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COASTAL HEROINE: HALAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFORMATION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE EAST COAST OF SUMATRA.

Novi Mubyarto [1], Nurfitri Martaliah [2], Fauzan Ramli [3], Maratun Saadah [4], Yuliana Safitri [5]

[1,2,3] UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi
[4,5]Universitas Jambi

Email: novimubyarto@uinjambi.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Study aims to analyze the transformation of halal product assurance knowledge from training and implementation of halal assurance systems in the coastal areas of Sumatra. Processed seafood products in Tungkal Ilir Subdistrict, Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency have not been able to access a wide market share due to the lack of halal assurance knowledge which has an impact on the absence of Halal Certificates. By applying qualitative methods, researchers conducted participatory observations and focused discussions with female entrepreneurs. The results of this study indicate that the transformation of knowledge about halal product assurance changes at least five aspects in the production of processed seafood in this area. There is an increase in knowledge about the urgency of halal certification, halal sharia provisions and knowledge about the halal certification process. Halal knowledge which was originally limited to raw materials has increased to an understanding of the criteria for auxiliary materials, production processes, product naming to the monitoring and evaluation process of halal assurance implementation. In addition, there is also a change in behavior that was originally unable to process halal certification, to being able to access the halal page and fill in SJPH files online.

Keywords*: Halal certification; Halal product assurance system; Coastal women.*

INTRODUCTION

Tungkal Ilir District is located right on the East Coast of Sumatra, making it rich in marine products. People can easily get marine products in the form of fish and shrimp. Fishermen sell their catch at local markets, sometimes to middlemen who then take it to various regions in Jambi Province. When supplies are abundant and the selling price of seafood falls, women innovate to process it into products that have more selling value and are durable.

Women, especially housewives (IRT) in Tungkal Ilir have long processed seafood into various simple processed products. They produce processed shrimp and fish into various products such as

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crackers, kletek, tekwan, pempek and terasi. These products eventually became the flagship of Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency.

Tanjung Jabung Barat itself has attracted attention since it was declared a culture-based tourism development area after the visit of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy Sandiaga Uno at the 2024 sahur parade festival. This is because Tanjabbar is a meeting place for various tribes and cultures, considering its strategic location on the coast.

The district is currently making various efforts to achieve its ideals of becoming 'TANJUNG JABUNG BARAT BERKAH' (Quality, Advanced Economy, Religious, Competitive, Safe and Harmonious)'. Various programs, activities, slogans and campaigns are carried out starting from changing the appearance of the city, creating new tourist locations, improving public facilities to improving the quality and quantity of MSMEs through MSME clinics and MSME Promotion Centers which were officially opened on February 13, 2024. Based on data from the Cooperatives, MSMEs, Industry and Trade Office of Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency, overall Tanjung Jabung Barat has 215 MSMEs which have so far supported the economic development ecosystem of Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency.

Currently, the seafood processing business has not been a priority in the community's economy and is run by women as an additional business. Based on the identification, it was found that there were 25 women running the cracker, kletek, tekwan, pempek and terasi processing business in West Tanjung Jabung. The product has a good taste, a cheaper selling price than other competitors. In terms of business development, the superior product business has not been maximized, even though the culinary potential can basically support tourism in an area[1].

Through discussions with business actors, it is known that some women business actors have not realized the need for legal Halal Certificates as one of the main requirements in marketing, especially in modern markets. Business actors have not taken care of halal certificates, not only because they are unaware of the certification mechanism, they also do not understand the concept of halal in the framework of halal product assurance. This is a fundamental problem that has not been widely studied.

Previous research has studied a lot about halal knowledge from the consumer perspective, especially regarding purchasing decisions[2]. Including from the type of consumers such as teenagers

[1] R P Ariani and others, (2022). "Strategi Pengembangan Wisata Kuliner Desa Bukti Berbasis Potensi Lokal," *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Dan Kejuruan*, 19.1.

[2] Susi Desmaryani and others. (2024). "Investigating the Role of Brand Image and Halal Labels on Purchase Decisions: An Empirical Study of Rice Processing Firms," *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 12.1 <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.uscm.2023.9.004>.

