

Exploring Halal Product Needs among Muslim Consumers in South Kalimantan: An Empirical Study of Perceptions and Preferences toward Halal Labeling

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's Halal Product Assurance Law (Law No. 33/2014), now implemented under Government Regulation No. 42/2024, mandates halal certification nationwide, yet little is known about how Muslim consumers in non-Javanese, Muslim-majority regions perceive and prioritize halal labeling in daily consumption. This qualitative descriptive field study used semi-structured interviews with 130 purposively sampled Muslim informants across all 13 regencies/cities of South Kalimantan (97.06% Muslim, Banjar-majority), combined with observation and documentation (triangulation) and analyzed via the Miles and Huberman model; response-category frequencies are reported descriptively, not inferentially. Most informants treated halal labeling as decisive in consumption decisions (87%), extending beyond packaged goods into informal food stalls, canteens, and street vendors (63%), even in non-Muslim-majority localities. A smaller, consistent minority (13-25%) instead relied on personal trust in known Muslim sellers, indicating formal certification and relational trust operate as complements rather than substitutes. In this Muslim-majority setting, halal labeling functions less as a minority-market device for accessing halal meat and more as a locally embedded instrument of trust, safety, and religious identity that consumers expect applied inclusively across formal and informal sectors, with implications for BPJPH's certification-prioritization strategy and halal literacy programming..

ABSTRAK

UU Jaminan Produk Halal (UU No. 33/2014), yang kini dijalankan melalui PP No. 42/2024, mewajibkan sertifikasi halal secara nasional, namun masih sedikit diketahui bagaimana konsumen Muslim di wilayah mayoritas Muslim non-Jawa memaknai dan memprioritaskan label halal dalam konsumsi sehari-hari. Penelitian lapangan kualitatif deskriptif ini menggunakan wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap 130 informan Muslim yang dipilih secara purposive di seluruh 13 kabupaten/kota Kalimantan Selatan (97,06% Muslim, mayoritas suku Banjar), dilengkapi observasi dan dokumentasi (triangulasi), dianalisis dengan model Miles dan Huberman; frekuensi kategori tanggapan dilaporkan secara deskriptif, bukan inferensial. Mayoritas informan menilai label halal sebagai pertimbangan penentu dalam keputusan konsumsi (87%), yang jangkauannya melampaui produk kemasan hingga warung, kantin, dan pedagang kaki lima (63%), bahkan di wilayah non-mayoritas Muslim. Sebagian kecil namun konsisten (13-25%) lebih mengandalkan kepercayaan personal terhadap penjual Muslim yang dikenal, menunjukkan bahwa sertifikasi formal dan kepercayaan relasional saling melengkapi, bukan saling menggantikan. Dalam konteks mayoritas Muslim ini, label halal berfungsi

bukan sekadar instrumen pasar minoritas untuk mengakses daging halal, melainkan instrumen kepercayaan, keamanan, dan identitas religius yang mengakar lokal dan diharapkan diterapkan secara inklusif di sektor formal maupun informal, dengan implikasi bagi strategi prioritas sertifikasi BPJPH dan program literasi halal.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consuming halal (permissible) food and using halal-certified products is regarded by Muslims as both a religious obligation and an expression of piety. Beyond its devotional dimension, halal certification has increasingly become a commercial and regulatory instrument: it signals product quality, safety, and cleanliness to consumers, and it structures participation in a global halal trade estimated to involve close to 150 countries. Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, formalized state involvement in halal assurance relatively late compared with neighboring Malaysia, where halal affairs have been under state administration since the 1970s, and Singapore, where the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) has long administered halal certification.

