DIJEFA:
Dinasti International Journal of Economics, Finance & Accounting
E-ISSN: 2721-303X
P-ISSN: 2721-3021
https://dinastipub.org/DIJEFA dinasti.info@gmail.com +62 811 7404 455

DOI: https://doi.org/10.38035/dijefa.v6i6.5844
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Received: 16 December 2025 | **Revised:** 03 December 2025 | **Accepted:** 16 December 2025

Trust, Faith, and Market: The Dualism of Indonesian Food Halal Certification between Self-Declaration and Global Standards

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Abstract: Halal certification in the food industry is not merely an administrative matter but represents a *sharia mandate* (faith), an instrument for building and maintaining consumer trust (trust), and a vital asset in strengthening Indonesia's position in the global market (market). As the world's largest Muslim-majority country, Indonesia holds a strategic potential to become the global hub of the Halal Food Industry. However, since the enactment of Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance (JPH Law), a dilemma has emerged due to the dualism of certification pathways: the regular system (through BPJPH–MUI–LPH) and the *self-declare* system designated for micro and small enterprises (MSEs). Employing a qualitative approach grounded in literature reviews, regulatory analysis, and Halal Food Industry reports, this study integrates a SWOT analysis to assess the strategic position of Indonesia's halal certification policy. The findings reveal that the strengths of Indonesia's halal system lie in its large Muslim demographic base and strong foundation of sharia spirituality; weaknesses arise in issues of credibility, halal literacy among MSE actors, and fragmented governance structures; opportunities exist in the economic inclusivity of MSEs, the digitalization of certification via the *SIHALAL* platform, and the potential for global halal diplomacy; while threats include the risks of *halal washing*, commodification of halal values, and disharmony with international standards. This study concludes that for Indonesia to realize its vision of becoming the global center of the Halal Food Industry, an integrated policy framework is needed one that harmonizes spiritual aspects (faith), public trust (trust), and global market credibility (market) within a competitive and internationally recognized *Halal Integrity System*.

Keywords: Halal, Halal Urgency, Self-Declaration, Consumer Trust.

INTRODUCTION

The global Halal Food Industry is experiencing rapid growth and is gaining attention not only in Muslim countries but also in countries with non-Muslim majorities. According to *the*

State of the Global Islamic Economy Report (SGIE) 2024/25, global halal consumption is estimated to exceed USD 2.3 trillion, covering the food, fashion, pharmaceutical, cosmetics, tourism, media, and recreation sectors (DinarStandard, 2024). This phenomenon shows that halal is no longer a marginal issue, but has become part of the mainstream global economy.

Indonesia, with the largest Muslim population in the world, is strategically positioned to lead the global Halal Food Industry. The government, through the National Committee for Sharia Economics and Finance (KNEKS) and the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH), aims to make Indonesia the center of the global Halal Food Industry by 2025. Regulatory policies were strengthened with the enactment of Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Guarantee (JPH Law), which was then expanded through Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021.

However, the emergence of halal certification policies in Indonesia has not been without controversy. Johan Fischer (2016), in his study on *Halal Cosmopolitanism*, emphasizes that halal cannot be viewed solely as a sharia label, but also as a global social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that is constantly negotiated between state actors, markets, and consumers. Halal, according to Fischer, is both a moral consumption practice and a commodification practice: it functions as worship, but also as an economic-political instrument (Fischer, 2016).

Meanwhile, Dominik Müller (2017) sees halal as an arena of political authority. In his book *Islam, Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Generation*, Müller shows how halal certification in Malaysia has become an instrument of the state to regulate public morality while expanding political legitimacy (Müller, 2017). This perspective is relevant to Indonesia, where the state has taken over the halal certification function from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) to the National Halal Product Certification Agency (BPJPH), so that halal is not only a religious issue, but also an issue of governance, state legitimacy, and market regulation.

