

Original Article

Legal Awareness of Halal Product Guarantees: The Role of Universities in Indonesia and Malaysia

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to further examine the role and strategy of universities in building legal awareness of Muslim consumers on the importance of halal product guarantees both related to food, beverages, used goods and other products, so that Muslim consumers feel safe and comfortable in utilizing/ consuming the products needed both imported and exported to other regions/ countries. In this research, the author uses a qualitative approach that emphasizes the importance of developing and compiling theories that are always rooted in inductive-empirical thinking. Regarding data collection techniques, the author used participant observation, interviews, and secondary data searches. The role of Indonesian and Malaysian Universities in building legal awareness of halal product guarantees, currently focuses on education and training, research and development, and collaboration with government and industry. For the strategies used, the two countries, namely Malaysia and Indonesia, have differences in application. The strategy used by Malaysia is more about strengthening halal legal awareness through a multidisciplinary approach, stronger collaboration with industry, and mature halal infrastructure. Meanwhile, the strategy used by Indonesia at this time is still focused on counseling and socialization, cooperation with the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH), and the development of halal infrastructure.

Keywords: Awareness; Halal Product; Indonesia; Malaysia;

Introduction

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world. In 2017, it was recorded that Indonesia has more than 200 million Muslims. This amounted to 87% of the total population of Indonesia. This illustrates that Islamic values will have a considerable role in various aspects of people's lives, given that the values prevailing in society are one of the main sources that influence purchasing behavior and decisions. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia mandates that the state guarantees the freedom of each citizen to embrace their respective religions and to worship according to their religions and beliefs. To guarantee every religious adherent to worship and this goal becomes important considering the advancement of science and technology in the fields of food, medicine, and cosmetics is growing very rapidly.

The birth of the Republic of Indonesia Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee (Halal Law) states that all products circulating in Indonesia must be halal certified. This law began to be implemented in officially and gradually on October 17, 2019, since it was passed on October 17, 2014. This is proof of the government's protection of Muslim consumers while opening up opportunities for the development of the halal industry both from within and outside the country. The Global Islamic Economic Report in 2017-2018 shows that the potential of the halal industry in Indonesia, globally is projected to reach US\$3,081 billion by 2022.



The issuance of the above regulations emphasizes that products in circulation should be halal products. Halal products are products that have been declared halal in accordance with Islamic law as evidenced by a halal certificate. This halal certified obligation is applied to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). For business actors whose product processing processes and materials used are still simple, the halal certificate is based on the halal statement of business actors based on halal standards set by BPJPH. As for business actors whose production processes and materials used have critical points (not simple) can apply for a halal certificate to BPJPH by attaching business actor data documents, product names and types, product lists and materials used, and product processing. Halal Product Guarantee is considered necessary in Indonesia to provide security, comfort, safety, and availability of halal products for all Indonesian people, especially Muslim citizens.¹ The existence of certification will also increase added value for companies in selling and producing their products (Article 3 of the JPH Law). With the Halal Product Guarantee Law (JPH Law), it is expected that all products imported and circulating in Indonesia have halal certificates.

Products circulating in Indonesia are very diverse, both local products and imported products from abroad. Each of these products needs a halal marker to facilitate consumers in choosing halal products. Therefore, it is necessary to certify and label products, especially those related to food and beverages, in providing halal product guarantees to the public, especially Muslim citizens.² Certification and labeling are two different things but have a mutual relationship. Food and beverages are basic needs for humans, and the sustainability of daily life is highly dependent on the availability of halal and thoyib (good and proper) products.³ the Indonesian government is responsible for It is our responsibility to ensure that products consumed by the public meet halal standards. Halal food and beverages are not only about religious aspects, but also about health and product quality. Therefore, it is important to conduct halal certification as a form of Muslim consumer protection.

In the context of globalization and rapid technological and industrial advancements, the Muslim community in Indonesia faces various challenges related to the halalness of products. Some of the problems that arise include: First, products in circulation are not guaranteed to be halal, especially food products that are mass-produced in modern factories. This is due to supervisory constraints that may be inadequate. Serious efforts are needed to ensure that these factories adhere to halal standards in their production. Second, consumers' lack of knowledge about the terms listed in the ingredient list on product packaging. Consumers often have difficulty understanding information regarding the halalness of a product. Education and counseling to consumers about halalness and the importance of checking product labels will help overcome this problem. Third, the emergence of well-known food brands that are booming, but do not have halal certification. This can deceive consumers and threaten their trust in the product the problem. Stricter regulations and stronger law enforcement are needed to address this issue. Fourth, there are various cases of food ingredients that should not be used in the home industry. This underscores the importance of strict supervision and regulation in the food industry. Concrete measures are needed to identify and stop these harmful practices to protect consumers.