The regulatory history of halal labeling in Indonesia illustrates this gradual shift from voluntary, producer-led disclosure toward mandatory state assurance. In 1976, a Ministry of Health decree required products containing pork to display a red pig symbol with the words "mengandung babi" (contains pork). From 1986, producers could voluntarily affix a halal label after self-reporting product composition, with moral rather than legal responsibility for accuracy. By 1989, halal labeling required prior verification by an authorized body. The decisive shift came with Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance (Undang-Undang Jaminan Produk Halal, UU JPH), which took effect on 17 October 2019 and made halal certification mandatory for all products entering, circulating, and traded within Indonesia, including in South Kalimantan. Hudaefi and Jaswir (2019) characterize this shift as part of a broader move toward formal "halal governance" in Indonesia, in which the state, rather than producers or consumers alone, becomes the guarantor of religious compliance, a transition whose consumer-facing consequences remain comparatively underexamined outside Java. Implementation for micro and small enterprises was further eased through a self-declaration mechanism, most recently governed by Government Regulation No. 42 of 2024 concerning the Administration of Halal Product Assurance, which superseded Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021 and extended the first-phase mandatory certification deadline to 17 October 2026. Under self-declaration, business actors submit halal claims through the BPJPH's digital SIHALAL system, subject to verification by a halal product process assistant (P3H) and approval from a fatwa committee, before BPJPH issues the halal certificate.

South Kalimantan is a particularly instructive setting in which to examine consumer response to this regulatory shift. The province's population is approximately 97% Muslim, overwhelmingly of Banjar ethnicity, a group whose Islamic identity dates to the formal adoption of Islam by the Banjar Sultanate in the sixteenth century under Sultan Suriansyah. Unlike the historical origins of halal markets in Muslim-minority settings, such as Western Europe, where demand emerged primarily from diaspora communities seeking access to halal meat, South Kalimantan represents a Muslim-majority context in which trust in a product's halal status has historically rested on informal, relational assurances, most notably confidence in known Muslim sellers, rather than on formal certification. It is not obvious, a priori, that a population accustomed to such relational trust would demand formal labeling as extensively as populations in minority settings; understanding whether, and how, this is changing under the new mandatory regime is the central empirical problem this study addresses.

Despite the scale of this regulatory transformation, empirical research specifically mapping which product and service categories South Kalimantan's Muslim consumers consider most in need of halal certification remains scarce. Existing Indonesian and international literature has concentrated heavily on purchase-intention modeling and producer or SME compliance, typically in Java or in Muslim-minority countries. Comparatively little work has asked consumers directly, across a broad range of everyday consumption settings, formal and informal food-service, packaged goods, and beverages, which categories they believe most urgently require halal labeling, and

why. This study responds to that gap by exploring how Muslim consumers in South Kalimantan perceive the importance of halal labeling and by mapping their preferences across product and service categories following the enactment of the UU JPH.

This study aims to: (1) describe Muslim consumers' perceptions in South Kalimantan of the importance of halal labeling across food, beverage, and food-service categories; (2) map consumer preferences regarding which categories of business actors are considered most in need of halal certification; and (3) interpret these perceptions and preferences in relation to Islamic consumer behavior theory and the local socio-religious context of the Banjar Muslim community.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior research on halal labeling and consumption can be broadly organized into three overlapping streams.

The first stream concerns halal literacy, awareness, and consumer perception. Studies in this cluster generally find that Muslim consumers report high awareness of halal labels as a symbol, while their understanding of the underlying certification process and fiqh (jurisprudential) requirements varies considerably; label recognition frequently substitutes for deeper knowledge of production processes (cf. Fischer, 2011, on the disjuncture between halal symbolism and production transparency). A recent bibliometric mapping of the halal industry literature (Zafar, Abu-Hussin, & Ali, 2025) confirms that consumer-side perception research of this kind continues to expand rapidly, even as most published studies remain concentrated on purchase-intention modeling rather than on structural questions of where certification obligations should apply.

The second stream, the largest, examines purchase intention and consumer behavior toward halal-labeled products across diverse national settings. Vanany, Soon, Maryani, and Wibawa (2020) identified attitude, subjective norms, and religiosity as significant predictors of halal food consumption intention in Indonesia. Elseidi (2018), applying the Theory of Planned Behaviour to Arab Muslim consumers in Scotland, found that subjective norms were the strongest predictor of intention to purchase halal-labeled products in a Muslim-minority, mainstream-retail context. Iranmanesh, Mirzaei, Parvin Hosseini, and Zailani (2019) extended the Theory of Planned Behaviour to explain Muslim consumers' willingness to pay a premium for certified halal food. In an earlier Indonesian study specifically focused on food-label perception, Sukesti and Budiman (2014) found that both halal labeling and personal religiosity significantly influenced purchase decisions for food products, an early empirical anchor for the link between label visibility and religiosity-driven purchasing that the present study revisits in a different regional and methodological context. Alserhan (2010) proposed a foundational framework for Islamic branding, arguing that halal-compliant brands function as expressions of religious virtue ("brands as good deeds") rather than purely commercial signals, a framework this study draws on to interpret why South Kalimantan informants describe halal labeling in moral as well as instrumental terms.

