



DETERMINANTS OF LOW HALAL CERTIFICATION IN MICRO ENTERPRISE PRODUCTS

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Abstract

This paper examines why halal certification remains limited among micro enterprise products. It maps concept level drivers linking business capacity, perceived market value, and certification governance. Micro enterprises often operate with centralized decision making, flexible sourcing, and minimal record keeping, which complicates traceability and process consistency. Certification is frequently viewed as an administrative commitment requiring time, documentation, and procedural discipline that competes with daily production and sales. Perceived costs include time loss, changes in ingredients and packaging, and reputational worry associated with external inspection. Benefits are often interpreted as relevant mainly for wider distribution channels, while local buyers rely on personal trust and repeat transactions. Information asymmetry in supply chains, shifting suppliers, and unclear ingredient documentation reduce readiness for accountable claims. The paper also highlights how social norms may substitute community trust for formal proof, reinforcing postponement. The synthesis proposes a structured set of determinants covering internal governance, knowledge and comprehension, cost and risk perceptions, demand signals, and traceability conditions. It concludes that low certification reflects interconnected factors shaping priorities rather than simple unwillingness, and it provides a conceptual basis for targeted guidance and policy design.

Keywords: halal certification, micro enterprises, traceability, procedural fairness, information duties, administrative capacity, market signals.

Introduction

Halal certification for food, beverage, cosmetic, and utility products carries a normative significance rooted in the guarantee of religious compliance and the provision of reliable information for consumers. In daily economic practice, the "halal" label is understood as a mark that simplifies purchasing decisions, particularly when consumers lack the capacity to inspect ingredients, production processes, and potential cross-contamination. In increasingly diverse marketplaces, the supply chain for raw materials has become more complex, involving additives, processing aids, and packaging sourced from various suppliers. This complexity expands the scope of uncertainty, making the need for trustworthy indicators more prominent. Simultaneously, halal certification requires adherence to rigorous requirements concerning ingredients, production processes, sanitation, documentation, and internal management (Wadud & Ali, 2023). Such compliance is not merely an administrative hurdle; it is a fundamental aspect of establishing robust juridical frameworks for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to ensure legal certainty and standardized market participation (Hakiky et al., 2023). These obligations compel business actors to reorganize their operations to remain consistent with established standards. Within this framework, the low rate of halal certification among micro-enterprises remains a critical issue, as these enterprises are primary providers of daily goods, maintaining close proximity to consumers across a vast array of regions.

Micro-enterprises possess distinct characteristics that differentiate them from larger entities, primarily regarding limited capital, organizational simplicity, and the dominance of family-based labor (Mustaqim et al., 2023). Production decisions are often made rapidly based on daily demand, material availability, and the limited capacity of the workforce. Recording ingredients, tracking suppliers, and standardizing procedures often fail to become priorities, as business actors focus on maintaining sales continuity and cash flow. In such situations, fulfilling halal certification requirements can be perceived as an administrative burden that diverts attention from core production. Furthermore, some micro-enterprises operate using equipment and production spaces integrated with domestic household areas, blurring the lines between production processes and domestic activities. This habit influences sanitation management, ingredient segregation, and risk control.

Addressing this requires not only awareness but also a commitment to superior Islamic ethics, where halal certification serves as a strategic tool to improve overall business quality (Mardikaningsih & Chasanah, 2024). In their relationship with the market, micro-enterprises often rely on customer trust, social recommendations, and local reputation. Local trust can lead business actors to believe that a formal halal label is unnecessary, as consumers are already assured by the reputation of the seller. This perception has the potential to foster a passive attitude toward certification.

In the governance of certification, there is a fundamental need for a clear understanding of standards, application procedures, required documentation, and the consequences of non-compliance. For micro-entrepreneurs, this understanding is often influenced by their ability to interpret documents, their experience dealing with authorities, and access to reliable information (Panggiarti et al., 2022). When information is perceived as complex or volatile, business actors may delay the submission process. Such delays can become habits, as daily production consistently demands primary attention. Furthermore, the costs inherent in meeting standards are often interpreted broadly, encompassing time, process adjustments, procurement of guaranteed raw materials, and administrative management. These costs may be perceived as exceeding the immediate benefits, especially if the primary market of the micro-enterprise does not explicitly demand a halal label. On the consumer side, some buyers assess "halal" through social proximity, such as trust in the seller, repeated purchase habits, or the assumption that home-based products are inherently compliant. This remains a concern for public health, as the lack of rigorous monitoring of food additives and illegal ingredients often found in non-certified products poses risks to consumer safety (Kahfi et al., 2023). Similarly, the circulation of illegal cosmetics and expired products necessitates stronger preventive measures by regulatory bodies like BPOM to ensure that the market remains fair and safe (Mustika et al., 2023; Prasetyo et al., 2023; Sumito et al., 2024).

