of products produced, distributed or sold

**Community**

The majority of the community in our study (247 out of 450) stated that halal products are important and they always paid attention to the halalness of the products they purchased. The community understood the consumer's rights to consume halal products. Only 133 respondents or 30% who less frequently paid attention whether the products they purchased were halal. This shows that they actually knew the importance of halal label on food products but they may at times ignored it, and therefore, it is vital to raise their understanding on halal food. Some other respondents (n=70;20%) are familiar with halal certificates and they also raise awareness of halal certification to other people in their community/circle.

Legal Compliance and Culture

**Business Actors**

A total of 64 (58%) business operators in this research are in possession of halal product certificate and label, 26 (23%) have their halal certification process underway, and the rest 21 (19%) have not exercised and complied to halal regulations. Reasons for registering to halal certification are either self-awareness (47 business actors; 56%) or counselling from the halal companion (37 business actors; 44%).

**Community**

Based on 450 community respondents in East Java, 247 are law-abiding and exercise good legal culture in using halal products because they always look for the halal label first before purchasing or using a product. Meanwhile, around 133 respondents doubt the importance of halal certification because they at times overlook halal label on products they purchase. The rest 70 respondents have not obeyed halal rules.

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2023

The 111 business operators in East Java are divided into two scales, namely MSMEs (n=77) and large business units (n=34). At the MSME level, 47% (36) are in possession of halal certificate, 26% (20) have their halal certification underway, and 27% (21) have not had halal certificate. For large-scale businesses, 82% (28) already have halal certification and labels while 18% (6) business operators in medicines and cosmetics either not have all their products halal-certified or are undergoing the halal certification process. In other words, 58% or 64 business operators in East Java are halal-certified, 18% or 20 business operators are having their halal certification underway, and 27 (24%) have not processed halal certification at all.

The reasons for business actors have completed or are undertaking halal certification for their products are summarized in the Table 2.

**Table 2.** Halal Certificate Management

Halal Certificate Management	Description	Percentage
Halal Certification Process	Easy and Relatively Fast	51%
	Difficult and Relatively Long	49%
Halal Certification Processing Fee	Free Halal Certificate Processing Fee (non Regular MSMEs)	33%
	IDR 500,000.00 - IDR 1,000,000.00 (Regular SMEs)	18%

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2023

The certification process encourages business operators to register their products certification. Table 2 shows that certification process was perceived easy and relatively fast for 43 business operators (51%) but difficult and lengthy for 41 business operators (49%). The cost of processing halal product certification is also an important factor in decision of business operators to apply for halal certification. Our respondents reported varied costs depending on their business scale, namely free-of-charge for non-regular MSMEs (28 or 33%), IDR 500,000.00 – 1,000,000.00 for non-regular SMEs (15 or 33%), and IDR 1,000,000.00 – 3,000,000.00 for medium and large-scale businesses (49 or 49%).

On one hand, business operators still need to fulfil the obligation to have halal certification (Batubara & Harahap, 2022) but the absence of sanctions imposed to business operators not having halal certification potentially make them reluctant to comply. On the other hand, the legal apparatus including BPJPH and the Government need to do extensive campaign on halal certification, impose strict law enforcement, and improve their responsibility and performance. There have been varied infrastructure challenges that constrain business operators from obtaining halal certification; MSEs are hampered by Business Identification Number or NIB (Nurhikma et al., 2021) while large business actors (e.g., pharmaceuticals) may find their ingredients, capsules, and product packaging stand in the way. Examined from the legal culture of the community, both business operators and the public consider eating halal products important, but they lack awareness of whether or not the products bear halal label.

The enactment of Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantees (abbreviated as UUJPH) emphasizes the urgency of halal and haram issue in the production chain from business operators to consumers, and the role of intermediaries like distributors, sub-distributors, wholesalers and retailers before the products reach the final consumers (Safira et al., 2019). The definition of halal products is regulated by Article 1 paragraph (2) UUJPH, "Halal products are products that have been declared halal in accordance with Islamic law". While food are staple needs for human, halal food is non-negotiable for the Muslims except in emergencies. (Harwati & Yunita Pettalolo, 2019; Safira et al., 2019).

Strengthening the implementation of the UUJPH, the Government issued Government Regulation Number 31 of 2019 concerning Halal Product Guarantees, which was ratified by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr Joko Widodo, on May 17, 2019 and came into effect on October 17, 2019 (Safira et al., 2019). Since then, halal product certification is no longer a recommendation (mogen) but is now an obligation. Accordingly, it is crucial to build public awareness, especially producers and the millennial generation, of the importance of halal certification (Safira et al., 2019).

This law is further strengthened by the ratification of Government Regulation Number 39 of 2021 on implementing Halal Product Guarantees. This regulation mandates that both Central and Regional Governments, through the Halal Product Guarantee Implementation Agency (abbreviated as BPJPH), collaborate with Halal Product Guarantee Institutions at both State and Private Universities to immediately complete the implementation of halal product guarantees as an effort to build legal awareness for both organizers and business actors. In addition, large-scale business and MSMEs should assess the success or failure of the 2019-2024 Indonesian Sharia Economic master plan (Mawardi et al., 2019) in encouraging halal certification to empower the performance of Indonesia's sharia economy. To date, Indonesia is transitioning from voluntary to mandatory nature of halal certification in hope for boosting the growth of halal trade in the country.