The third stream addresses needs-mapping and prioritization: identifying which product categories consumers regard as most requiring halal certification, typically using descriptive quantitative or ranking-based instruments (e.g., Likert-scale surveys, Analytical Hierarchy Process, Importance-Performance Analysis). This approach has been applied mainly in Java and in urban centers; its application to non-Javanese, Muslim-majority provinces such as South Kalimantan remains limited, leaving open questions about how local ethnic and religious culture (in this case, Banjar Islamic identity) shapes prioritization patterns.

Positioned against this literature, the present study's contribution is deliberately modest and specific rather than categorical: it does not claim to introduce a wholly new theoretical construct, but it provides, to the authors' knowledge, one of the first empirically grounded, province-wide qualitative mappings of consumer-perceived halal-labeling needs in a non-Javanese, near-homogeneously Muslim provincial population, explicitly extending the analytical lens from purchase intention (the dominant frame in prior work) toward the question of where, structurally, consumers believe certification obligations should apply, including within the informal food economy. This reframing responds directly to a gap noted in the third literature stream and offers a locally grounded complement to the largely Java-centric and cross-national purchase-intention literature reviewed above.

It is important to acknowledge that Kalimantan is not, in fact, an entirely unstudied setting for halal-related research. Prabowo, Abd Rahman, Ab Rahman, and Samah (2015) examined the supply side of halal certification in neighboring East Kalimantan, using a nominal group technique with certifying bodies, industry players, consumers, and government representatives to identify factors hindering restaurants and catering businesses from obtaining halal certification. That study, however, centers on producer- and institution-side barriers to certification uptake, not on how ordinary Muslim consumers perceive and prioritize the necessity of labeling across everyday consumption settings. The present study is therefore best understood not as filling a wholly empty regional gap, but as complementing this earlier supply-side Kalimantan literature with a demand-side, consumer-perception account situated in the neighboring, culturally distinct South Kalimantan/Banjar context, an important distinction for an accurate originality claim.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Halal Labeling in Indonesian Regulation

A halal label is the officially recognized mark of a product's halal status, affixed to packaging after a business actor obtains halal certification, either through regular examination by a Halal Inspection Agency (LPH) and fatwa approval from the Fatwa Commission, or through the self-declaration pathway verified by a halal process assistant and a fatwa committee, culminating in certificate issuance by BPJPH. Indonesia's current national halal label design, combining a gunung/dome silhouette with a surjan/lurik textile motif to reflect Indonesian cultural values, was established under BPJPH Head Decision No. 40 of 2022, implementing Article 37 of Law No. 33 of 2014, and has applied nationally since 1 March 2022; products packaged under the earlier MUI label may remain in circulation until existing stock is exhausted, which explains the continued presence of both label designs in the market. Businesses holding halal certification are legally required to display the label prominently and durably on packaging.



Figure 1. Current National Halal Label (BPJPH, effective since 1 March 2022)



Figure 2. Former Halal Label (MUI), still found on legacy packaging stock

3.2 Perception and Preference

Perception is the cognitive process by which individuals select, organize, and interpret sensory information to construct meaning, commonly described as proceeding through stimulation, organization, interpretation-evaluation, memory, and recall. Perception of halal labeling is shaped by internal factors (prior experience, motivation, values, expectations) and external factors (product presentation, social and cultural context, and the clarity, relevance, and accuracy of the information conveyed by the label itself). Preference, following Varian's (2014) treatment of consumer choice in microeconomic theory, describes the rank-ordering individuals impose on available goods and services under an assumption of rational consistency (transitivity). Kotler and Keller (2016) complicate a purely rational account, arguing that preference is also shaped by perception, cultural background, and emotional drivers, such that consumers select products not solely for function but for the values, status, or reassurance a product represents. For Muslim consumers, halal-related preference is additionally structured by religiosity, halal knowledge, trust in certifying institutions, brand image, and product accessibility.