[3], generation Z [4] and Muslim students [5]. However, research on halal knowledge from the perspective of business actors, especially as an obstacle to halal certificate ownership, has not been conducted.

In addition, the limited knowledge of female business actors is a separate phenomenon. The coastal women's business is a substitution business, by the women themselves and the surrounding community in general. This assumption is a natural blockade for business development. Studies on women's empowerment in business have been widely conducted, based on a search on the OpenAlex database there are 3031 research documents and community service that have discussed women's empowerment in business. Furthermore, through VOSViewer analysis it is known that there are 337 different keywords that accommodate the discussion.

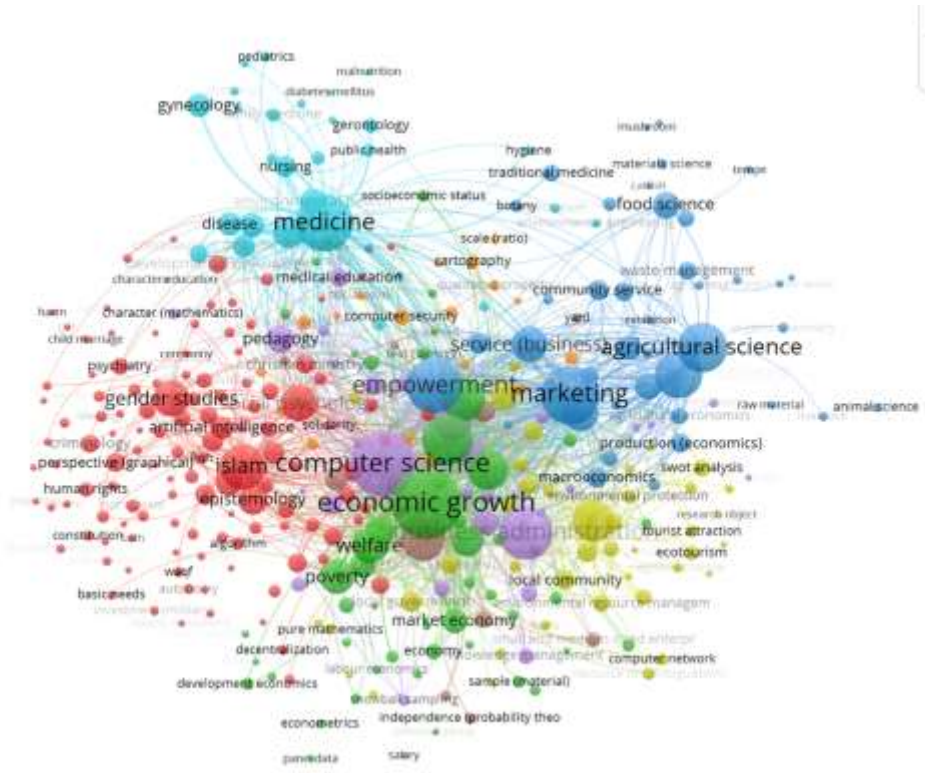


Figure 1. Vosviewer Analysis of Women's Empowerment in Business

[3] Novia Maulina; Hurriyatul Zulfa; Mohammad Alfin Sammah; Cindy Natasya. (2023). "Pengaruh Edukasi Podcast Terhadap Pengetahuan Dan Sikap Remaja Muslim Tentang Skincare Halal di Kota Malang: Effect Of Podcast Education On Muslim Teenager's Knowledge And Attitudes About Halal Skincare In Malang," Medical Sains : Jurnal Ilmiah Kefarmasian, no. Vol 8 No 3: 935–44, https://ojs.ummada.ac.id/index.php/iojs/article/view/610/490.

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[5] Evi Susanti; Apriyana Apriyana; Zurlina Lubis. (2023). "Perilaku Pembelian Produk Makanan Halal Pada Mahasiswa Muslim Di Indonesia (Ditinjau Dari Religiusitas, Pengetahuan Label Halal Dan Sikap)," *Perbanas Journal of Islamic Economics and Business*, Vol 3 No 1: Perbanas Journal of Islamic Economics and Business, 2023, 1–10 <https://joieb.perbanas.id/index.php/Joieb/article/view/60/20>.

