



# MOBILIZING THE HALAL LIFESTYLE OF MIDDLE-CLASS MUSLIMS IN INDONESIA

## AN ACCELERATION PROGRAM OF FREE HALAL CERTIFICATION FOR SMALL AND MICRO ENTERPRISES (SMES)

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### Abstract

The halal industry is now proliferating along with the halal lifestyle, which is very prominent in the Muslim middle class in Indonesia. The consequence is considered not only to have encouraged the development of the Islamic economy but also to intensify the halal lifestyle. This article discusses the government's acceleration of halal certification by accelerating the process of halal certification through the Free Halal Certification Program (Sehati) for Small and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMEs). The program, especially food products, has accelerated the community's halal lifestyle, especially for middle-class Muslims in Indonesia. In doing so, the government contributes to mobilizing middle-class Muslim lifestyles in contemporary Indonesian culture.

**Keywords:** *Free Halal Certification, Halal Lifestyle, Middle Class Muslims, Small and Micro-sized Enterprises (SMEs).*

### Introduction

Islam provides guidelines for humans to live life. In the development of industrialization, life's problems have become increasingly complex due to shifts in material values and ways of

life—people view piety as inseparable from modes of production and consumption. The practice of this way of life is now better known as the halal lifestyle. According to the Muslim Judicial Halal Trust (MJCHT), a halal lifestyle is



a human behavior carried out correctly, honestly, with integrity, dignity, and fairly according to ability, and does not deviate from Islamic teachings.<sup>1</sup>

However, today's awareness of the halal lifestyle is built by market demand, including halal guarantees for consumer products. Therefore, it is an essential issue for a shift in global culture,<sup>2</sup> especially among Muslims in Indonesia (at the end of 2021 or 86.93% of 238.09 million Indonesians).<sup>3</sup> Referring to Boston Consulting Group data, Indonesia's Muslim middle class in 2021 is predicted to reach 150 million people (62.8% of Indonesia's population).<sup>4</sup>

The large population of the Muslim

middle class makes the need for halal products in Indonesia increase. In order to provide comfort and certainty for the availability of halal products in Indonesia, the government has enacted Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Guarantees for Halal Products and Government Regulation Number 39 of 2021 concerning Implementation of the Field of Guarantees for Halal Products.

These regulations concerning halal product guarantees emphasize how urgent the issue of halal-haram is in production relations from entrepreneurs to consumers, as a concrete manifestation of the state in protecting consumers.<sup>5</sup> These regulations emphasize that business products that are produced, distributed, and marketed in the territory of Indonesia must have a halal certificate. Therefore, the government regulates the implementation (Government Regulation Number 39 of 2021 in article 140) concerning the obligation to be halal certified, which is carried out in stages over five years, for food products, beverages, slaughter products, and slaughter services (from October 17, 2019, to October 17, 2024).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hendri Hermawan Adinugraha et al., "Halal Lifestyle di Indonesia," *An-Nisbah: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah* 5, no. 02 (April 2019): 64. DOI: 10.21274/an.2019.6.1.57-81.

<sup>2</sup> Hadiyanto Abdul Rachim & Meilanny Budiarti Santoso, "Mainstreaming the Halal Lifestyle: Between Opportunities and Challenges of Social Protection Capacity in Global Trends," *AdBispreneur: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Penelitian Administrasi Bisnis dan Kewirausahaan* 6, no. 2 (2021): 151, DOI: 10.24198/adbispreneur.v6i2.33085.

<sup>3</sup> Viva Budy Kusnandar, "Sebanyak 86,93% Penduduk Indonesia Beragama Islam pada 31 Desember 2021," *Katadata*, February 12, 2022, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/02/12/sebanyak-8693-penduduk-indonesia-beragama-islam-pada-31-desember-2021>.

<sup>4</sup> Viva Budy Kusnandar, "Sebanyak 115 Juta Masyarakat Indonesia Menuju Kelas Menengah," *Katadata*, September 14, 2022, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/09/14/sebanyak-115-juta-masyarakat-indonesia-menuju-kelas-menengah>.

<sup>5</sup> May Lim Charity, "Halal Products Guarantee in Indonesia," *Jurnal Legislasi Indonesia* 14, no. 1 (March 2017): 99, DOI: 10.54629/jli.v14i1.77.