Since 2021, Indonesia has introduced a *self-declared* halal certification scheme for micro and small enterprises (MSEs). The main objectives are to expand access to halal certification, reduce costs, and accelerate the penetration of MSEs into the halal ecosystem. However, this system poses a dilemma. First, from a religious perspective, there are concerns about whether MSME operators have the capacity and integrity to ensure the halal status of their products. Second, from the perspective of consumer trust, *self-declaration* has the potential to undermine the credibility of Indonesian halal certification in the eyes of the public, especially at the international level. Third, from the global market perspective, Indonesian halal standards are not yet fully recognized as equivalent to international standards such as JAKIM (Malaysia) or ESMA (UAE), so *self-declaration* is feared to hinder exports.

Thus, the main issue in Indonesia's halal food policy is not merely administrative efficiency, but the balance between *trust, faith, and market* in the context of a dual certification system: *self-declaration* for MSMEs and regular certification with global standards.

This paper attempts to answer three main questions: 1) How is the urgency of halal understood from the perspective of faith and sharia (*faith*)?; 2) What are the implications of the dualism of halal certification (self-declaration vs. regular) on consumer *trust*?; 3) How do global market dynamics influence Indonesia's position in halal food branding (*market*)?.

This study aims to analyze the urgency of halal in the Halal Food Industry by integrating three main perspectives: sharia, consumer trust, and global branding.

This article contributes to academic and practical discourse in three ways: 1) First, it offers a multidimensional analysis of halal as a Sharia, social, and economic phenomenon; 2) Second, it enriches the academic discourse by utilizing the frameworks of Johan Fischer (halal as moral consumption and commodification) and Dominik Müller (halal as the politics of

authority); 3) Third, providing practical input for policymakers to design an inclusive, credible, and globally competitive halal certification system.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach, because the issue of halal is not merely an economic phenomenon, but a social, political, and religious phenomenon that requires a multidisciplinary approach. The primary data used are regulatory documents related to halal certification in Indonesia, such as Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee, Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021, and official documents from the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH). Secondary data was obtained from academic literature, journals, books, and industry reports such as *the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report (SGIE) 2024/25* published by DinarStandard.

The analysis technique used is descriptive-comparative analysis. First, descriptive analysis is used to explain the dynamics of Indonesia's halal certification regulations, particularly regarding *self-declaration* for MSMEs compared to regular certification. Second, comparative analysis is used to assess Indonesia's position compared to international halal standards such as JAKIM Malaysia, ESMA United Arab Emirates, and OIC–SMIIC standards. Third, interpretive analysis is used to relate these phenomena to three main theoretical dimensions: *faith* (maqashid syariah), *trust* (brand trust & TPB), and *market* (nation branding, Islamic branding).

This study has limitations in terms of empirical aspects. Because it is based on a literature study, it does not conduct direct surveys of SME actors or halal consumers. However, these limitations open up space for further field-based research, for example through consumer trust surveys on self-declared products or analysis of Indonesian halal branding in the export market.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Previous Studies

Academic studies on halal certification have developed rapidly in the last two decades and cover theological, economic, and regulatory political dimensions. In general, the literature can be grouped into three main streams:

1. Halal as a spiritual practice and ethical consumption. Auda (2008), through the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* approach, explains that halal is a form of protection for religion, life, and property. Meanwhile, Fischer, in his *book Islam, Standards, and Technoscience: In Global Halal Zones*. Routledge., views halal as "*moral* consumption," that is, consumption practices that reflect faith but are also subject to market and state logic.
2. Halal as an instrument of legitimacy and political authority. Müller (2017) in his book *Politics and Youth in Malaysia: The Pop-Islamist Reinvention of PAS* shows that in Malaysia, halal certification serves as a state tool to enforce public morality while expanding the political legitimacy of Islam. Similar studies by Nasr (2019) and Ahmad (2020) also highlight the dimension of power in halal regulation in Southeast Asia.
3. Halal as a branding and global market strategy. Wilson (2014) and Anholt (2007) place halal within the framework *of Islamic branding* and *nation branding*. Countries such as Malaysia, the UAE, and Thailand have used halal certification as economic *soft power* to strengthen their global reputation. Gereffi (2005) emphasizes the importance of international standards for countries to integrate into *the global value chain* of the Halal Food Industry.