The most widely discussed discussion of women's empowerment in business is from economic growth, especially creating prosperity and overcoming poverty. This shows that empowerment is closely related to economic motives. In addition, the field of empowerment is seen to be spread from tourism, natural resources, traditional medicines, and business marketing efforts. This study shows that the discussion of women's empowerment has developed and matured. However, the breadth of systemic problems in women's empowerment in business provides a space for study on their limited access to learning about halal product assurance.

The author initiated the concept of Halal Product Assurance as a form of halal knowledge that needs to be internalized and owned by business actors, especially in the culinary field. According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (UKM), access to the modern market requires various legalities, especially halal certificates [6]. Halal in Islamic discourse refers to a series of criteria in terms of substance, method of obtaining and process[7].

Furthermore, as a form of protection for Muslim consumers, the government issued the criteria for the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) which regulates materials, production processes, products, resources, and procedures in order to maintain the continuity of the halal product process. For this reason, special knowledge is needed to implement it. These business actors do not yet have halal certificates and of course do not understand the criteria for halal product assurance. Observations found that there were 25 leading shrimp and shrimp paste business actors, all of whom did not yet have halal certificates and did not yet know about the concept and criteria of SJPH and the mechanism for managing halal certificates. This study will first discuss the criteria for SJPH according to laws and regulations, the stages of internalization of halal knowledge and the form of transformation of halal knowledge of women entrepreneurs in Tungkal Ilir District.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study has two objectives; first, this study will explore the SJPH criteria according to laws and regulations. Second, after going through the stages of internalizing halal knowledge, the author will describe the form of halal knowledge transformation of female business actors in Tungkal Ilir District. To answer this, the author uses a qualitative descriptive research method by applying the

[6] Imam Arifa'illah Syaiful Huda and others. (2024). "Revealing Halal Certification Oversight Gaps for MSEs through ArcGIS Dashboard Integration," *Indonesian Journal of Halal Research*, 6.2, 1–23 <https://journal.uinsgd.ac.id/index.php/ijhar/article/view/33308> [accessed 26 January 2025].

[7] Mar Atun Saadah and Mohd. Norma Sampoerno. (2023). "Pendampingan Pengurusan Sertifikasi Halal Bagi Komunitas Pelaku Usaha Kecil Dan Menengah," *Jurnal Pembelajaran Pemberdayaan Masyarakat (JP2M)*, 4.1, 35–40 <https://doi.org/10.33474/jp2m.v4i1.19876>.

participatory observation method in internalizing knowledge of the halal product assurance system and focused discussion in exploring the transformation of halal product assurance knowledge.

The objects of this study were 25 female seafood business actors located on the East Coast in West Tanjung Jabung Regency; the location is demographically located in Tungkal Ilir District. The categories of seafood processed are crackers, kletek, tekwan, pempek and terasi made from fish and shrimp.

Internalization of halal knowledge is carried out by first identifying the level of knowledge through questions on the Google form platform. Questions are developed from the SJPH criteria that refer to laws and regulations, including from the Job Creation Law Number 6 of 2023, Government Regulation Number 42 of 2024 concerning the Field of Implementation of Halal Product Assurance and Decree of the Head of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency Number 48 of 2024 concerning the Manual of the Halal Product Assurance System for Micro and Small Business Actors with the Regular Halal Certification Mechanism.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The obligation of the Muslim community in practicing their religion, including the obligation to consume halal food according to Islamic law, requires the government to intervene through policies. Government intervention in this case is carried out in various forms and stages. The government issued a policy related to halal assurance for the first time in 2014 through Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance. This law is the basis for efforts to realize the obligation to consume halal food for the Muslim community in Indonesia.

This law states that legal certainty in halal product assurance is proven through halal certificates which in their implementation are obtained through a series of mechanisms. Over time, the halal certification mechanism has developed followed by the policies that govern it. This law also regulates halal criteria within the JPH framework which includes commitment and responsibility, products, materials, halal product processes, monitoring and evaluation. These criteria are summarized in a systematic and integrated document, compiled, implemented, and maintained to regulate the JPH criteria, known as the Halal Product Assurance System. Knowledge about JPH and SJPH is not generally obtained through information freely circulating in the community. The SJPH criteria are the core material for Human Resources (HR) training in the field of JPH such as Halal Product Process Assistants (P3H), Halal Supervisors and Halal Auditors.