Halal has become part of a Muslim's life. Halal aspects are very broad, such as food, drinks, medicines, cosmetics, and others. In food products, information about halal can be seen from the label or logo on the packaging. If a manufacturer puts up a halal logo, it means

¹ Juliana Juliana and others, 'Opportunities and Challenges of Halal Certification in Micro, Small and Medium Food Enterprises (MSMEs) in Bandung', *Jurnal Kajian Peradaban Islam*, 7.2 (2024), 153–60 <<https://doi.org/10.47076/jkpi.v7i2.228>>.

² Miftah Adhi Ikhsanto, 'Analisis Ekonomi Politik Sertifikasi Halal Oleh Majelis Ulama Indonesia.', *Jurnal Kebijakan & Administrasi Politik*, 3.2 (2021), 2019–22.

³ Dede Al Mustaqim, 'SERTIFIKASI HALAL SEBAGAI BENTUK PERLINDUNGAN KONSUMEN MUSLIM: ANALISIS MAQASHID SYARIAH DAN HUKUM POSITIF', *AB-JOIEC: Al-Bahjab Journal of Islamic Economics*, 1.2 (2023), 54–67 <<https://doi.org/10.61553/abjoiec.v1i2.26>>.



that the product has gone through a long audit process. The audit includes several things including; examination of the data submitted, inspection of the production process, laboratory, packaging, storage, transportation, distribution, marketing, presentation to the determination of halal certification (Article 2 KMA RI No. 519 Th. 2001 concerning the Implementing Agency for Halal Food Examiners). If when audited it turns out to be free from non-halal ingredients, a halal certificate will be given. This means that the producer has provided a guarantee that the product is halal for consumers.⁴

Halal lifestyle is sweeping the world, not only in countries with Muslim majority populations, but also in countries with Muslim minority populations. Each country has its own policies regarding certification. Certification organizers can come from government and non-government institutions. For example, Malaysia, certification in Malaysia is carried out by a government certification body that is directly under the government. Certification is taken over by the state because the country has declared itself an Islamic country so that it is very concerned about halal rules and guarantees for all citizens. Since 1965, Malaysia has implemented halal certification conducted by the Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS). Meanwhile, in 1974, halal certification was under the supervision of the government, namely *Jabatan Kemajuan Islam* Malaysia or commonly abbreviated as JAKIM. The Halal Management Division of JAKIM together with the state Department of Islamic Religion is specifically tasked with taking care of everything related to halal certification in Malaysia.⁵

Unlike Malaysia, halal certification in Thailand is carried out by non-governmental organizations. Thailand is a country with a majority Buddhist population. Even so, halal certification, especially in terms of food, has been well executed. Halal certification in Thailand is taken over by the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT) which is an organization of Thai clerics at the national level. CICOT has a Halal Standard Institute of Thailand which is tasked with inspecting and certifying Thai products. In addition, in Thailand there is also a halal research center located at Chulalongkorn University, namely The Halal Science Center in the Faculty of Applied Science. Although Thailand is not a Muslim country, the Government supports halal certification because of economic interests. The government is very excited and supports programs related to halal certification to penetrate the global market, especially with a majority Muslim population.⁶ The existence of a halal certification body is a way to ensure the halalness of products to be exported abroad, especially countries with a majority Muslim population. Private certification bodies or those established by non-governmental institutions are sometimes not recognized by other countries so they get rejected. Currently, Indonesia is starting to make efforts to transfer certification institutions that were originally carried out by non-governmental institutions, namely MUI, to government institutions under the Ministry of Religion, namely BPJPH.