<sup>6</sup> Government Regulation Number 39 of 2021 Concerning Implementation of Halal Product Assurance, accessed October 12, 2022, <https://halal.kemenperin.go.id/pp-nomor-39-tahun-2021-tentang-penyelenggaraan-bidang-jaminan-produk-halal>.

A Halal certificates are official certificates regarding halal guarantees for a product issued by the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH) based on the halal fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council.<sup>7</sup> This certificate is one of the obligations entrepreneurs or business actors must own to develop their business as a guarantee for halal business for consumers.

Currently, the majority of businesses in Indonesia are small enterprises. A total of 99.99% of businesses in Indonesia are Small, and Micro, Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and of the 98.67% of SMEs, 798,679 units are micro and small enterprises—individual businesses or business entities with a top business capital of IDR 5 billion (not including land and buildings where the business is located). This large number is a challenge for them to be able to have a halal certificate for their products within five years. For this reason, BPJPH initiated a program called Free Halal Certification (Sehati) for small and micro-sized enterprises, which the Minister of Religion released on September 8, 2021.

The Sehati program is one of the strategies to increase the number of halal products in Indonesia. This program aims to reach 10 million halal products

(2022). In phase 1 of the Sehati program, about 25,000 micro and small enterprises have successfully obtained halal certification; and in stage 2 (until the end of 2022), 324,834 quotas are provided for micro and small enterprises.

Based on *SiHalal* (Halal Information System), 749,971 products were halal certified during 2019-2022. More and more products that have been certified halal will make it easier for people to get halal products. This is a solution to overcome the gap between the growth of the halal industry and the halal lifestyle in society, especially in the middle-class Muslim community.<sup>8</sup>

Several previous studies have examined lifestyle and halal issues in the Muslim middle class, which include the following. Adinugraha and Sartika describe that the halal phenomena in Indonesia today were not only concentrating on the food sector but have been extended to other sectors, such as halal tourism, halal cosmetics, halal medicines, financial institutions, halal modes, and others. This trend is promoted by media and events that raise the halal lifestyle theme. They concluded that the population of Muslims worldwide could intensify the halal lifestyles trend. Muslims and non-Muslims have accepted

<sup>7</sup> Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 33 of 2014 concerning Guarantees for Halal Products

<sup>8</sup> Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal, "Sertifikasi Halal untuk UMK, accessed October 20, 2022, <https://sehati.halal.go.id>.

even the concept of halal, and it gradually begins to become a lifestyle.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, Malik et al. explored the consumer behavior of the middle-class Muslim. They stated that the halal status is a driving factor that leads to the consumption of the middle class, assuring religious morals and Islamic life. They cited two models of halal in products and social cognition of the middle-class Muslim: Islamic products and Islamicized products.<sup>10</sup>

Specifically, Aswad focused on identifying the proliferation of halal-certified products along with the rise of middle-class Muslims in contemporary Indonesia. He supposed that commodifying religious symbols through halal certification are one crucial aspect that encourages the production of a middle-class Muslim economy in contemporary Indonesia.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, Triguswinri discussed the transformation of consumption behavior of middle-class Muslim commu-

nities in response the entrepreneurs and the government to halal product certification. To him, Indonesia government has not been able to integrate official regulations with the implementation of economic activities. He assumed that if the government immediately does not facilitate and participate institutionally, the market system will take over the halal industry in Indonesia.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, this article examines the acceleration of the government program for free halal product certification for SMEs and its impact on the lifestyle of middle-class Muslims in Indonesia. The research used the literature study<sup>13</sup> to overview the tendency of Muslim consumers and small and micro-entrepreneurs to innovate toward this trend.

## Halal Lifestyle of Middle Class Muslim

Lifestyle will change along with the times. As Muslims, everything cultivated and consumed must comply with Islamic law, which is a halal lifestyle. Halal lifestyle can be interpreted as a popular Islamic way of living contemporary life, which consists of life principles,

<sup>9</sup> Adinugraha et al., "Halal Lifestyle di Indonesia."

<sup>10</sup> Abdul Malik et al., "Halal Products and Formal Piety Muslim Middle-Class Life in the Analysis of Religious Reception Theory," *Sangkép: Jurnal Kajian Sosial Keagamaan* 5, no. 1 (2022): 58-75, DOI: 10.20414/sangkep.v5i1.5743.

