

HALAL CERTIFICATION FOR MSEs IN INDONESIA: HOW BUSINESS DURATION DRIVES LEGAL AWARENESS

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ABSTRACT - Halal certification is mandatory for all Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in Indonesia. Despite the vast number of MSEs, totaling 64.2 million as of February 2023, only about 20% have obtained halal certification. This study investigates the influence of legal awareness on halal certification registration among Indonesian MSEs and examines the moderating role of business duration. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a quantitative approach, the study assessed the impact of legal awareness constructs (knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior) on halal certification awareness among 333 MSE respondents, with business duration included as a moderator. The findings revealed that legal knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior did not significantly affect halal certification awareness, whereas business duration had a significant positive impact. Additionally, the moderation analysis demonstrated that business duration significantly influenced the relationship between legal understanding and halal certification awareness. The results suggest that experience, rather than legal comprehension, drives halal certification awareness among Indonesian MSEs. The study offers insights for policymakers to support longer-running businesses and simplify certification processes to increase halal certification rates among MSEs. Future research should consider using larger, more diverse samples and incorporating qualitative methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of MSEs' motivations and challenges in obtaining halal certification.

Keywords: Legal Awareness, Business Duration, Halal Certification

ABSTRAK – Sertifikasi Halal untuk UKM di Indonesia: Peran Durasi Usaha dalam Mendorong Kesadaran Hukum. Sertifikasi halal diwajibkan bagi seluruh Usaha Mikro dan Kecil (UMK) di Indonesia. Meskipun jumlah UKM mencapai 64,2 juta per Februari 2023, hanya sekitar 20% yang telah memperoleh sertifikasi halal. Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh kesadaran hukum terhadap pendaftaran sertifikasi halal di kalangan UKM Indonesia dan menguji peran moderasi durasi usaha. Menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) dengan pendekatan kuantitatif, penelitian ini menguji dampak konstruk kesadaran hukum (pengetahuan, pemahaman, sikap, dan perilaku) terhadap kesadaran sertifikasi halal di antara 333 responden UKM, dengan durasi usaha dimasukkan sebagai variabel moderator. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengetahuan hukum, pemahaman, sikap, dan perilaku tidak secara signifikan mempengaruhi kesadaran sertifikasi halal, sementara durasi usaha memiliki dampak positif yang signifikan. Lebih lanjut, analisis moderasi menunjukkan bahwa durasi usaha secara signifikan mempengaruhi hubungan antara pemahaman hukum dan kesadaran sertifikasi halal. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa pengalaman akan mendorong kesadaran sertifikasi halal di kalangan UKM Indonesia. Temuan ini memberikan pencerahan bagi pembuat kebijakan untuk lebih mendukung usaha-usaha yang telah berjalan lama dan menyederhanakan proses sertifikasi bagi UKM. Penelitian selanjutnya perlu mempertimbangkan penggunaan sampel yang lebih besar dan beragam serta menggabungkan metode kualitatif untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif mengenai motivasi dan tantangan UKM dalam memperoleh sertifikasi halal.

Kata Kunci: Kesadaran Hukum, Durasi Usaha, Sertifikasi Halal

INTRODUCTION

Halal products are those that meet Islamic legal standards, making them permissible for consumption by Muslims. The Qur'an, in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 168, emphasizes the importance of consuming halal food, stating, "O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy" (Al-Baqarah 2:168). This command underscores that the need for halal products extends beyond religious observance to a global need for ethical consumption. Rahmawati (2022) supports this view, noting that halal products have become a global necessity, driven not only by religious adherence but also by their significant business potential. Entrepreneurs can leverage halal certification to establish a unique business identity (Rahmawati et al., 2022).

In Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, halal certification plays a critical role in both religious and economic contexts. As the world's largest Muslim-majority country, ensuring that halal products are available aligns with deeply rooted religious and cultural values. Beyond religion, the halal industry is emerging as a critical driver of economic growth, helping Indonesia establish itself as a key player in the global halal market. The demand for halal products has expanded beyond Muslim consumers to include those interested in ethical and sustainable consumption (Setyaningsih & Marwansyah, 2019).

The common perception is that halal certification primarily pertains to food and beverages. However, Swandaru argues that the concept of halal has extended to other industries, opening significant growth opportunities in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and services, including marketing, supply chain management, and finance (Setyaningsih & Marwansyah, 2019). Elasmagh further highlights the rapid expansion of the halal industry into lifestyle areas like travel, tourism, hospitality, and fashion (Aulianda et al., 2021).