The low rate of halal certification in micro-enterprises also relates to how business actors understand risk and responsibility. Some focus on food safety in terms of hygiene and shelf life, while halal compliance is assumed to be inherent because the actors believe they use "reasonable" ingredients. Such understanding often ignores the details of additives,

sources of gelatin, enzymes, flavors, and potential contamination from tools and storage. When these details are not understood, business actors feel there are no problems to be addressed, making certification appear non-urgent. Furthermore, there is a psychological aspect regarding external audits. Certification is often perceived as an assessment process that might uncover deficiencies, leading to anxiety regarding social and administrative consequences. This anxiety can trigger avoidance, especially if business actors are not confident they can meet the standards. In the social realm, micro-enterprises often operate in tight-knit environments; therefore, discussions regarding halal compliance can easily devolve into reputation issues. Business actors may choose silence to avoid inviting customer scrutiny. This pattern indicates that the low rate of certification is not merely a technical issue, but is deeply linked to how business actors interpret compliance, risk, and public assessment.

Market dimensions also influence certification decisions. Micro-enterprises often serve surrounding consumers with repeated purchase patterns and personal relationships. In this mode, quality is understood through consumption experience and direct communication rather than documentation. If customers do not inquire about certification, business actors conclude that it is not a sales determinant. Even when business actors realize the potential for certification to expand their market, this expansion is often viewed as unrealistic due to limitations in production, distribution, and promotion. In contrast, the implementation of halal standards is a vital strategy to strengthen participation in the global halal market and international trade, providing a competitive edge beyond the local scope (Rojak, Darmawan, & Jahroni, 2021). Additionally, changing sales channels, such as consignment or online sales, creates new demands related to labeling and product information. However, these demands are not always understood as "halal obligations," but rather as requirements for packaging design and expiration dating. When changes in sales channels are not accompanied by normative understanding of halal as part of product information, business actors continue to delay certification—a delay that becomes a pattern inherited through social discourse. Moreover, strict adherence to labeling regulations for all products, including cosmetics, is essential to ensure fair competition and protect consumers from misleading information (Purwanto et al., 2023).

The scientific problem that needs to be addressed is the confusion in mapping the causes for the low rate of halal certification in micro-enterprise products. Factors are often conflated, mixing knowledge, procedures, costs, business culture, and market demand. If these factors are not disentangled, the conclusion easily shifts into a general assessment that micro-enterprises are "less compliant," whereas compliance depends on incentive structures, information structures, and limited organizational capacity. Confusion also arises when certification is viewed as a singular objective, whereas for micro-entrepreneurs, it is often understood as a process requiring a fundamental reorganization of production practices such as changing suppliers, standardizing recipes, segregating tools, and compiling records. In normative terms, these are governance changes; thus, resistance can occur without necessarily being classified as "rejection of halal." Furthermore, discussions often fail to distinguish between business actors who value halal but delay due to limitations, and those who perceive certification as a formal irrelevance for local markets. Without such distinctions, the explanation remains obscured, hindering the development of a conceptual framework capable of addressing the variation in micro-enterprise decision-making, including the protection of Muslim consumers against the distribution of non-halal medicinal products (Romli et al., 2023).

Another problem relates to the relationship between the obligation to inform consumers and the informal nature of micro-enterprise production practices. Halal certification presupposes an administrative trail of ingredients and processes that can be traced. In many micro-enterprises, such trails do not exist because procurement is based on supplier proximity, price, and market availability. When suppliers change, ingredient specifications may change unnoticed. This instability creates uncertainty in compliance, yet the uncertainty is not always visible in short-term consumption experiences. Consequently, business actors may feel secure even when formal standards have not been met. Conversely, consumers may perceive home-based products as inherently more trustworthy. This trust, born from social proximity, reduces the demand for formal evidence. This problem demonstrates the tension between the proof standards expected in certification and local economic practices rooted in trust. This tension influences how business actors interpret

obligations, as formal requirements are deemed inconsistent with local market mechanisms. Normative analysis must explain how this tension shapes the decision to delay or avoid certification.

The urgency of this paper lies in the need to build a structured conceptual mapping of the causes behind low halal certification rates. This mapping is vital because halal certification concerns both consumer information certainty and production governance standards. In policy discussions, low certification rates are often addressed through socialization or assistance programs, but without a clear understanding of the causal structure, such programs risk being misdirected. A systematic normative analysis can distinguish between factors stemming from internal business capacity, the certification governance process, and market pressures or social norms. Furthermore, conceptual mapping can explain why business actors might value halal as an important ideal yet fail to pursue certification due to the gap between moral belief and administrative capability. This urgency is also academic, as it strengthens the explanation of the relationship between regulation, voluntary compliance, and MSME informality. Thus, this paper is necessary as an argumentative basis for a more precise discussion of halal certification and the dynamics of micro-enterprises.