3.3 Religion, Trust, and Consumption

Religion shapes consumption orientation and social behavior by defining categories of the permissible and the impermissible; for practicing Muslims, consuming halal food constitutes obedience to a religious command intended to preserve the integrity of worship. El-Bassiouny's (2020) review of religion-and-consumption scholarship similarly argues that religious identity operates as a durable, often understudied driver of consumption choice that can outweigh purely economic considerations, a pattern consistent with this study's finding that informants rarely cite price as their dominant purchasing criterion. Fischer's (2011) ethnographic account of halal consumption among Muslim-minority communities in Europe shows how halal markets there emerged substantially to meet demand for halal meat among diasporic populations who could not rely on ambient social trust in the surrounding food supply. Alserhan's (2010) Islamic-branding framework and the broader literature on Islamic consumer behavior instead emphasize halal compliance as an act of religious virtue embedded in everyday market participation, a framing more consistent with a Muslim-majority setting like South Kalimantan, where the present study argues halal labeling functions less as a substitute for absent trust and more as a formalization of trust that has traditionally been vested in known Muslim sellers. This study draws on *maqasid al-shariah* as elaborated by Dusuki and Bouheraoua (2021), particularly the objectives of protecting religion (*hifz al-din*) and protecting life or self (*hifz al-nafs*), and on trust-based assurance theory in consumption, to interpret why South Kalimantan's Muslim consumers regard halal labeling as important even in a social environment where informal trust in Muslim sellers has historically sufficed.

3.4 South Kalimantan's Socio-Religious Context

South Kalimantan is home to the Banjar ethnic group, whose adoption of Islam as the Banjar Sultanate's official religion in the sixteenth century, under Sultan Suriansyah, catalyzed a broader transformation of governmental

structure and social-cultural life along Islamic lines. Approximately 97% of the province's population identifies as Muslim. Banjar society is characterized by strong sensitivity to religiously prohibited substances, particularly pork, which functions as both a religious and cultural taboo. This background provides the socio-religious frame within which informants' perceptions of halal-labeling necessity should be interpreted.

4. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive field-research design, appropriate for generating an in-depth, first-hand account of a contemporary social phenomenon, here, consumer perception and preference regarding halal labeling, as it unfolds among individuals, communities, and institutions in a defined geographic setting. Qualitative inquiry was selected because the phenomenon under study (meaning-making around religious consumption) required rich contextual interpretation that a purely instrument-based quantitative approach would not adequately capture (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The study was conducted across South Kalimantan Province's 13 regencies/cities. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 130 informants, 10 per regency/city, selected through purposive (non-probability) sampling based on informants' status as Muslim consumers with routine experience purchasing food, beverage, and food-service products within their locality. Secondary data were drawn from relevant literature, government documents, and regulatory texts. Data collection combined observation, interviews, and documentation in a triangulated design (Figure 3), and analysis followed the Miles and Huberman (1994) interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, continued iteratively until thematic saturation was reached.

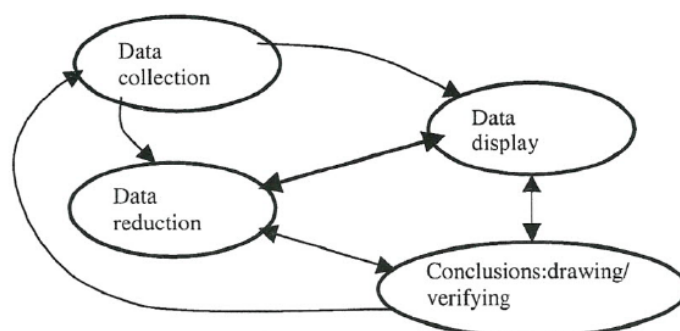


Figure 3. Data Triangulation Scheme (adapted from Sugiyono, 2013)

Methodological note. Consistent with a qualitative content-analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), interview responses were coded into recurring categories, and the frequency of informants falling into each category is reported as a descriptive proportion (e.g., "63% of informants indicated..."). These figures characterize the distribution of qualitative response categories within this purposive, non-probability sample; they are not derived from a probability sample and are not subjected to inferential statistical testing, and they should not be generalized as population-representative statistics for South Kalimantan as a whole. They are reported because they provide readers with a transparent, quantifiable sense of how widely shared each qualitative theme was among the 130 informants interviewed, a common and legitimate practice in qualitative descriptive and content-analytic research, provided the epistemic status of the numbers is made explicit, as it is here.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Informant Profile

A total of 130 Muslim informants were interviewed, 10 from each of the 13 regencies/cities of South Kalimantan Province (Table 1). Table 2 presents informants' educational attainment, and Table 3 presents their age distribution.