In response to the increasing demand for halal products, the Indonesian government enacted Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee, demonstrating its commitment to ensuring the safety and halal integrity of products in line with Islamic law (Hasibuan, 2023). This was further strengthened by Law No. 11 of 2020 on Job Creation and Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021, which introduced specific regulations to streamline the halal certification process.



Despite these regulations, the rate of halal certification among Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in Indonesia remains low, with only about 20% of MSEs having obtained certification (BPJPH, 2023). Legal awareness surrounding halal certification is still underdeveloped, and initiatives like the Sehati program have faced challenges in reaching all MSEs due to high costs and uncertainty regarding product halalness (Jakiyudin & Fedro, 2022). Furthermore, efforts by local governments, such as banners and counseling, have proven insufficient to raise awareness and interest in halal certification (M. K. Sari, 2020).

Legal awareness is a key factor influencing the behavior of MSEs, as businesses with higher legal awareness are more likely to comply with regulations (A. M. Sari, 2023). Factors like education, experience, and social environment can shape this awareness, which in turn affects legal knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior (Marsinah, 2014). Oemar et al. (2023) found that halal awareness influences MSEs' intentions to register for halal certification, particularly among those in the food sector. Similarly, Aslan (2023) stresses the importance of halal certification even in Muslim-majority countries, where consumer behavior is significantly shaped by halal awareness.

Previous studies have primarily focused on consumer behavior and general halal awareness but have not examined the specific impact of legal awareness on halal certification among MSEs in Indonesia. Moreover, there is limited understanding of how the length of business operation influences the relationship between legal awareness and the decision to pursue halal certification. Additionally, while halal certification has been studied in the broader market, the unique barriers faced by Indonesian MSEs remain underexplored, despite the presence of regulatory frameworks such as Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Guarantee. This study aims to address this gap by conducting a quantitative analysis of how legal awareness affects MSEs' decisions to pursue halal certification, with a focus on the moderating role of business duration.

The study focuses on legal awareness within the context of MSEs. It examines how legal knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior influence MSEs' decisions to pursue halal certification, an area that has not been extensively studied. Additionally, the study introduces business duration as a moderating variable to explore how the length of time a business has been operational affects the relationship between legal awareness and certification decisions.



This study is important for several reasons. From a policy perspective, the findings can provide valuable insights for policymakers in supporting MSEs to achieve halal certification. This could involve the development of more targeted legal awareness programs and efforts to simplify the certification process. Furthermore, by identifying the barriers and motivators behind halal certification, the research could help unlock the economic potential of Indonesia's vast MSE sector within the global halal market. Lastly, given Indonesia's position as the world's largest Muslim-majority country, improving halal certification among MSEs is significant not only for economic growth but also for upholding cultural and religious values.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Legal Knowledge and Halal Certification of MSEs in Indonesia

Halal Certification and Legal Awareness

One prominent theme in the literature is the effectiveness of regulations, such as the Halal Product Guarantee Act, in raising legal awareness and compliance among business owners. Anzellyta and Fittria (2022) explored how this Act impacted business actors' awareness of registering for halal certification. Through a qualitative field study with an empirical juridical approach, their findings revealed that the Act had not significantly improved awareness or the availability of halal-certified products. The study concluded that business owners in Indonesia generally exhibit low legal awareness regarding halal certification registration.

Similarly, Azizah and Sulistyowati (2012) investigated consumer legal awareness of halal labeling on Gethuk Pisang, a traditional Indonesian food product. Their study found that consumer awareness could be substantially higher, being influenced by factors such as reading interest, education, age, gender, religion, and the lack of socialization about the importance of halal labeling. This suggests that both business owners and consumers have insufficient awareness and understanding of halal certification requirements.

Socialization Efforts and Challenges in Halal Certification

Efforts to promote the halal assurance system among MSEs have encountered significant challenges. Savitri et al. (2022) discussed the socialization of the Halal Assurance System for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Although these initiatives aim to address the low adoption of halal certification



in Indonesia, they have not been fully effective. Many MSMEs do not recognize the value of participating in the halal certification process, largely due to low consumer awareness, which reduces its perceived benefits for businesses.

Despite ongoing socialization efforts, there is a gap in the literature, particularly regarding quantitative research that examines how legal awareness affects MSE owners' participation in halal certification, with the duration of business operations acting as a moderating variable. This study seeks to bridge that gap by empirically investigating the impact of legal awareness on halal certification participation among MSEs in Indonesia.

Knowledge, Religiosity, and Attitudes Towards Halal Certification

Legal knowledge, along with religiosity and consumer attitudes toward halal products, significantly shapes behavior concerning halal certification. Susanti et al. (2023) found that religiosity, knowledge of halal labels, and consumer attitudes significantly influenced purchasing decisions among Muslim students in Indonesia. Likewise, Adiba and Wulandari (2018) demonstrated that halal knowledge, religiosity, and attitudes positively and significantly impact consumer behavior toward halal cosmetics in Surabaya.