Micro and home industry business actors generally do not have halal supervisors, so they need to learn SJPH themselves with various limitations.

A. Internalization Of Halal Product Assurance Criteria

Halal product assurance criteria is a comprehensive system to ensure that products consumed by Muslims are truly halal and meet established standards. By implementing a halal assurance system, producers can provide assurance to consumers and increase trust in their products. There are five halal criteria that must be met in the Halal Product Assurance. These provisions are contained in the Decree of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH) Number 57 of 2021 concerning the SJPH Criteria. These five aspects are then internalized through a series of training.

1. Commitment and Responsibility

   Commitment and responsibility are written statements from the company's top management to always focus on developing and implementing SJPH criteria and to be responsible for minimizing and eliminating anything that is not halal, and adjusting to developments in laws and regulations and/or MUI fatwas. There are three aspects in this criterion, including a halal policy in the form of a written statement, the commitment of Business Actors to use halal materials, process halal products, and produce halal products in accordance with halal certification requirements continuously and consistently.

   In this criterion, business actors are required to have a written commitment to apply halal principles in all aspects of production operations. This halal policy is recorded and documented and used as a guideline for all employees and stakeholders. The team accompanies business actors to make posters about halal commitments that must be attached to the walls of the production area.

   In addition, business actors must also form a Halal Management Team tasked with managing and supervising the implementation of SJPH. Because business actors in Tungkal are home businesses, the halal management team formed consists of the business actors themselves as the owners. Finally, in this criterion, all employees, especially in this case business owners involved in the production process, must receive training on halal.

   This training includes material on the concept of halal and haram, how the halal production process is, procedures for separating halal and haram materials, and cleanliness and sanitation according to halal standards. In this training, the team also provides material

on the need to comply with established halal policies and periodically conduct internal audits on the implementation of SJPH.

2. Ingredients

   In this section, business actors are equipped with knowledge related to the categorization of materials in production, namely raw materials, additional materials, and auxiliary materials. All raw materials used must come from materials that can be ascertained and traced as halal. All plant materials are halal and pure if they do not come into contact with impurities. Meanwhile, materials that have gone through the process of changing shape, taste or smell must have halal certification.

   For example, pepper that has changed from its original form when it was still on the tree, must have a halal certificate. Because in the manufacturing process, it is possible that there will be a critical point. Furthermore, business actors must ensure that no haram or impure materials enter the product. In the discussion session, it was discovered that business actors also did not know that eggs must be washed before being processed, they assumed that the eggs were halal. In fact, the impurities on the egg shell can be a critical point that causes non-halal.

3. Halal Product Process

   In this criterion, business actors are equipped with knowledge about the production process that meets halal standards, especially if the production kitchen also produces non-halal materials. It is necessary to separate production facilities or tools for halal and non-halal products. In this case, there are no business actors in Tungkal who produce products with haram materials, all products use materials whose legal origin is halal.

4. Product

   Product naming is important to be done according to halal criteria. Business actors in Tungkal do not yet understand the critical points in product naming such as names that contain un-Islamic elements, elements of other religions, names of spirits, pornographic elements and other taboos. In addition, products must be packaged, stored, and distributed in a way that ensures there is no contamination with haram or unclean materials. So in the presentation process, it is necessary to train how to choose packaging that ensures that the product is not contaminated. In addition, the team also directed business actors to attach a halal label to the packaging, if the product has received halal certification.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation.

Finally, business actors must continue to evaluate and improve their commitment through the implementation of SJPH which is also for the development of related policies, technology, and market needs. In addition, the monitoring criteria also need to document all activities related to the SJPH stages, in the form of halal policy documentation, raw material lists, standard operating procedures and internal and external audit results when verification and validation are carried out by halal assistants. This documentation is proof of compliance with halal standards when audited by a halal certification body.