<sup>11</sup> Muhammad Aswad, "Halal Industries: Markets and the Rising of Middle-Class Muslims in Contemporary Java," *Episteme: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 17, no. 1 (June 2022): 1-25. DOI: 10.21274/epis.2022.17.1.1-25.

<sup>12</sup> Krisnaldo Triguwini, "Halal Industry in Indonesia Muslim Middle Class Consumption Behavior: An Analysis of New Institutionalism," *Journal of Research in Business, Economics, and Education* 3, Issue 5 (October 2021): 87-93

<sup>13</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R & D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2015).

habits, behavior, activities, and interest in Islamic teachings.

Halal here is not only about food or materials used to produce it, but how to obtain these goods, process them, and market them must also be carried out through halal procedures. There are three patterns of halal consumption in society, including the Muslim lifestyle, religiosity, and halal labeling.

As stated in the Qur'an ([2]: 168), a Muslim in his life is obliged to consume halal and good food (*tayyib*). Therefore, Muslims must be more selective in choosing the products to consume. Along with social changes in a country with a majority Muslim population, the Indonesian people's religiosity is increasingly striking. Middle-class Muslims who live in urban areas have the understanding and ability to practice the halal lifestyle in the religiosity and spirituality of the community.

According to Rimayanti, middle-class Muslims in Indonesia have a distinctive and unique character:

1. They are religious and obedient to Islamic principles.
2. They are modern, knowledgeable, technologically literate, and globally minded.
3. They see Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, which provides universal goodness to all humankind.
4. They are prosperous with adequate purchasing power, decent invest-

ment ability, and a spirit of giving or philanthropy in the form of high zakat and alms habits.<sup>14</sup>

As a country with the highest level of consumption of halal products in the world for the last three years, this creates an opportunity for domestic halal producers to optimize the marketing of their products further. In order to develop a halal lifestyle in Indonesia, policy support from the government is needed.

The ratification of Law no. 33 of 2014 is clear evidence of government support for strengthening the Islamic economy through the halal value chain, strengthened by Government Regulation 39 of 2021 regarding the Halal Product Guarantee System. Based on this regulation, halal certification must be carried out within five years until 2024. Indonesian Ministry of Religion's Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH) created a program to accelerate halal certification called the Free Halal Certification Program (Sehati). This program is a free halal certification program initiated by the BPJPH. This program is carried out using a *self-declare scheme* (self-declaration from entrepreneurs regarding the halal product) with specific require-

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<sup>14</sup> Rimayanti, "Industri Halal dan Muslim Kelas Menengah: Peluang dan Tantangan," *Jurnal Ekonomi Pembangunan dan Pariwisata* 2, No. 2 (October 2022): 66. DOI: 10.52300/jepp.v2i2.5473.

ments that must be met. The Sehati Program collaborates and synergizes between BPJPH and ministries, local governments, agencies, and the private sector. This program aims to help Micro and Small Enterprises to finance halal certification for free.

In 2021 there are 112 institutions or facilitators that provide budgets for halal certification costs for SMEs. The total budget was 16.5 billion to certify halal as many as 7,160 SMEs. To organize financing for the halal certification program, BPJPH is consolidating with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office of the Presidential Staff (KSP), National Sharia Economic and Financial Committee (KNEKS), Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kadin), business associations, governors, and banking parties. This consolidation was carried out to get concrete support in facilitating and helping to finance halal product certification for SMEs. BPJPH Prepares 25,000 Quotas for Small and Medium Enterprises.<sup>15</sup>

According to Khasanah and Husain, Sehati Program is an effort to accelerate halal certification given to SMEs that

<sup>15</sup> Khoeron, Moh (ed.), "Sertifikasi Halal Gratis Dibuka, BPJPH Siapkan 25000 Kuota untuk UMK," *Indonesian Ministry of Religion*, March 19, 2022. <https://www.kemenag.go.id/read/sertifikasi-halal-gratis-dibuka-bpjph-siapkan-25-000-kuota-untuk-umk-y5jkk>

meet the criteria. The free halal certification program is supported by the significant potential of the halal industry in Indonesia, a large number of MSEs and consumers who are starting to realize the importance of halal branding, the majority of Indonesia's Muslim population as a market, and the halal lifestyle in the world.<sup>16</sup>

The government continues to accelerate the Sehati Program acceleration to carry out the mandate of Government Regulation Number 39 of 2021 regarding halal certification of all products circulating in Indonesian territory until 2024.