In addition, Gunawan et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of assisting MSEs in understanding and meeting halal certification requirements, while Rafianti et al. (2022) highlighted the difficulties MSEs encounter in the halal certification process, particularly under the Self Declare program. Both studies emphasize the need for improved education and knowledge about the certification process.

Legal Knowledge and Its Influence on Halal Certification

Legal knowledge is a crucial factor influencing MSEs' engagement with the halal certification process. Hasan (2014) stressed the importance of businesses understanding the legal aspects of halal certification, including its voluntary nature and the related rights and obligations. Such knowledge enables businesses to navigate the certification process more effectively. Based on this, the study will test the following hypothesis:

H1: Legal knowledge has a positive effect on halal certification of MSEs in Indonesia.



Legal Understanding and Halal Certification of MSEs in Indonesia

Nuraliyah et al. (2023) found that knowledge, understanding, and certification costs significantly influence the decisions of MSMEs in Bangkalan to pursue halal certification. Their study underscores the vital role of legal understanding in the decision-making process for halal certification. Similarly, Hasan (2014) sheds light on the legal framework and challenges surrounding halal certification and food product labeling, emphasizing the importance of legal certainty in the certification process.

Various studies have explored efforts to support MSMEs in obtaining halal certification. Gunawan et al. (2021) focused on assisting MSMEs with the halal assurance system, while Pardiansyah et al. (2022) examined the socialization and facilitation of free halal certification for MSMEs in Domas Village. Puspita et al. (2022) highlighted the lack of knowledge among MSMEs regarding the *Nomor Induk Berusaha* (NIB), a key document required for halal certification. Similarly, Nasori et al. (2022) studied the readiness of MSME products in East Java for self-declared halal certification, stressing the importance of preparation and monitoring for certification. Based on this literature, the study will test the following hypothesis:

H2: Legal understanding has a positive effect on halal certification of MSEs in Indonesia.

Legal Attitudes and Halal Certification of MSEs in Indonesia

The study of Jakiyudin and Fedro (2022) on the SEHATI program, which offers free halal certification for MSEs in Indonesia, demonstrates that the legal attitude of MSEs toward halal certification is influenced by the legal framework and incentives provided. Similarly, Gunawan et al. (2020) conducted a study focused on assisting MSEs in Sukolilo to obtain halal certification, emphasizing that the benefits and requirements of certification play a significant role in shaping the legal attitudes of MSEs. Their research suggests that certification not only ensures product halalness but also positively impacts MSEs' perceptions of the certification process.

Based on these findings, it can be hypothesized that the legal attitudes of MSEs in Indonesia, including their perceptions of the legal framework, availability of support programs, and the benefits and requirements of certification, influence



their decision to pursue halal certification. Therefore, this study will test the following hypothesis:

H3: Legal attitudes have a positive effect on halal certification of MSEs in Indonesia.

Legal Behavior and Halal Certification of MSEs in Indonesia

Hidayatullah (2020) emphasized the critical role of adherence to Islamic principles and regulations in the halal certification process, suggesting that MSEs' legal behavior, particularly their compliance with Islamic law, plays a significant role in their decision to pursue halal certification. Hartati et al. (2023) also focused on the socialization of online halal certification registration for MSEs, highlighting the importance of legal compliance. Their study indicates that MSEs' legal behavior, especially their willingness to follow the registration process, is a key factor that may influence their decision to obtain halal certification.

According to Hasan (2014), MSEs' legal behavior is shaped by their understanding and perception of the legal framework surrounding halal certification. This understanding can impact their willingness to pursue certification. Based on these insights, it can be hypothesized that MSEs' legal behavior in Indonesia—including adherence to Islamic law, compliance with the certification process, and understanding of the legal framework—affects their decision to seek halal certification.

H4: Legal behavior has a positive effect on halal certification of MSEs in Indonesia.

Length of Business as a Moderating Factor in Halal Certification

Meilanda et al. (2020) revealed that efficiency can moderate the relationship between diversification strategies and firm performance, with the length of business serving as an indicator of both experience and efficiency. In contrast, Puspitasari and Ismunawan (2022) found that the length of business did not significantly impact the income of traders in Pasar Palur, Karanganyar. However, Tifania and Ismunawan (2022) reported that for MSMEs in the trade sector in Surakarta, the longer they operated, the better their business survival and overall improvement. Similarly, Muhammad et al. (2018) studied mustahik businesses in productive zakat programs and found that business longevity



positively influenced profits. Furthermore, research by Elen and Ariska (2022) demonstrated that the length of business can moderate MSMEs' understanding of financial statements.