Based on the explanation above, the author is interested in further examining the role and strategy of universities in building legal awareness of Muslim consumers on the importance of guaranteeing halal products both related to food, beverages, used goods and other products, so that Muslim consumers feel safe and comfortable in utilizing / consuming products needed both imported and exported to other regions / countries. Therefore, the author focuses the place that is the object of research study on two countries with a majority Muslim population, namely Indonesia and Malaysia, because of the current problems of the two countries, the awareness of both consumers and producers of the importance of halal products is still minimal, especially consumer knowledge about the terms listed in the list of ingredients on product packaging. Consumers often have difficulty understanding information about the halalness of a product. So that this research

⁴ Joseph PAGAYA and others, 'Isolation and Characterization of Bioplastic-Degrading Bacteria from Nutmeg Plantation Land', *Notulae Scientia Biologicae*, 17.2 (2025), 12363 <<https://doi.org/10.55779/nsb17212363>>.

⁵ PAGAYA and others.

⁶ PAGAYA and others.



will later help and provide solutions to the problems of business actors and consumers regarding the importance of the halalness of products consumed or used.

Method

The research paradigm used by the author in answering the issues studied is a qualitative paradigm, in which the author places humans as research subjects.⁷ In order to obtain data directly related to the role and strategy of universities in fostering legal awareness regarding certification or guarantee of halal products both in Indonesia and Malaysia. The type of research used in this study focuses on the type of ethnographic research, in which the researcher will conduct a study of the culture of a group in natural conditions and is carried out through a process of observation and / or interviews.⁸ So that data relating to the role and strategy of universities from each country regarding legal awareness of the importance of halal product guarantees can be collected in accordance with the practices or regulations applied by each country. This study uses two types of data, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data obtained from interviews with campus leaders/ chairmen/ secretaries/ managers of halal center institutions. Secondary data is obtained from university/ institutional profiles, activity report books, cooperation agreements, related laws and regulations and web data for each university/halal center institution.⁹ While the data collection method is taken from, Halal Product Guarantee legislation documents in Indonesia and Malaysia, university profiles, and Halal Center/P3H institutions, activity reports, Halal Center annual reports, cooperation contracts, and relevant journals. Interviews with resource persons Leaders/ Lecturers/ student managers of universities and managers of halal center units in Indonesia and Malaysia. As well as observations to the Halal Center at the Mataram State Islamic University and the Islamic Business School Universiti Utara Malaysia Sintok, 06010 Bukit Kayu Hitam, Kedah, Malaysia to find data on the role of universities, obstacles and strategies to build legal awareness of Halal Guarantee in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Results and Discussions

A decade ago, Islamic issues began to occupy a central position in public discussions, academic research, and mainstream media, particularly in Malaysia. In the education sector, universities increasingly introduced academic programs featuring Islamic studies in business, banking, administration, and education. However, once halal-related issues entered the public spotlight, the concept of halal quickly became a mainstream topic supported by rising public awareness. Halal, by its nature, encompasses a broad spectrum of societal sectors, especially those connected to the needs of Muslim communities.¹⁰ This growing awareness made it essential for the halal industry and its business actors to be supported by qualified human resources with strong and comprehensive halal knowledge. Basic or superficial halal understanding was no longer sufficient for real-world halal business practices. As a result, higher education institutions became crucial providers of in-depth, structured halal knowledge, with many prominent halal-focused universities worldwide contributing significantly to halal education.¹¹

⁷ Erfiani Ramadanti and Zuhairansyah Arifin, 'Strategi Peningkatan Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan Melalui Media Kartu Bergambar Bagi Anak Usia Dini Dalam Bingkai Islami Dan Perspektif Pakar Pendidikan', *KINDERGARTEN: Journal of Islamic Early Childhood Education*, 4.2 (2021), 173–87.

⁸ Ramadanti and Arifin.

⁹ Dian Satria Charismana, Heri Retnawati and Hapri Novrizza Setya Dhewantoro, 'Motivasi Belajar Dan Prestasi Belajar Pada Mata Pelajaran Ppkn Di Indonesia: Kajian Analisis Meta', *Bhineka Tunggal Ika: Kajian Teori Dan Praktik Pendidikan Pkn*, 9.2 (2022), 99–113 <<https://doi.org/10.36706/jbti.v9i2.18333>>.

¹⁰ Noor Haslihsa Hashim and others, 'Relationship Between Awareness, Knowledge, and Attitude of Behavioural Intention Towards Halal Jobs among Malaysian Muslim University Students', 2020 <<https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:237427165>>.

¹¹ Hashim and others.