Meanwhile, research in Indonesia (Lubis, 2021; Fitriani & Purnomo, 2022; Yuliana & Nugroho, 2022) has focused more on the implementation *of self-declaration* for MSMEs and the issue of consumer *trust gaps*. However, there has not been much research that

comprehensively links the three main aspects—*faith*, *trust*, and *market*—in reading the dilemma of Indonesia's halal certification dualism. Therefore, this study fills this gap with an interdisciplinary approach that combines normative sharia analysis, consumer behavior theory, and *nation branding* theory.

Research Novelty

In the context of the development of halal certification studies in Indonesia, this research offers significant conceptual and methodological novelty. Most previous studies tend to focus on the legal and administrative aspects of halal certification, while its social, ethical, and diplomatic dimensions have not been explored in an integrative manner. Therefore, this study aims to enrich the academic discourse while offering a more comprehensive analytical framework for understanding the dilemma of dualism in halal certification between the regular and *self-declared* schemes.

The scientific novelty (novel contributions) of this article can be detailed as follows:

1. Triadic Approach (Faith–Trust–Market Framework). This study does not only examine halal from a theological (*faith*) or economic (*market*) perspective, but also integrates the dimension of public trust as a connecting variable between sharia spirituality and global credibility. This approach broadens the horizon of halal analysis from mere normative compliance to sociological relations between the state, business actors, and society.
2. Analysis of the Dualism of Halal Certification as a Structural Dilemma. This article highlights *self-declaration* and regular certification not as two mutually exclusive poles, but as systems that must be synergized in *the Halal Integrity System*. This approach differs from previous studies, which generally view *self-declaration* as an administrative compromise. Thus, this study attempts to present the dynamics of halal policy as a dialectic between economic flexibility and religious authority.
3. Contextual SWOT Analysis Model in *the* Halal Food Industry. By applying the SWOT framework linked to *faith–trust–market*, this study offers a strategic map for national *halal food* policies that are compatible with global standards such as JAKIM (Malaysia) and ESMA (UAE). This analysis not only maps internal strengths and weaknesses, but also external opportunities and threats in efforts to build the competitiveness of Indonesia's halal industry.
4. Conceptual Contribution to Halal Economic Diplomacy. This study positions halal not only as a domestic issue, but also as an instrument of economic diplomacy and *nation branding*. Through this approach, halal is understood as a form *of* Indonesia's *soft power* in the global market that can strengthen the country's image as a center of ethical consumption and spiritual excellence in the Muslim world.

Discussion

Faith: Halal as a Sharia Mandate

From a Sharia perspective, halal is not merely a legal status, but part of faith. Auda (2008), through the *maqashid Sharia* approach, explains that halal serves to protect religion (*hifdz al-din*), life (*hifdz al-nafs*), and property (*hifdz al-mal*). This emphasizes the spiritual dimension of halal.

However, when compared to Johan Fischer's (2016) analysis, another layer becomes apparent. Fischer views halal as a socio-economic practice negotiated by state actors, the market, and consumers. This means that, outside the normative framework of sharia, halal is also an arena of political economy. Fischer even uses the term "*halal as moral consumption*" to emphasize that halal is a form of consumption that is laden with moral meaning, but also vulnerable to commodification.

In the context *of self-declaration* in Indonesia, these two perspectives have the potential to clash. From Auda's point of view, *self-declaration* is acceptable as long as MSME actors maintain their religious integrity and maqashid. However, from Fischer's point of view, *self-declaration* risks reducing halal to a mere administrative label because market and state logic are more dominant than religious awareness.