Building on this literature, this study will test the hypothesis regarding the effect of business longevity and its moderating role in several relationships:

H5: Length of business affects the awareness of halal certification ownership among MSEs in Indonesia.

H5a: Length of business moderates the relationship between legal knowledge and awareness of halal certification ownership in Indonesian MSEs.

H5b: Length of business moderates the relationship between legal understanding and awareness of halal certification ownership in Indonesian MSEs.

H5c: Length of business moderates the relationship between legal attitudes and awareness of halal certification ownership in Indonesian MSEs.

H5d: Length of business moderates the relationship between legal behavior and awareness of halal certification ownership in Indonesian MSEs.

Research Framework

Based on the literature reviewed, the research framework can be illustrated in Figure 1. The figure proposes that legal knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior, along with the length of business operation, are key factors that influence the process of obtaining halal certification. This combination of legal and operational aspects is expected to shape how MSEs approach and succeed in acquiring halal certification.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) and adopts a quantitative approach to assess the impact of legal awareness on the obligation of halal certification, using the length of business



as a mediating variable. SEM-PLS is chosen due to its ability to model complex relationships between multiple variables, providing a comprehensive understanding of the model (Rahayu et al., 2020). SEM also allows for the estimation of latent variables, making it suitable for analyzing constructs that are not directly observable (Shmueli et al., 2019). This method facilitates the analysis of primary data collected through questionnaires distributed to respondents.

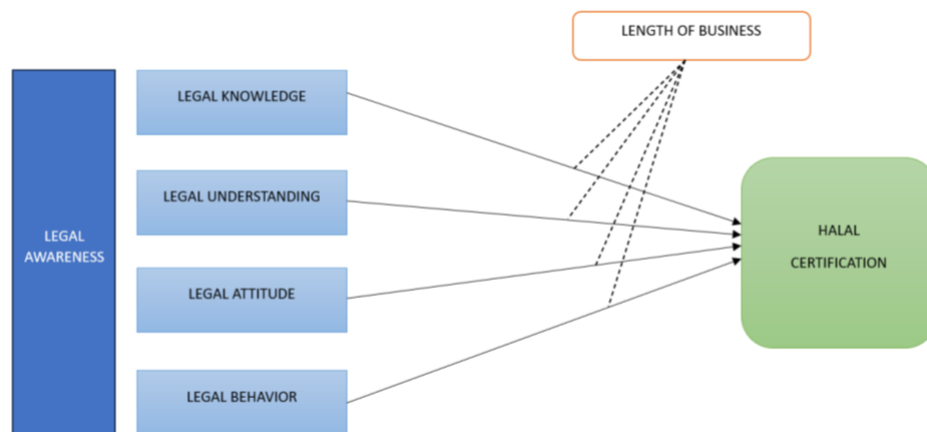


Figure 1. Research Framework

Data Collection Method

Data for the study was gathered through both online and offline questionnaires. Online questionnaires were distributed via social media, business associations, and relevant online communities. Offline questionnaires were administered through field visits to local markets, business clusters, and MSE hubs across the provinces of East Java, Central Java, West Java, Jabodetabek, and other regions in Indonesia. The unit of analysis includes individuals operating Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs). The researchers conducted thorough screening and validation processes to ensure data quality, including checks for completeness, consistency, and outliers. A total of 333 valid responses were collected, which met the requirements for robust SEM-PLS analysis.

Population and Sample

The study population consists of MSE owners in Indonesia. According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, as of November 2023, Indonesia has 64.2 million MSEs, comprising 62.7 million micro businesses and 1.5 million small



businesses. To ensure accurate statistical analysis, sample size determination is critical. Based on Garson's (2016) guidelines, SEM-PLS analysis can accommodate both small and large sample sizes, with a minimum of 20 respondents being adequate for basic SEM analysis.

For this study, the sample size was determined using Hair's formula, which recommends a sample size of 5-10 times the number of indicator variables (Hair, 2009). Given that this study involves 25 indicators, the minimum required sample size is 250 respondents (25 indicators x 10 = 250). A total of 333 valid responses were collected from MSE owners, exceeding the minimum threshold. The sample was selected using a non-probability purposive sampling technique, focusing on respondents who met predefined demographic criteria such as age, province, religion, occupation, length of business, gender, and education level.