Table 1. Distribution of Informants by Regency/City

No.	Regency/City	Number of Informants
1	Banjarmasin City	10
2	Banjar Regency	10
3	Barito Kuala Regency	10
4	Tapin Regency	10
5	Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency	10
6	Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency	10
7	Tanah Laut Regency	10
8	Kotabaru Regency	10
9	Tabalong Regency	10
10	Tanah Bumbu Regency	10
11	Balangan Regency	10
12	Hulu Sungai Utara Regency	10
13	Banjarbaru City	10
	Total	130

Table 2. Informant Educational Attainment

No.	Education Level	Percentage
1	Elementary school (SD)	7%
2	Junior secondary (SMP)	15%
3	Senior secondary (SMA)	32%
4	Bachelor's degree (S1)	40%
5	Master's degree (S2)	5%
6	Doctoral degree (S3)	1%

Table 3. Informant Age Distribution

No.	Age Range	Percentage
1	18-30 years	51%
2	31-50 years	35%
3	>50 years	14%

Note: the sample skews toward younger, more educated informants (51% aged 18-30; 45% holding at least a bachelor's degree), a composition consistent with purposive sampling in accessible urban and semi-urban interview locations, and one that should be kept in mind when interpreting the reported perceptions, as it may not proportionally reflect South Kalimantan's older or less formally educated Muslim population.

5.2 Perceived Importance of Halal Labeling in General Consumption

When asked directly whether halal labeling is an important consideration in choosing and consuming a product, 87% of informants indicated that it is a primary consideration, while 13% indicated that they do not treat it as a priority (Table 4). This finding suggests a generally high level of halal-label awareness among Banjar Muslim consumers, consistent with the community's strong socio-religious emphasis on maintaining Islamic consumption values.

5.3 Halal Labeling in Food Stalls, Canteens, and Restaurants

A large majority of informants (82%) reported that they always pay attention to halal labeling when purchasing food at food stalls (warung), canteens, and restaurants; 11% reported doing so only occasionally; and 6% reported not paying attention to it at all. This indicates that consumer attentiveness to halal status extends beyond packaged, industrially produced goods into the informal culinary sector.

The study further examined whether this attentiveness persists when informants purchase food at local eateries situated in localities where the surrounding population is predominantly non-Muslim. Sixty-three percent of informants stated that halal labeling remains their primary basis for purchase decisions in such settings; 20% reported occasional attentiveness, particularly for unfamiliar menu items or ingredients; and 17% reported not attending to halal labeling in this context, most often citing trust in the seller's reputation, familiarity with the ingredients used, or the absence of a more assured alternative (Table 5).

Table 5. Attentiveness to Halal Labeling at Local Eateries in Non-Muslim-Majority Localities

Response Category	Percentage
Halal labeling is the primary basis for purchase decisions	63%
Occasionally attentive to halal labeling	20%
Not attentive to halal labeling at all	17%

These results indicate that in social contexts where the ambient population is predominantly non-Muslim, halal labeling functions for the majority of informants as a guiding principle for consumption, and as a strategic marker of transparency, trust, and consumer-rights fulfillment for Muslim patrons, one that may also enhance the competitiveness of local food businesses that adopt it.

5.4 Halal Labeling for Beverage Products

Regarding beverages specifically, 63% of informants held that all beverage types, whether packaged, freshly mixed, or traditionally sold, should carry halal labeling, reflecting heightened caution toward liquid products whose

composition is less directly observable. Twenty percent considered halal labeling necessary only for packaged beverages, reasoning that industrially produced beverages are harder for consumers to trace directly; 17% considered labeling unnecessary for most beverages, citing either common knowledge of a beverage's halal status or trust in the producer (Table 6)

Table 6. Perceived Necessity of Halal Labeling for Beverage Products

Response Category	Percentage
All beverage types should carry halal labeling	63%
Labeling necessary only for packaged beverages	20%
Labeling not necessary for most beverages	17%

5.5 Halal Labeling for Food Stalls, Restaurants, and Eateries in General

When asked whether all food stalls, restaurants, and eateries in South Kalimantan should be required to display halal labeling, 74% of informants affirmed this view, 25% held that not all establishments need to, and 1% stated that halal labeling is unnecessary in food establishments altogether (Table 7). This distribution indicates a strong expectation among the majority of informants for a comprehensive, equitably applied halal assurance system across the culinary sector, not limited to large-scale or nationally franchised businesses.