B. Transformation Of Women Business Actors' Knowledge About Halal Product Assurance

Halal certification has many benefits for consumers, one of which is to provide peace of mind that the products consumed can be guaranteed and safe. This is certainly the main concern of business actors so that the products they produce are certified halal. For producers, halal certification has an impact on winning the market in the global market because the product has added value as a way to compete. Consumer trust will be easier to obtain if the product has halal certification, therefore a halal certificate is a must.

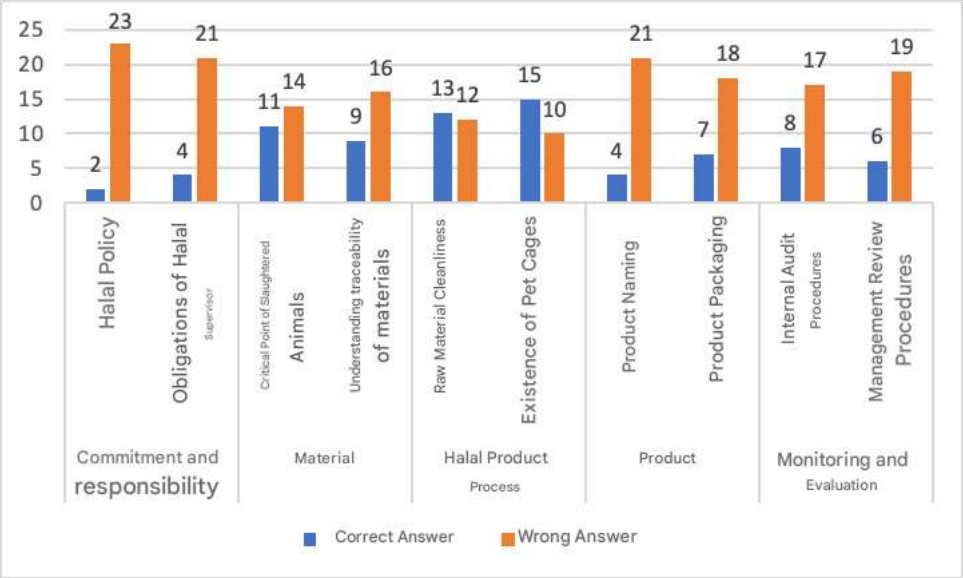
Halal certification involves several parties according to the latest BPJPH provisions, namely business actors and supervisors, BPJPH, Halal Inspection Institutions as examiners and MUI as the fatwa issuer. BPJPH implements the implementation of halal product assurance. LPH checks the adequacy of documents, schedules audit, conducts audits, holds auditor meetings, issues audit memorandums, submits minutes of audit results at the MUI Fatwa Commission meeting. MUI through the Fatwa Commission determines the halalness of products based on the audit results and issues the MUI Halal Decree.

Then, halal certification is not just a certificate paper, considering the urgency of halal itself and the validity period of halal certification which is attached for life as long as there are no changes to the JPH criteria. Business actors must understand and fulfill SJPH in order to obtain recognition of product halalness in the form of a halal certificate. Thus, the next stage of this study is to evaluate the halal knowledge of Business Actors and internalize halal knowledge within the framework of Halal Product Assurance in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

The author formulated ten basic questions related to the five JPH criteria which were then distributed via an online form to Women Business Actors who had been previously confirmed. The

ten questions each represent a JPH criterion. The following is a recapitulation of respondents' answers:

Table 1. Summary of Female Entrepreneurs' Answers before the Activity



The table above shows that only 32% of the answers from the Women Entrepreneurs were correct, the remaining 68% of their answers were wrong. The most dominant wrong answers were in the commitment and responsibility criteria, this criterion is the most basic criterion that shows the intention of the producer to maintain and implement halal policies in their business. Another criterion that also had many wrong answers was the Product criterion, business actors did not understand how product naming could violate JPH rules such as product naming that contained non-halal product names and names that were not in accordance with other Islamic rules. The author gives an example of the name of coffee "Rhum Coffee" containing the word "Rhum". This word refers to the type or name of fermented sugar alcoholic beverages whose basic law is non-halal. So the use of the name "Rhum" in halal food variants is not permitted according to MUI fatwa Number 4 of 2003 concerning Halal Fatwa Standardization.