Research Instrument Development

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure key constructs related to legal awareness, halal certification, and business experience. The questionnaire was developed based on relevant theories and adapted from prior research. Each variable was operationalized with several indicators as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Instrument

Variable	Definition	Reference	Dimension
Legal Awareness (X)	legal awareness is knowledge of the content of regulations, understanding of the meaning and purpose of regulations, attitudes towards regulations, and behavior in accordance with regulations.	(Taneko et al., 2002), (Rektiansyah & Auwalin, 2022), (Oemar et al. 2022), (Giyanti et al. 2021)	Legal Knowledge Legal Understanding Legal Attitude Legal Behavior
Halal Certification (Y)	Products that enter, circulate, and are traded in the territory of Indonesia must be halal certified.	Indonesian Law No. 33/2014, (Ngah et al., 2021), (Hosseini et al., 2020), (Mutmainah, 2018)	Certificate ownership Halal requirement compliance
Length of Business (Z)	The length of time a business person has been in their field of business will have an influence on their professional abilities.	(Ilham, 2014), (Suparnoh et al., 2021), (Li et al., 2022)	Business Skills Business Insight Business Experience



Data Analysis Techniques

The data was analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS), a multivariate statistical technique that handles both dependent and independent variables simultaneously. PLS is suitable for models with multiple latent variables and is robust to issues such as multicollinearity (Vlascici et al., 1986). PLS-SEM is particularly advantageous because it can analyze small and large sample sizes and does not require strict normality assumptions (Garson, 2008). In this study, the analysis was conducted using Smart PLS software to model the relationships between variables and validate the overall model structure.

PLS is considered a powerful predictive tool and can handle numerous independent variables even in the presence of multicollinearity (Wold, 1984). Developed in the 1960s by Herman Wold, PLS has since become widely used due to its flexibility in dealing with complex data structures, such as latent variables measured through multiple indicators (Jannoo et al., 2014). This method is also considered "soft modeling," meaning it can analyze data that doesn't meet certain distributional assumptions and can handle nominal, ordinal, and ratio scales without requiring normality tests (Ghozali, n.d.).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Demographic Information

The findings of this study reveal that Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) are predominantly run by men, who account for 51.7% of business operators, while women represent 48.3%. Fairlie and Robb (2009) supports these findings, suggesting that men are more likely to start and run businesses, and tend to generate higher business revenues compared to women. This may indicate a societal or cultural trend where men engage more frequently in entrepreneurial activities. This is detailed in the Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Valid Percent (%)
Male	173	51.7
Female	166	48.3
Total	333	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)



The demographic analysis shows that most respondents hail from Banten Province, followed by the Jabodetabek region, Central Java, Sulawesi, and other regions across Indonesia. This geographical diversity highlights the broad reach of MSEs across various Indonesian regions, with the largest proportion coming from urbanized areas like Jabodetabek. The distribution of respondents by residence is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents by Residence

Residence	Frequency	Percent (%)
Jabodetabek	48	14.4
Central Java	40	12.0
Sulawesi	38	11.4
West Java	38	11.4
East Java	35	10.5
Sumatra	33	9.9
Kalimantan	20	6.0
Bali & Nusa Tenggara	20	6.0
Papua	8	2.4
Total	333	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

The majority of MSE operators are aged between 30 and 40 years (52.3%), followed by those over 40 years (37.2%), and the youngest group under 30 years (10.5%). This age demographic is significant as it highlights the concentration of entrepreneurial activity among those in their prime working years. The millennial generation (aged 20-35) plays a key role in driving MSE operations, as their technological literacy enables them to adopt modern solutions that improve business adaptability and innovation.

Table 4. Age Demographics of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
< 30 Years	35	10.5
30 - 40 Years	174	52.3
> 40 Years	124	37.2
Total	333	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

The study shows a diverse employment pattern among MSE operators. Approximately 34.5% of respondents run MSEs as a side job, while 33.3% focus on running MSEs as their main job. An additional 32.1% are involved in other jobs alongside their MSE activities. These results reflect the economic



diversity and complexity of MSE operators, with many engaging in multiple income-generating activities to support their livelihoods.

Table 5. Respondent Employment by Profession

Profession	Frequency	Percent (%)
MSE as a side job	115	34.5
MSE as the main job	111	33.3
MSE as the main job with side jobs	107	32.1
Total	333	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

The study categorizes respondents by the duration of their MSE operations. The majority (41.4%) have been in business for three years, indicating a period of stability for many operators. Some have been running their businesses for four years (25.5%), while others are still in the early stages (under two years). This breakdown suggests that a significant portion of respondents are at a stage where they have passed the initial setup phase and are working towards long-term sustainability.