In this context, the roles and strategies implemented by Universiti Malaysia do not differ substantially from the activities carried out by universities in Indonesia.¹² Both countries are aligned in supporting government initiatives to build legal awareness surrounding halal product assurance.¹³ Their shared objective is to ensure that the general public can consume goods and services with a sense of safety and comfort, free from doubt regarding halal status. Consequently, awareness of halal products becomes a foundational element for the circulation of goods both nationally and internationally. When viewed holistically, Indonesian and Malaysian universities display more similarities than differences, although Malaysia's focus on halal development emerged earlier and has been more established over time. Both countries' higher education institutions integrate halal product assurance into their academic curricula, offering programs related to halal law, certification management, and business ethics in the halal industry. These initiatives aim to strengthen students' understanding of halal regulations and the importance of halal assurance. Furthermore, universities in Indonesia and Malaysia play an active role in conducting research on halal laws and regulations, examining applicable standards, and addressing emerging legal issues in the evolving halal industry. The findings of such research support government bodies, certification agencies, and industry players in refining policies, improving procedures, and enhancing halal governance. Collaboration with halal certification bodies is also a significant component in both countries. Indonesian universities frequently partner with BPJPH, while Malaysian universities collaborate with JAKIM to promote legal awareness and improve understanding of halal certification processes. These collaborations typically take the form of seminars, conferences, and professional training programs. Universities also engage in counseling and capacity-building efforts, educating industry players, especially SMEs, about compliance with halal regulations, certification procedures, and the importance of maintaining product quality.

Despite these similarities, differences also exist between the two countries. Malaysia has a more established and internationally recognized halal regulatory framework, spearheaded by JAKIM as the main authority. Malaysian universities thus tend to emphasize international standardization and global policy formulation.¹⁴ Indonesia, on the other hand, is still in the process of strengthening its halal certification infrastructure following the establishment of BPJPH in 2017 and the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance Law in 2019. Indonesian universities therefore focus more on local policy development and addressing the needs of Indonesia's large halal market.¹⁵ In terms of international involvement, Malaysian universities maintain stronger ties with global halal institutions and often serve as hubs for international conferences, collaborative research, and cross-country academic exchanges.¹⁶ Conversely, Indonesian universities focus predominantly on domestic collaboration, working closely with BPJPH, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and local industry.¹⁷ Similarly, Malaysia's halal industry ecosystem is more mature and structurally developed, supported by a private sector that is highly committed to halal certification. This allows Malaysian universities to engage more extensively in research on halal innovation,

¹² Tri Suyantiningsih and others, 'Comparison between Universities in Indonesia and Malaysia: World-Class College Ranking Perspectives', *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 17.2 (2023), 249–61 <<https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v17i2.20633>>.

¹³ Muh. Bahrudin and others, 'Halal Food Industry: Reinforcing the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Body (Bpjph) in the Development of the Among Urban Muslim Community in Indonesia', *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 29.1 (2024), 61 <<https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v29i1.9039>>.

¹⁴ Khairul Akmaliah Adham and others, 'Evolution of the Malaysian Halal Certification System: The Viable System Model as the Diagnostic Framework', *Jurnal Pengurusan*, 66 (2022), 29–40 <<https://doi.org/10.17576/pengurusan-2022-66-03>>.

¹⁵ Bahrudin and others.

¹⁶ Adham and others.

¹⁷ Bahrudin and others.



quality standards, and verification technologies.¹⁸ In Indonesia, universities tend to prioritize raising awareness among SMEs and providing guidance on compliance, as several halal-related industry sectors are still in early development stages. Regulatory differences further shape the strategies of universities in each country.¹⁹ Malaysia possesses a comprehensive legal framework governing halal certification and food regulation, supported by longstanding acts such as the Trade Descriptions Act 2011 and the Food Act 1983. Universities in Malaysia thus focus on deepening and expanding the established halal legal system. Indonesia's newer halal certification system places universities in a role heavily oriented toward developing, introducing, and socializing recently implemented regulations, as well as training businesses to adapt to the new legal environment. When examining the strategies of higher education institutions more broadly, both Indonesian and Malaysian universities prioritize education, training, and curriculum development in the field of halal studies. Collaboration with government agencies, particularly BPJPH and JAKIM, forms a cornerstone of public legal education and awareness-raising. Both also invest significantly in research and development, producing scholarly work that strengthens halal supervision, identifies legal challenges, and proposes improvements. Public outreach through seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns is also widely practiced in both countries.²⁰