Table 7. Perceived Necessity of Halal Labeling at Food Stalls, Restaurants, and Eateries

Response Category	Percentage
All food establishments should display halal labeling	74%
Not all establishments need halal labeling	25%
Halal labeling is unnecessary altogether	1%

5.6 Preferences by Type of Business Actor

Informants were also asked which categories of business actors they regarded as most in need of halal certification. Sixty-three percent identified food stalls, canteens, street vendors, and restaurants, reasoning that these actors typically draw on varied ingredient sources and preparation methods that are difficult for consumers to directly monitor, making certification comparatively more important. Twenty percent instead prioritized packaged food and beverage products, citing greater uncertainty about undisclosed additives in industrially manufactured goods. Seventeen percent considered certification unnecessary across all business types, arguing that consumers can adequately judge halal status through direct observation or a seller's reputation, particularly for micro and traditional traders (Table 8).

Table 8. Preferred Priority Category for Halal Certification, by Business Type

Response Category	Percentage
Food stalls/canteens/street vendors/restaurants	63%
Packaged food and beverage products	20%
Certification not necessary for any business type	17%

Table 8. Preferred Priority Category for Halal Certification, by Business Type Taken together, these results indicate that consumer demand for halal assurance in South Kalimantan is not confined to large-scale industry or packaged

goods; a majority of informants extend this expectation to the ready-to-eat, informal food economy, precisely the segment of the market least covered by formal certification infrastructure at the time of data collection.

5.7 Factors in Product Purchase Decisions

Across interviews, four factors recurred most frequently as considerations in product purchase decisions: price, product quality, halal status, and taste. Notably, price was rarely cited as the dominant factor; halal status and quality were more frequently foregrounded, suggesting a value orientation among these informants that favors religious compliance and perceived quality over cost minimization. Consistent with the findings above, 87% of informants again affirmed that halal labeling is a primary consideration in product selection, while 13% did not treat it as decisive, reinforcing the pattern observed in Section 5.2.

5.8 Discussion

The overall pattern of findings indicates a high level of halal-label awareness among Muslim consumers in South Kalimantan, with halal status functioning, for most informants, as a non-negotiable consideration alongside, and often ahead of, price and quality. This is consistent with the broader Islamic consumer-behavior literature identifying halal compliance as a core determinant of Muslim consumption decisions (Alserhan, 2010), and can be read through the *maqasid al-shariah* lens as an expression of *hifz al-din* (protection of religion) and *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life/self): informants frequently associated halal labeling not only with religious obedience but with physical safety, hygiene, and freedom from undisclosed, potentially harmful ingredients.

A theoretically important pattern emerges from the comparison between Sections 5.2-5.6: demand for halal assurance is strongest, and most consistently above 60%, for exactly those market segments where consumers cannot directly observe production processes, packaged goods with undisclosed additives, beverages with compound formulations, and food-service outlets whose ingredient sourcing is opaque, and comparatively more mixed for products or sellers where informants report an alternative basis for trust (established sellers, familiar recipes, personal reputation). This is consistent with a trust-based assurance interpretation: halal labeling appears to function, for these informants, as a substitute for direct observability rather than as an unconditional requirement independent of context. This nuances Fischer's (2011) account of halal markets emerging to meet demand unmet by ambient social trust; in a Muslim-majority setting such as South Kalimantan, formal labeling and informal relational trust do not operate as alternatives so much as complements, with formal certification stepping in specifically where relational trust is structurally unavailable, most visibly in industrially processed goods and in food-service settings located outside a consumer's usual, trusted network.