Table 6. Duration of Business Operations

Duration of Business	Frequency	Percent (%)
3 Years	138	41.4
4 Years	85	25.5
< 2 Years	48	14.4
2 Years	42	12.6
> 5 Years	20	6.0
Total	333	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

Reliability and Validity Tests

In this study, an indicator is considered valid if the Outer Loading Factor value exceeds 0.60 (Rahmad Solling Hamid, 2019). The results from the Outer Loading Factor analysis show that all indicators are valid, with loadings above 0.60. Table 7 shows the Outer Loading Factor values for each variable and indicator.

Table 7. Validity Test Result

Variable	Indicators	Outer Loadings	Results
Halal Certification	HC1	0.84	Valid
	HC2	0.869	Valid



Variable	Indicators	Outer Loadings	Results
	HC3	0.854	Valid
	HC4	0.855	Valid
	HC5	0.849	Valid
Legal Attitude	LA1	0.811	Valid
	LA2	0.88	Valid
	LA3	0.864	Valid
	LA4	0.86	Valid
	LA5	0.871	Valid
Length of Business	Length of Business1	0.853	Valid
	Length of Business2	0.828	Valid
	Length of Business3	0.855	Valid
	Length of Business4	0.857	Valid
	Length of Business5	0.863	Valid
Legal Behavior	LB1	0.864	Valid
	LB2	0.873	Valid
	LB3	0.86	Valid
	LB4	0.861	Valid
	LB5	0.864	Valid
Legal Knowledge	LK1	0.858	Valid
	LK2	0.871	Valid
	LK3	0.857	Valid
	LK4	0.867	Valid
	LK5	0.863	Valid
Legal Understanding	LU1	0.855	Valid
	LU2	0.866	Valid
	LU3	0.863	Valid
	LU4	0.869	Valid
	LU5	0.868	Valid
Moderating Variables	LoB*LA	1.512	Valid
	LoB*LB	1.502	Valid
	LoB*LK	1.553	Valid
	LoB*LU	1.567	Valid

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed the threshold of 0.50, ensuring convergent validity across constructs like Halal Certification, Legal Attitude, and Length of Business as displays in Table 8.

Table 8. Reliability and AVE Values

Variable	AVE	Composite Reliability	Status
Halal Certification	0.728	0.931	Reliable
Length of Business	0.725	0.929	Reliable
Legal Attitude	0.736	0.933	Reliable
Legal Behavior	0.747	0.937	Reliable
Legal Knowledge	0.745	0.936	Reliable
Legal Understanding	0.747	0.936	Reliable

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)



The composite reliability values further indicate that the constructs are reliable, with values consistently above 0.9, showing that the data collected is robust and dependable.

Partial Least Squares Assumption

In the analysis of the outer model, one key assumption is the absence of multicollinearity, which refers to a high degree of intercorrelation between indicators. A common threshold for detecting multicollinearity is a correlation value > 0.9 , often identified through the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). If the VIF value for any indicator > 5 , it suggests the presence of multicollinearity. In such cases, one of the highly correlated indicators may need to be dropped from the model. Table 9 presents the VIF analysis results for each indicator.

Table 9. VIF Analysis Results

Indicators	VIF
HC1	2.258
HC2	2.643
HC3	2.442
HC4	2.441
HC5	2.36
LA1	2.042
LA2	2.84
LA3	2.604
LA4	2.52
LA5	2.659
Length of Business1	2.415
Length of Business2	2.175
Length of Business3	2.45
Length of Business4	2.491
Length of Business5	2.549
LB1	2.625
LB2	2.761
LB3	2.59
LB4	2.562
LB5	2.568
LK1	2.518
LK2	2.718
LK3	2.488
LK4	2.688
LK5	2.568
LU1	2.498
LU2	2.69
LU3	2.615
LU4	2.693



Indicators	VIF
LU5	2.652
Legal Attitude * Length of Business	1.000
Legal Behavior * Length of Business	1.000
Legal Knowledge * Length of Business	1.000
Legal Understanding * Length of Business	1.000

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

Based on the results in Table 9, all indicators have a VIF value below 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues.

Model Fit and Predictive Power

The R-Square values show that 96.4% of the variation in the Halal Certification variable is explained by the model. This high R-Square value demonstrates the model’s strong explanatory power, supported by an adjusted R-Square of 0.963, which remains stable with additional variables.

Table 10. R-Square and Adjusted R-Square Values

Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Halal Certification	0.964	0.963

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

The model effectively captures the key drivers of Halal Certification, supporting its predictive validity.

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

The path analysis reveals that while several hypotheses are not supported, the length of business significantly influences Halal Certification at the 10% significance level. The moderation of Legal Understanding also has a significant effect.