Number of Sehati Program Quotas<sup>17</sup>

Through a *self-declare scheme*, the Sehati Program in 2022 was extended to November 25, 2022. BPJPH targets

<sup>16</sup> Nur Kasanah & Muhammad Husain As Sajjad, "Potensi, Regulasi, dan Problematika Sertifikasi Halal Gratis," *Potensi, Regulasi, dan Problematika Sertifikasi Halal Gratis*, *Journal of Economics, Law, and Humanities* 1, No. 2 (2022): 28-41. DOI: 10.21154/jelhum.v1i2.1196.

<sup>17</sup> Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal (2022), <https://sehati.halal.go.id>. Accessed October 20, 2022.



324,834 halal certificates in the second stage, which started on August 24, 2022. This is to accelerate the 10 million halal-certified products initiated by the government.

Since the second phase of the Sehati Program began until the time this research was written (October 2022), there were 265,182 quotas for halal certification applications remaining out of a total of 349,834 quotas. Thus, 84,652 entrepreneurs have registered in this program; of these, 24,345 already have halal certificates.

Based on this data, during the last three months, an additional 24,345 products have been halal certified. This number continues to grow as more and more entrepreneurs register their products through the Sehati Program in this second phase. The Head of BPJPH, Aqil Irham said that the Sehati Program is a fast step for Indonesia to certify all its products as halal. Before the Sehati Program was intensified, on average, only 100 thousand products were halal-certified yearly. After this program was released, there were 250 thousand products that have been halal certified or increased 2.5 times in the last three years.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Antara News, "BPJPH: Program Sehati Jadi Strategi Tingkatkan Jumlah Produk Halal," *Antara News*, August 30, 2022, <https://www.antaranews.com/berita/3088173/bpjph-program-sehati-jadi-strategi-tingkatkan-jumlah-produk-halal>.

This increase in the number of halal certifications in Indonesia certainly positively impacts entrepreneurs as halal producers and the community as halal consumers. The *self-declared scheme* in halal management for submitting Sehati products also adds insight to Indonesian halal product entrepreneurs. By declaring their products halal, they are more selective in choosing raw materials for making them. Through this system, entrepreneurs pay more attention to materials, production equipment, manufacturing processes, packaging, and marketing of their products. Thus, they are required to produce quality and halal products following Islamic law to benefit society.

The Muslim middle class in Indonesia today seems to be becoming more religious as their economic and educational status improves. In a qualitative survey of many middle-class Muslim consumers, Rimayanti maps middle-class Muslim consumers into four types.

1. Apathists are people with low income, adherence to Islamic values tends to be low, and their consumption pattern is based on product prices.
2. Rationalists are people who have a relatively good level of product knowledge and prioritize the benefits of a product but still override Islamic values in purchasing decisions.

3. Universalists are people who have broad knowledge and insight but still try to carry out religious teachings well. They pay attention to product performance and the Islamic value proposition offered.
4. Conformists are consumers who are very strict in Islamic standards; their Islamic practices tend to be normative and conservative (traditional). The low level of knowledge and insight causes their purchasing decisions to be heavily influenced by endorsements from religious leaders or role models.

Based on these four consumer categories, entrepreneurs as halal producers must be innovative so their products can continue to survive and progress in line with the currently developing halal lifestyle. The suggestions that entrepreneurs can do include:

1. Entrepreneurs must innovate in producing halal products at more affordable prices aimed at apathetic consumers so they can consistently consume them even with a relatively low-income level.
2. Entrepreneurs must make reasonable and attractive packaging so that rationalist-type consumers can be sure that product performance also benefits society in addition to having a halal-certified product.
3. Entrepreneurs must produce halal products with attractive packaging

and can highlight the advantages of the product compared to other products. This is to meet consumer demand rationalist type.

4. Entrepreneurs can promote their halal products by cooperating with the endorsement of a religious figure to convince the conformist type of Muslim community that their products are truthfully halal.