Responding to this challenge, BPJPH East Java Provincial Government, in coordination with



BPJPH Regency, planned to issue one million halal product certifications for MSME business actors in 2023. However, as of June 2023, there were only 10,000 MSME business operators who have halal certificates for their food products (Results of an interview with the Head of the Trade and Micro Business Service, Mr Addin Andhanawarih, on May 25 2023). It showed that there remain obstacles to accelerating halal certification of food products in Indonesia. Based on (Indah, 2023; Novi, 2023) and based on our surveys, these obstacles may include:

- a. Business operators need help certifying their food products;
- b. Lack of socialization about various government halal programs such as SEHATI and Declare Halal;
- c. Halal procedures are difficult for MSME business operators because they must have an NIB letter (Business Identification Number), which most MSME business actors not have and consequently, it hindered the acceleration of food products to earn halal certificate and label;
- d. Lack of public legal awareness of halal food products.

#### Legal Awareness of Halal Certification according to Maqhashid Shariah among Business Actors in East Java.

The number of business actors in East Java continues to increase every year. According to data from the Department of Cooperatives and MSME in East Java, there are around 9,782,262 MSMEs, consisting of 93.37% (9,133,859) micro businesses, 5.92% (579,567) small businesses, and 0.70% (68,835) medium-sized businesses. These businesses are mostly food, drink, pharmaceutical, and cosmetic that are vulnerable without guaranteed halal certificate. Legal awareness of business operators and consumers in East Java in eating halal food is fardhu 'ain (a mandatory rule that, if undone, cause sins to Muslims). Since eating means putting something into our body, selecting halal food is an act of accomplishing maqashid dharuriyat (staple needs that must be fulfilled to provide ritual and secular benefits). Consuming halal products is mandatory and a form of protection to religion (hifz al-diin), soul (hifz al-nafs), intellectuality (hifz al-'aql), descendants (hifz al-nasl) and property (hifz al-maal).

This has also been confirmed in the objectives of Law Number 33 of 2014 and PP Number 39 of 2021 of the Republic of Indonesia that stipulate two objectives of implementing the guarantee for halal products. The first objective is to provide comfort, security, safety and certainty of the availability of halal products for the public who consume and use the products. The sense of comfort is a priority for Muslim community to feel satisfied after consuming halal products. Meanwhile, security and safety is assurance that the products they consumed are free from non-halal elements. Certainty refers to availability of halal products in Indonesia. These four elements are absolute and crucial for the Muslim, and the law has enforced this.

The second objective is to increase added value for business operators to produce and sell halal products. While added value is a pragmatic goal in the business world, implementing halal certification is a part of spreading the good teachings of Islam that can be implemented in a modern business system and mechanism. Regardless of personal faith and religion, any business actors who want to sell their products in Muslim majority countries must ensure that their products are halal because, without a doubt, Muslim consumers will avoid non-halal products.

#### Strategies of East Java Government to Increase Legal Awareness of MSME Business Operators and the Community in Managing and Using Products that are Certified and Labeled Halal

The Governor of East Java conveyed his plans for regional development. The first halal industry in Indonesia dedicated to SMEs is located at Safe and Lock in Sidoarjo while halal tourism centres are being developed in Malang and Mojokerto (East Java Province Communications and

Information Service, 2021). In 2022, 1.5 million MSME products in East Java were targeted to have halal certification in order to accelerate national halal certification process. As of January 3, 2024, BOJPH had issued 252,490 halal certificates for business operators, including 98.52% SMEs in East Java (Nashrullah, 2022).

During the period of 2017-2019, Provincial Industry and Trade Serviv of East Java provided halal facilitation to 385 East Java Small and Medium Industries (IKM) and again in 2020-2021 to 678 (East et al. 2020). The Guarantee Administering Agency Halal Products (BPJPH) has issued 184 Halal Certificate in East Java since October 17, 2019. By 2020, facilitation for MSMEs had reached 428 business units, and in 2021 was 650 business units (Department of Industry and Commerce Jawa Timur Province, 2020).

In order to impose halal certification to food and beverage sales areas around UIN Malang, UIN Malang halal institution provided education to some business operators residing in the working areas of Halal Center of UIN Malang since 2018. Today, more than 100 SMEs around UIN Malang campus have been certified halal by the UIN Malang halal institution (Indah, personal communication, 2023). In contrast, the Ministry of Religion in Ponorogo issued the 2020 "Sehati Program" where BPJPH and Ponorogo Regency Indakop provided free facilities for managing halal products for 2,500 SMEs in Ponorogo (Sunarto, personal communication, 2023). In Madiun Regency, the Chair of IKM Forum managed to facilitate approximately 700 halal certificates in 2023 (Sunarto, personal communication, 2023). In the same year, the Provincial BPJPH targeted to issue 25,000 free-of-charge halal product certifications to MSMEs in East Java (Evi, 2022).

The strategies carried out by the provincial, city, and district government can be successfully realized with outreach, seminars, and assistance for UMKM in East Java. Indakop Ponorogo has exemplified annual MSME exhibition starting in 2019 and held regular education and mentoring on halal certification five times a year (Astin, personal communication, 2023).

## Conclusion

Business operators and the East Java community still lack understanding and awareness of halal certification as reflected from a large number of halal-uncertified local business. The absence of sanctions products without halal certification makes business operators reluctant to apply for one. the legal apparatus, namely the Guarantee Administering Agency Halal Products (BPJPH) and the government, are lack in campaign of halal certification, fierce law enforcement, and high responsibility and performance. Some business operators like SMEs are difficult to obtain halal certification because they do not have the Business Identification Number (NIB). While the legal culture of both business operators and community perceives the importance of eating halal products, the legal awareness needs more serious implementation. The Muslim community in East Java may lack awareness of producing and using products bearing halal label or certificates. The solution implemented by the East Java government through BPJPH is accelerating halal certification by developing a Halal Product Information System (SIP Halal). It enables both public and MSME business operators to access and understand East Java halal-certified products and facilitate business operators to obtain halal product certification with assistance of all related parties.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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