Table 11. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Path	Hypothesis	Coefficient	t-Statistics	p-Value	Status
Legal Knowledge → Halal Certification	H1	0.203	0.911	0.375	Not Supported
Legal Understanding → Halal Certification	H2	0.216	1.062	0.256	Not Supported
Legal Attitude → Halal Certification	H3	0.130	0.420	0.660	Not Supported



Path	Hypothesis	Coefficient	t-Statistics	p-Value	Status
Legal Behavior → Halal Certification	H4	0.156	0.419	0.672	Not Supported
Length of Business → Halal Certification	H5	0.295	1.811**	0.063	Supported
Moderating Legal Knowledge → Halal Certification	H5a	-0.168	0.676	0.507	Not Supported
Moderating Legal Understanding → Halal Certification	H5b	0.457	2.095*	0.046	Supported
Moderating Legal Attitude → Halal Certification	H5c	-0.212	0.954	0.322	Not Supported
Moderating Legal Behavior → Halal Certification	H5d	-0.077	0.319	0.752	Not Supported

Notes: *Significance Level = 5%; **Significance Level = 10%

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2023)

The findings reveal that the Length of Business (H5) has a positive and significant effect on Halal Certification at the 10% significance level ($p = 0.063$). This suggests that business duration influences the likelihood of obtaining halal certification. Additionally, the moderation of Legal Understanding (H5b) on the relationship between Length of Business and Halal Certification is also significant at the 5% level ($p = 0.046$), indicating that the moderating effect of legal understanding strengthens the impact of business duration on halal certification.

However, other paths, including Legal Knowledge (H1), Legal Understanding (H2), Legal Attitude (H3), and Legal Behavior (H4), were found to have no significant effect on Halal Certification. Similarly, the moderating effects of Legal Knowledge (H5a), Legal Attitude (H5c), and Legal Behavior (H5d) on the relationship between Length of Business and Halal Certification were not supported, indicating that these factors do not significantly influence the outcome.

The use of a 10% significance level, as recommended by Goodhue et al. (2012), was employed as a preventive measure to reduce the risk of misinterpreting results when statistical power is low. This approach helps ensure that the research captures relevant relationships and increases the reliability of findings (Kock & Hadaya, 2018).



Discussion

Legal Knowledge and Halal Certification Awareness

The findings reveal a counterintuitive relationship between legal knowledge and awareness of obtaining halal certification among Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs). Contrary to the initial hypothesis (H1), higher levels of legal knowledge were associated with lower awareness of halal certification. This negative effect suggests that as MSE entrepreneurs become more knowledgeable about legal frameworks, they may perceive the process of obtaining halal certification as either too complex or less critical.

This result aligns with Zainuddin et al. (2022), which found that business actors' legal awareness regarding the obligation for halal certification remains low. Similarly, Aulia et al. (2020) emphasizes that MSEs face challenges in obtaining halal-certified materials due to low awareness. Therefore, it is plausible that while legal knowledge increases, it does not necessarily translate into greater motivation or perceived importance for halal certification.

A potential explanation for this could be the complexity or perceived cost associated with halal certification, as suggested by Akmal et al. (2020) and Oemar et al. (2022), who found that restaurant/stall owners and MSEs in West Java avoided registering for halal certification due to perceived complications and high costs. This finding highlights the importance of addressing non-technical factors, such as perceptions of practicality, costs, and the perceived benefits of certification, which influence the decision-making process for halal certification among MSEs.

The findings suggest a need for targeted education and awareness programs that not only increase legal knowledge but also simplify the halal certification process. Policymakers should focus on reducing the complexity and costs associated with halal certification, which could mitigate negative perceptions and increase certification uptake.

Legal Attitude and Halal Certification Awareness

Although the hypothesis posited a positive effect of legal attitude on halal certification awareness, the results showed an insignificant negative impact. This indicates that a more positive legal attitude does not necessarily lead to higher awareness of halal certification among MSEs. This unexpected result



highlights the complexity of the relationship between legal attitudes and certification awareness, as positive legal attitudes may not be sufficient to overcome other barriers, such as lack of information or perceived irrelevance of certification.

These results are consistent with Zainuddin et al. (2022) and Prabowo et al. (2015), who argue that limited socialization and dissemination of information about halal certification contribute to the low awareness among business actors. This suggests that even if MSE actors hold positive legal attitudes, they may still lack the necessary information and motivation to pursue halal certification.

This finding highlights the need for more robust socialization efforts to educate MSEs on the importance and benefits of halal certification. Legal attitudes alone are insufficient without a deeper understanding of how certification can positively impact business outcomes. Tailored communication strategies focusing on the practical benefits of certification could bridge this gap.