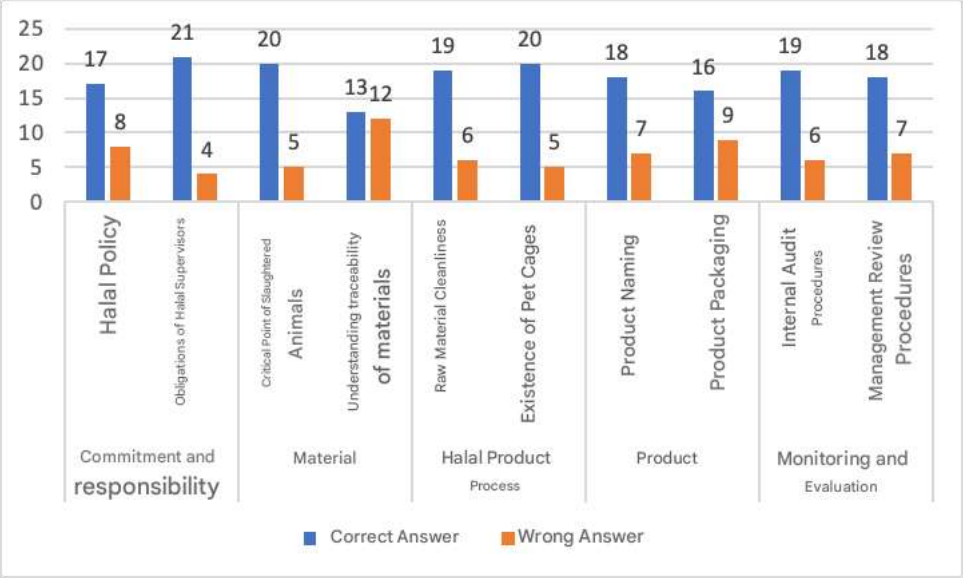
Furthermore, we provide JPH training and are followed by a workshop on filling out SJPH. This knowledge is directly implemented in the preparation of SJPH which is useful for business actors to increase consumer confidence, especially Muslim consumers, that the products they consume have met halal standards according to Islamic law. SJPH is a system that not only guarantees the halalness of products, but also provides added value for producers and convenience

for consumers, especially Muslims who need a guarantee of the halalness of the products they consume.

Finally, we provide assistance in filling out SJPH on the sihalal platform. The halal certificate registration assistance activity through the independent recognition route is in collaboration with the Halal Product Process Assistance Institution of UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. We are also Halal Product Process Assistance (P3H) who have the authority to assist business actors in preparing SJPH and verifying and validating business actor products.

After all stages of internalization of knowledge and skills have been carried out, we evaluate the level of knowledge of Women Entrepreneurs with similar but different questions. The results show a significant increase in knowledge of business actors who initially only answered 32% correctly to 72%. The following is a recapitulation of the correct and incorrect answers from 25 research subjects.

Table 2. Summary of Female Entrepreneurs' Answers after the Activity



The table above shows that there is a significant increase in knowledge of all JPH criteria. Although the aspect of understanding the level of halal material traceability is still not high, this is because traceability requires time and repetition to be skilled. However, all products used by the Women Entrepreneurs have clear traceability status, because the main raw materials they use are seafood that does not have a critical point. While the additional ingredients are in the form of various halal-certified flour products with clear brands and manufacturers.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the limitations of female coastal business actors on the east coast of Sumatra in Tungkal Ilir District in marketing their processed seafood are partly due to the absence of a Halal Certificate. Ownership of a halal certificate must be followed by an understanding of the Halal Product Guarantee, while out of a total of 25 Business Actors only 32% of their answers were correct. After being given JPH training and a workshop on compiling SJPH as practical material, their knowledge increased to 72% correct answers out of a total of 250 scores. This increase in knowledge increases the confidence of business actors in applying for Halal Certificates and marketing their products. This study has not answered how the level of increase in turnover of business actors after having a halal certificate along with the addition of marketing channels. Therefore, future research is expected to elaborate on this phenomenon.

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