Therefore, through the Sehati Program, entrepreneurs obtain halal certification for their products to improve their products' performance, increase the number of consumers, and expand the marketing area. Since the release of the Sehati Program on September 8, 2021, there has been a significant increase in the number of halal food producers. It is based on the ranking of the Indonesian halal food industry in the world, which has risen to second place--based on the State of the Global Islamic Economy (SGIE) Report 2022, which was released on March 31, 2022.

Rank	Halal Food
1	Malaysia
2	Indonesia
3	Turkey
4	Russia
5	United Emirat Arab
6	Kazakhstan
7	Singapore



8	Saudi Arabia
9	South Africa
10	Australia

Global Islamic Economy Indicator Score<sup>19</sup>

As a country with a majority Muslim population, awareness of a lifestyle that conforms to Islamic law continues to be intensified. Because ideally, a Muslim is someone who has a lifestyle following these rules. Awareness of a lifestyle originating from Islamic teachings is known as the halal lifestyle. Adopting a halal lifestyle in Indonesia with a majority Muslim population is crucial. Because something halal can ensure cleanliness and health, it is appropriate for a Muslim to protect himself from various things Allah forbids.

The proliferation of halal lifestyles in Indonesia and even worldwide can be seen from the increasing number of halal industries. Not only in the food and beverage industry but also the fashion, cosmetics, tourism, medicine, and financial industries. The halal industry is not only developing in Islamic countries or countries with a majority Muslim population, but in countries with a minority

Muslim population, the halal industry is proliferating.

Opportunities for SMEs in the halal product business are still wide open, given the growth of the Muslim middle class, which continues to increase from year to year, and the trend of increasing individual piety, especially among urban Muslims. Especially for halal food products (*halal* food).

Based on the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report (SGIER, 2020/2021), Indonesia is in the top position in the world in the use of halal products. This position has remained the same in the last three years, since 2018. According to Aslikhah, Indonesia has enormous potential in the market for halal products in the world, especially in food and beverage products.<sup>20</sup>

In accelerating the Sehati Program, the government collaborates with various parties such as universities, community organizations, and other institutions. Furthermore, BPJBH designated the Halal Inspection Institute (LPH), which held Training of Trainers (ToT) for Halal Product Process (PPH) assistants and halal auditors. This acceleration is expected to help recover the national economy and increase sales value and competitiveness with local and interna-

<sup>19</sup> Indonesia Sharia Economic Festival (ISEF), "SGIE Report 2022: Makanan Halal Indonesia Peringkat Dua Dunia," *State of the Global Islamic Economy (SGIE) Report 2022*, <https://isef.co.id/id/artikel/sgie-report-2022-makanan-halal-indonesia-peringkat-dua-dunia>. Accessed October 20, 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Aslikhah, "Potensi Ekonomi Syariah dengan Tren Halal Lifestyle di Indonesia dalam Perspektif State the Global Islamic Economy Report," *Ekosiana: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah* 8, no. 1 (2021): 39, DOI: 10.47077/ekosiana.v8i1.171.

tional products. The increasing number of SMEs that already have halal certification will be able to intensify the halal lifestyle among middle-class Muslims in Indonesia.

## Conclusion

The Indonesian government has committed to certifying all food, beverage, cosmetic, medicinal, and other products as mandated by Law No. 33 of 2021. For this reason, the Sehati Program was initiated to accelerate the halal certification. More than 100,000 entrepreneurs have now attended the program to obtain halal certification for their products. Halal certification is crucial because people have realized the importance of consuming halal food along with people's halal lifestyle.

The popular halal lifestyle is closely related to middle-class Muslims, the largest population in Indonesia. The more halal producers, the easier it is for consumers to get the various halal products they want or need. Thus, this encourages the development of a halal lifestyle in Indonesia. Thus, the free halal certification program is a solution for the people of Indonesia, especially for micro and small entrepreneurs who are recovering from the slump after the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, apart from increasing the number of halal producers in Indonesia, it will also make Indonesia the country with the largest halal

industry in the world. Finally, with the development of the halal industry in Indonesia, which the Sehati Program drives, the government can mobilize the halal lifestyle of the community, especially middle-class Muslims.

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