Legal Behavior and Halal Certification Awareness

Similar to the results for legal attitude, legal behavior also showed an insignificant negative effect on halal certification awareness. This finding suggests that even when MSEs demonstrate positive legal behavior, such as adherence to laws and regulations, it does not necessarily lead to greater awareness or pursuit of halal certification. One possible interpretation is that positive legal behavior may reflect compliance with basic legal requirements but not an understanding of the specific benefits of halal certification.

This observation is supported by Zainuddin et al. (2022) and Ismail & Kornitasari (2022), who note that a lack of socialization of halal product regulations contributes to the low number of halal-certified products. Muhammad et al. (2020) further argue that this is a persistent challenge in Malaysia, where many business owners are unaware of the certification's significance.

Legal behavior alone does not drive awareness of halal certification (Kamri et al., 2013). Policymakers should enhance outreach programs that go beyond basic legal compliance and focus on educating MSEs about the broader benefits of halal certification for their businesses. Incentives and simplified procedures could encourage more MSEs to adopt halal certification.



Length of Business and Halal Certification Awareness

The length of time a business has been operating was found to have a significant positive effect on halal certification awareness. The path analysis showed that the longer a business has been running, the more likely the business owner is to be aware of the importance of halal certification. This is significant at the 10% confidence level, indicating that as businesses grow and mature, their owners become more knowledgeable about certification processes and are more likely to pursue halal certification.

This result is supported by previous studies, such as those by Saefullah & Ruvi (2022) and Armiani et al. (2022), who found that longer business operation periods contribute to higher levels of legal awareness among Indonesian business owners. Over time, MSEs may encounter more opportunities to engage with regulatory requirements, leading to a greater appreciation for halal certification.

This finding suggests that halal certification initiatives should particularly target newer businesses, which may not yet fully recognize the importance of certification. Providing mentorship and support programs for emerging businesses could enhance their early awareness and adoption of halal certification.

Moderating Role of Length of Business on Legal Awareness and Halal Certification

The hypothesis that the length of business would moderate the relationship between legal awareness and halal certification awareness was not supported by the data. This indicates that the duration of a business's operation does not significantly strengthen or weaken the relationship between legal awareness and certification awareness. However, legal understanding was found to be a significant moderator, suggesting that a deeper comprehension of legal concepts may influence certification awareness.

These findings are consistent with previous research who also found that the length of business does not always serve as a strong moderating factor in business-related outcomes (Setyaningsih & Marwansyah, 2019). While longer operational experience contributes to some aspects of awareness, it does not necessarily moderate the influence of legal awareness on certification uptake.



Policymakers should focus on enhancing legal understanding across businesses, regardless of their operational age. By improving the depth of legal knowledge and simplifying legal requirements, MSEs may be more inclined to seek halal certification, especially in the early stages of their business.

CONCLUSION

This study provides important insights into the factors influencing awareness of halal certification among Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in Indonesia. Contrary to expectations, legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitude, and legal behavior did not show significant positive impacts on MSE awareness of halal certification. However, length of business was found to have a significant positive effect, suggesting that MSEs that have been operating for a longer period are more aware of the importance of halal certification. Additionally, the moderating effect of legal understanding on the relationship between legal awareness and certification was significant at a 10% level, while the length of business did not significantly moderate other legal factors.

The findings have several implications for policymakers and practitioners. First, efforts to enhance halal certification awareness among MSEs should not focus solely on improving legal knowledge or promoting legal behavior. Instead, the experience gained through longer business operation appears to be a more important factor. Policymakers should consider targeted support for newer businesses by offering simplified certification processes or incentives, such as subsidies for certification costs, particularly for businesses that have been in operation for over five years. The fact that legal knowledge and behavior did not drive awareness suggests that informational campaigns alone may not be sufficient. Thus, addressing practical barriers, such as perceived complexity and cost of certification, may be more effective in encouraging MSEs to pursue halal certification.

This study has several limitations that must be considered when interpreting the results. First, the sample size was relatively small and limited to one region of Indonesia, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the focus on legal factors and business length may have overlooked other important variables that could influence awareness, such as cultural or demographic factors. Future studies should address these limitations by using larger sample sizes and broader geographic coverage in Indonesia for more representative results. Qualitative approaches, like in-depth interviews or case



studies, could provide deeper insights into MSE motivations and challenges related to halal certification. Longitudinal research can track how awareness evolves over time. Further exploration of cultural, demographic, and business factors beyond legal aspects is also needed. Comparative studies with other Muslim-majority countries could identify best practices and challenges to improve halal certification policies in Indonesia and beyond.

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