Trust: Implications of Certification Dualism

Erdem & Swait (2004) emphasize that *brand credibility* is key in consumer decisions. Trust is built from consistency and reliability. In the Halal Food Industry, certification is a symbol of that credibility. Morgan & Hunt (1994) even emphasize that trust is the foundation of consumers' long-term commitment to a brand.

However, Ajzen (1991), through *the Theory of Planned Behavior*, emphasizes the factors of social norms and perceived control in halal consumption. Consumers do not only consider brand credibility but also religious norms and social pressure. In other words, *self-declaration* may still be accepted in the domestic market, where religious norms and the Muslim majority culture reinforce trust. However, in the global market, trust is more determined by formal certification recognized by international institutions.

This comparison reveals a major dilemma. On the one hand, *self-declaration* is in line with Ajzen's theory because it utilizes the high social norms of Indonesian Muslims. On the other hand, it contradicts Erdem & Swait's argument because it lacks formal credibility for global consumers. If trust is the main capital, then *self-declaration* must be accompanied by education and audits to prevent *halal washing*.

Market: Indonesian Branding in the Global Arena

Wilson (2014) developed the concept *of Islamic branding*, in which halal is positioned not only as certification but also as a value (ethics, integrity, spirituality). Meanwhile, Anholt (2007) sees halal as part of *nation branding* that shapes a country's reputation.

A comparison with Malaysia and the UAE reinforces this analysis. Dominik Müller (2017) shows how Malaysia uses JAKIM not only as a certification body but also as an instrument of political authority and halal diplomacy. Malaysia has succeeded in making halal a national identity and an instrument of soft power. The United Arab Emirates, with ESMA, has gone even further, integrating halal with the concept of Dubai as the "*capital of the Islamic economy*."

Indonesia, despite its large demographic potential, still lacks "global authority" in halal certification. *Self-declaration* actually widens this gap, because the global market values formal certification with strict supervision. From Gereffi's (2005) perspective, Indonesia risks difficulty entering *the global* halal *value chain* if it does not standardize its certification in accordance with international norms.

Here, a fundamental difference is apparent: Malaysia and the UAE build global trust through strict (regular) standards, while Indonesia attempts to build domestic inclusivity through *self-declaration*. The question is: can the two be synergized without sacrificing global reputation?

Faith, Trust, and Market in Certification Dualism

An analysis of the urgency of halal in Indonesia reveals a tug-of-war between three main dimensions: faith (belief and sharia), trust (consumer confidence), and market (global branding). The three are interrelated, but also pose a dilemma when faced with the policy of dualism in halal certification: regular and *self-declared*.

Halal and Thayyiban as the Foundation of Faith

From a sharia perspective, halal cannot be separated from the concept *of thayyiban*. The Qur'an repeatedly juxtaposes the word *halal* with *thayyiban,* for example in QS. Al-Baqarah: 168:

> O people, eat of what is lawful and good on the earth, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.168
>
> *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*. (QS. Al-Baqarah: 168)

And in QS. Al-Maidah: 88:

> And eat of what Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and fear Allah, in Whom you believe. 88
>
> *Eat what Allah has provided for you as lawful and good sustenance, and fear Allah, in Whom you believe.*

Halal means 'permissible' according to Sharia law, while *thayyiban* means good, healthy, clean, and beneficial. Thus, halal should not be understood merely as a formal legal status, but must be accompanied by qualities that are healthy and soothing to the soul.

Jasser Auda (2008), through maqashid syariah, emphasizes that halal food and products must protect religion, soul, and wealth. This cannot be achieved solely with a certification stamp, but must ensure that the product is also *thayyiban*: hygienic, safe, and of high quality. Johan Fischer (2016) also reminds us that when halal is understood only as a label, there is a risk of value reduction, where the *thayyiban* aspect is neglected for the sake of the market.