The finding that a majority of informants extend their expectation of halal certification into the informal food-service sector (Section 5.3 and 5.6) carries direct implications for Indonesia's phased implementation of the UU JPH. Government Regulation No. 42 of 2024 extends the first-phase mandatory certification deadline to 17 October 2026 and continues to rely substantially on the self-declaration mechanism to bring micro and small enterprises into the certification regime. The present findings suggest that consumer demand for certification in precisely this segment, informal warung, canteens, and street vendors, already runs ahead of current certification coverage, indicating both an opportunity (latent consumer support that could ease MSE compliance costs through demand-side incentives) and a governance gap (the segment where demand is highest is also the segment historically hardest to monitor and formalize).

At the same time, the persistent minority (13-25%, depending on context) who reported relying on personal trust in known Muslim sellers rather than formal labeling should not be read simply as a residual literacy gap to be closed through more intensive labeling enforcement. Read alongside the literature on halal literacy (Section 2), this pattern is more plausibly interpreted as evidence that formal certification and informal, relationally grounded trust coexist as parallel assurance mechanisms in a Muslim-majority society, and that halal literacy programming should explicitly build on, rather than attempt to displace, this existing relational trust infrastructure, for instance by helping consumers understand what formal certification adds on top of seller reputation (e.g., verification of slaughtering method and ingredient traceability), rather than treating informal trust as a deficient substitute for formal labeling.

These findings should be interpreted in light of the study's methodological scope. The reported percentages summarize response patterns within a purposive sample of 130 informants and are not inferential population estimates; the sample also skews toward younger, more formally educated respondents (Section 5.1), which may understate the views of older or less formally educated Banjar Muslims, a group whose relationship to formal certification versus customary trust may differ. Future research combining this qualitative mapping with a probability-based quantitative survey, or with AHP/IPA-based prioritization instruments as used in prior Java-based studies, would allow the patterns identified here to be tested for generalizability across South Kalimantan's full population.

6. CONCLUSION

This study finds that halal labeling occupies a significant place in the consumption behavior of Muslim consumers in South Kalimantan, extending well beyond packaged industrial goods into the informal food-service economy of warung, canteens, and street vendors. For most informants, halal status functions not merely as a regulatory requirement but as a symbol of trust, safety, and religious identity, one that operates alongside, and in some contexts substitutes for, the relational trust historically placed in known Muslim sellers. Consumer expectations for certification coverage in this Muslim-majority province appear, on the evidence presented here, to already exceed the pace of current formal certification rollout in the informal sector.

6.1 Implications for Policy and Practice

For BPJPH and related stakeholders, these findings suggest that certification-prioritization and outreach strategies for the self-declaration pathway under Government Regulation No. 42 of 2024 could reasonably prioritize informal food-service actors (warung, canteens, street vendors), given the strength and consistency of consumer demand documented here, particularly in cross-cultural localities where Muslim consumers rely on halal labeling as a substitute for the relational trust otherwise available in Muslim-majority neighborhoods. Halal-literacy programming for MSE operators and consumers alike should explicitly address the technical content of certification (e.g., slaughtering methods, ingredient traceability) rather than assuming that label recognition alone constitutes adequate consumer protection.

6.2 Implications for Research

This study contributes a province-level, non-Javanese empirical mapping of consumer-perceived halal-labeling needs that can serve as a comparative reference point for future research in other Muslim-majority Indonesian provinces outside Java, and as a qualitative complement to the predominantly purchase-intention-focused international literature. Future studies could productively pair this qualitative mapping with probability-sampled quantitative instruments (e.g., Likert-based ranking, AHP, or IPA) to test the generalizability of the priority patterns identified here, and could extend the trust-based assurance interpretation proposed in Section 6 through comparative fieldwork in other Muslim-majority, non-Java provinces.

6.3 Implications for Society

For the Banjar Muslim community and South Kalimantan society more broadly, these findings document a strong, locally grounded social expectation that halal assurance be applied inclusively, across formal and informal economic sectors alike, rather than being treated as a concern relevant only to large-scale or nationally branded businesses. This has potential implications for public trust in the halal assurance system, for the competitiveness of small and micro food businesses that pursue certification, and for the broader integration of religious values into everyday economic life in a Muslim-majority regional setting.

6.4 Limitations

This study is limited by its purposive, non-probability sampling design, its demographic skew toward younger and more formally educated informants, and its reliance on descriptive frequency counts of qualitative response categories rather than inferential statistics. The findings characterize the range and relative weight of views

expressed by the 130 informants interviewed and should not be read as population-representative estimates for South Kalimantan as a whole.

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