Nevertheless, differences remain visible. Indonesia's strategy emphasizes strengthening regulatory foundations, focusing on domestic needs and the gradual implementation of the Halal Product Guarantee Law. Malaysia's strategy is more advanced, rooted in a well-established certification framework under JAKIM and supported by specialized, intensive academic programs.²¹ Indonesian universities focus primarily on religious and legal aspects of halal, while Malaysian universities adopt a multidisciplinary approach integrating law, economics, technology, management, and science. Direct integration with industry is also more pronounced in Malaysia, where universities frequently collaborate with halal businesses and assist manufacturers in obtaining certification. In Indonesia, collaboration exists but remains more oriented toward education, awareness, and support for SMEs.

Overall, universities in both Indonesia and Malaysia play essential roles in strengthening legal awareness related to halal product assurance. Although their approaches share many similarities particularly in education, research, and collaboration the maturity of Malaysia's regulatory system and the breadth of its global integration distinguish it from Indonesia's more recently developed and still-expanding halal framework. While Malaysia leads with a well-established, internationally recognized model, Indonesia continues to build and refine its system to ensure that halal assurance can be implemented effectively across its vast and diverse market.²²

¹⁸ Muhammad Nur Fitri Razak, Kavitha Balakrishnan and Rosmiza Bidin, 'Emerging Influential Factors in Malaysia's Halal Industry Development Ecosystem: A Story from Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Study', *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 33.1 (2025), 275–99 <<https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.33.1.13>>.

¹⁹ Rizal Bahara and others, 'Global Research Trends on Halal Food SMEs: A Bibliometric Analysis', *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 16.9 (2025), 2641–78 <<https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-08-2024-0349>>.

²⁰ Bayu Arie Fianto and others, 'Factors Influencing Behavior Intention to Obtain Halal Certificate: Study on MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia', *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 2025 <<https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-09-2024-0446>>.

²¹ Mohd Ikhwan Izzat Zulkefli, Mohd Nuri Al-Amin Endut and Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah, 'Exploring Factors Affecting the Sustainability of Islamic Affairs in Malaysia: An Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) Approach', *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, 19.2 (2024), 703–13 <<https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.190227>>.

²² Hulwati Hulwati and others, 'Navigating Halal Certification Standards: A Comparative Analysis Of The Food Industry In Indonesia And Malaysia', *Journal of Fatwa Management and Research*, 30.1 (2025), 1–22 <<https://doi.org/10.33102/jfatwa.vol30no1.619>>.



Conclusion

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the similarities and differences in the roles and strategies implemented by universities in Indonesia and Malaysia in building legal awareness of halal product assurance can be described as follows. To begin with, universities in both countries share several common roles. They contribute significantly to education and training by offering academic programs and organizing seminars or workshops related to halal law and halal product regulation. These institutions also play an active part in research and development, conducting studies on legal, regulatory, and innovation aspects within the halal sector research that ultimately supports the advancement of the halal industry. Moreover, close collaboration with government authorities and industry stakeholders is a hallmark of higher education efforts in both nations. Universities routinely partner with agencies such as BPJPH in Indonesia and JAKIM in Malaysia to educate the public and assist industry players in understanding and fulfilling halal certification requirements. Despite these similarities, the strategies adopted by higher education institutions in each country reflect important differences. In Malaysia, universities employ a more multidisciplinary approach, integrating elements of law, economics, management, and technology into halal education. Their programs are generally more comprehensive and maintain stronger linkages with the halal industry. Malaysian universities are also more actively involved in supporting companies throughout the halal certification process by offering consultancy services and practical, hands-on training. This is supported by Malaysia's mature halal infrastructure under JAKIM, which enables universities to take on a more concrete role in the practical implementation of halal certification. In Indonesia, the approach is somewhat different. Universities place greater emphasis on counseling and socialization efforts, focusing primarily on providing foundational knowledge of halal law, especially within Islamic law programs and courses related to halal product regulation. Collaboration with BPJPH is ongoing, allowing universities to contribute to the implementation of national halal product assurance policies, although their direct involvement in certification processes remains limited. Indonesia continues to strengthen its legal and educational infrastructure related to halal matters, and while international collaboration is emerging, it is still in a developmental stage compared to Malaysia.

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