In the Indonesian context, *self-declaration* for MSMEs can be seen as an opportunity to expand access to halal products. However, if the *thayyiban* dimension is not taken into account—for example, in terms of hygiene, production standards, and consumer safety—then halal risks losing its spiritual meaning. Conversely, stricter regular certification generally already covers food quality and safety aspects, so it is closer to the principle *of halalan thayyiban*.

Research by Lubis (2021) and Fitriani & Purnomo (2022), which highlights low consumer trust in self-declared products, can be understood not only as an issue of halal labeling, but also as doubt regarding the fulfillment *of thayyiban* aspects. Consumers not only want a "halal" label, but also a guarantee that the product is truly good, safe, and of high quality.

Thus, the integration of the concepts *of halal and thayyiban* emphasizes that the urgency of halal in Indonesia must go beyond administrative formalities. It must combine the dimensions of sharia (*halal*) with the dimensions of quality, hygiene, and usefulness (*thayyiban*). This should be the basis for designing an inclusive, credible, and globally competitive certification system.

Faith, Trust, and Market in Certification Dualism: SWOT Analysis of the Indonesian Halal System

The analysis of halal certification dualism in Indonesia can be read through three main dimensions—*faith*, *trust*, and market—which conceptually intersect between the spiritual, social, and economic realms. To understand Indonesia's strategic position in this context, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis approach is used to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of halal certification policies, particularly *self-declaration* for MSMEs and regular schemes for large industries.

Faith: Spiritual Foundation and Normative Strength

From a faith perspective, halal is a sharia mandate and a form *of tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul). This principle is the main strength of the Indonesian halal system because Muslim communities have a high spiritual awareness of the concepts of halal and thayyiban. Within the framework of maqashid sharia, Auda (2008) emphasizes that halal serves to protect religion (*hifdz al-din*), life (*hifdz al-nafs*), and property (*hifdz al-mal*). This awareness strengthens the moral legitimacy of the *self-declare* system based on religious honesty. However, as Fischer (2016) reminds us, when halal is reduced to a mere economic instrument, there is a threat of spiritual reduction. Therefore, *faith* must be maintained so that it becomes *a strength* in Indonesia's halal system: namely, that *self-declare* is not a simplification, but a manifestation of the moral mandate of MSME actors within the framework of faith.

Trust: Credibility, Literacy, and Institutional Challenges

The dimension of trust is *a weakness* in the implementation of the *self-declare* system. Empirical research shows that consumer confidence in *self-declared* products is still low due to the lack of independent audits and the risk of *halal washing* (Lubis, 2021; Fitriani & Purnomo, 2022).

In addition, institutional fragmentation between BPJPH, MUI, and LPH causes confusion in *halal governance* (Yuliana & Nugroho, 2022). In Ajzen's (1991) perspective, Muslim social norms do support the cultural acceptance of halal products, but they are not sufficient to replace formal credibility in the eyes of the public and the global market.

Thus, *the* main *weaknesses of* the *self-declare* system are weak supervision, limited halal literacy among MSME actors (Ashfia, 2022), and the absence of credible verification mechanisms to ensure sharia integrity and product quality.

Market: Domestic Inclusivity and Global Diplomacy Opportunities

From the market perspective, *self-declaration* opens up broad strategic opportunities. First, this system expands the inclusiveness and access of MSMEs to halal certification without high costs, thereby accelerating the growth of the national sharia economy (Rizky & Sholihah, 2025). Second, digitizing the system through the *SIHALAL* application improves the efficiency and transparency of BPJPH services. Third, opportunities for national halal branding can be strengthened through *Islamic branding* (Wilson, 2014) and *competitive identity* (Anholt, 2007) strategies, by positioning Indonesia as a "Halal Integrity Nation."

In addition, Indonesia's active participation in international forums such as OIC–SMIIC and *Halal 20 Forum* opens up broader opportunities for halal diplomacy, thereby increasing global recognition of BPJPH (Viartasiwi, 2023). These opportunities show that Indonesia's *market opportunity* is not only on a domestic economic scale but also as a force of Islamic *soft power* at the global level.

Threats to Global Integrity and Credibility

Despite its great potential, the *self-declare* system faces several threats. *First*, the risk *of halal washing* increases if supervision is not strict (Lubis, 2021). *Second*, competition among global halal authorities is becoming increasingly fierce, especially with Malaysia (JAKIM) and the United Arab Emirates (ESMA), which are internationally recognized (Müller, 2017). Third, there is a threat of reducing the spiritual meaning of halal due to excessive commodification (Fischer, 2016).

In addition, the lack of harmonization of halal standards between countries poses a threat to Indonesian exports because the global market trusts formal certification that follows OIC–SMIIC standards (Gereffi, 2005). If this is not anticipated, dual certification can create *a trust gap* between domestic businesses and the global market.

SWOT Synthesis: Building a Halal Integrity System

The SWOT analysis shows that Indonesia has spiritual strength (faith) and a large market potential (market), but faces serious challenges in credibility (trust) and international recognition (threats). Therefore, the direction of Indonesia's halal certification policy should not be to choose between *self-declaration* or regulation, but to build a Halal Integrity System—a system that is: 1) Is based on faith and sharia awareness (faith); 2) Is supported by credible oversight and halal education (trust); 3) Is oriented towards market differentiation and global diplomacy (market).

With this integrity system, Indonesia can transform the dualism of halal certification into a competitive advantage: *self-declaration* to strengthen domestic inclusiveness, and regular certification to build global credibility.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the urgency of halal in the Halal Food Industry cannot be narrowly understood as an administrative issue or market commodification. It is a multidimensional phenomenon that must be read through three major frameworks: *faith, trust, and market*.

First, from the dimension of faith, halal is a sharia mandate rooted in faith. Jasser Auda (2008), through the *maqashid sharia* framework, emphasizes that halal serves to protect religion, life, and property. Thus, halal is not merely a legal label, but a reflection of worship. Johan Fischer (2016) expands on this analysis by showing that halal is also a social and economic practice negotiated between state actors, the market, and consumers. In the Indonesian context, *self-declaration* can only be accepted if it is practiced with religious awareness, not merely as a bureaucratic formality.

Second, from the dimension of trust, halal certification serves as an instrument of credibility between producers and consumers. Erdem & Swait (2004) state that *brand credibility* determines consumer considerations. Morgan & Hunt (1994) also emphasize that trust is the foundation of long-term commitment. *Self-declaration* opens access for MSMEs, but poses a dilemma: social norms (Ajzen, 1991) may support acceptance in the domestic market, but in the global market, trust is only built through formal certification that is independently audited. The risk *of halal washing*—that is, the use of halal labels solely for commercial interests without integrity—is very real if self-declaration is not strictly monitored.

Third, from a market perspective, halal is an instrument *of nation branding* and *Islamic branding*. Wilson (2014) emphasizes that halal is a value that can be positioned globally, while Anholt (2007) sees it as a strategy for building a country's reputation. Dominik Müller's (2017) study on Malaysia shows how halal certification is used as a political instrument of authority as well as soft power. Malaysia and the UAE have successfully positioned halal as a global identity through strict regulations. Conversely, Indonesia has the potential to face difficulties in integrating the global supply chain (Gereffi, 2005) if it relies too much on *self-declaration*, which is not recognized in export markets.

By comparing the arguments of these scholars, it can be concluded that the dualism of halal certification in Indonesia presents a major dilemma: 1) *Self-declaration* supports domestic inclusiveness, accelerates certification, and eases the burden on MSMEs; 2) Regular certification ensures credibility, maintains consumer trust, and supports global branding.

Therefore, the best solution is not to choose one over the other, but to build a halal integrity system that combines both approaches. This system must be faith-based, credible in the eyes of consumers, and compatible with global standards.

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