The research question for this paper is: What factors conceptually cause the low rate of halal certification for micro-enterprise products within the relationship between business capacity, perceived benefits, and certification governance? This question demands a scientific explanation that maps these causes into distinguishable categories, such as knowledge and understanding, administrative burden, production governance changes, consumer demand pressure, as well as risk and reputation perception. The question focuses on the argumentative mapping of relationships between these categories, ensuring the explanation does not stop at a mere list of factors. It also allows for the discussion of how business actors weigh time and process costs against perceived market benefits. With a sharp focus, this paper maintains its attention on conceptual causes without drifting into case-by-case technical constraints. The research question simultaneously guides the discussion to link legal, social, and economic aspects within a normative framework.

The aim of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework regarding the causes of low halal certification rates among micro-enterprise products by mapping the categories of causes and the relationships between them. The paper examines factors relating to the internal capacity of businesses, understanding of procedures, administrative burdens, changes in production management, perceptions of market benefits, as well as considerations of reputation and risk. This framework is expected to clarify the distinction between non-compliance stemming from limited capacity and non-compliance stemming from the assessment that certification is not yet relevant. Theoretically, this paper enriches the discussion of regulatory compliance in small-scale enterprises. In practical terms, this framework can serve as a conceptual reference for programme designers. The analysis is purely normative and does not include data.

Method

This study employs a qualitative literature review with a normative orientation to construct a conceptual synthesis regarding the causes of low halal certification rates among micro-enterprise products. Diantha (2016) is used to clarify how normative legal research operates in establishing legal theory justifications through issue structuring, the grouping of norms, and consistent doctrinal reasoning. Susiani (2024) is used to organise the steps in developing a conceptual framework, determining legal materials, and constructing arguments that distinguish between concepts, principles, and normative implications. De Vaus and De Vaus (2013) are used as a methodological reference to strengthen the discipline of academic writing when mapping categories of causes, particularly regarding the care taken in formulating concepts and the relationships between concepts, although this study does not conduct a survey or process field data. The criteria for selecting sources focused on writings discussing halal certification, business operator compliance, administrative informality, the behaviour of micro-business operators, as well as consumer protection principles and information certainty.

The material was processed through repeated reading and thematic coding to identify consistent explanatory patterns regarding the causes of low certification rates. Themes were organised into conceptual categories, such as organisational capacity constraints, administrative burdens, perceptions of

benefits, local market norms, and the structure of responsibility within the supply chain. Conceptual validity was maintained through consistent terminology, a distinction between internal and external factors, and a separation between normative claims and claims requiring empirical verification. A variety of citation styles is used proportionately, for example narrative forms such as Susiani (2024) and parenthetical forms such as (Diantha, 2016), to ensure the narrative remains natural. The methodology section clarifies the scope of this study as a literature-based study without interviews or field observations. The results of the synthesis are presented as an argument that addresses the research question through the mapping of causal factors and an explanation of the relationships between factors within a coherent framework.

Result and Discussion

Regulation regarding halal certification in Indonesia has undergone a major transformation from a voluntary system to an independent and centralized legal obligation. The main foundation of this transformation rests on Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance (UU JPH), which was subsequently strengthened through Undang-Undang Nomor 6 Tahun 2023 or the Cipta Kerja Law. Based on this legal framework, every product entering, circulating, and traded within Indonesian territory must be halal-certified, except for products originating from materials prohibited according to Islamic sharia provisions.

Institutionally, the authority for implementing halal product assurance now lies under the Halal Product Assurance Implementing Agency (BPJPH) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as regulated in Government Regulation Number 39 of 2021 concerning Implementation of the Halal Product Assurance Sector. BPJPH has authority to issue certificates, conduct registration, and supervise compliance with halal standards by business actors (Chasanah & Muzammil, 2024). This role is supported by the Halal Inspection Agency (LPH) responsible for conducting physical product inspection and the MUI Fatwa Commission authorized to determine the halal fatwa of a product. In this context, a strict supervision structure along with firm sanctions for violators of Halal Product Assurance regulations becomes a crucial element in protecting consumer rights in Indonesia (Aziz et al., 2023).

The government sets staged obligations for halal certification based on product type to provide adaptation space for business actors. The first stage has begun for food, beverages, slaughtering results, and slaughtering services with a deadline falling in October 2024, while for pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and other utilizable goods a longer deadline is given progressively (Syahr et al., 2024). Failure to meet certification obligations by the specified deadline can result in administrative sanctions such as written warnings, fines, up to product withdrawal from market circulation. Given the risks inherent in products like cosmetics, producers have substantial juridical responsibility to guarantee that every material used meets the halal needs of Muslim consumers (Alfiah et al., 2023).

For Micro and Small Enterprises, the regulation provides special facilitation through the business actor declaration scheme known as Self Declare. This provision is regulated in Minister of Religion Regulation Number 20 of 2021 which enables small business actors to obtain halal certificates more quickly and free, provided that produced products use materials already certainly halal and production processes are confirmed simple (Pratama, 2024). This scheme aims to accelerate certification for millions of MSMEs in Indonesia so they remain able to compete without being burdened by high certification costs.

In its operational governance, every business actor applying for certification must have a Halal Supervisor, namely a person responsible for the Halal Product Process within the company (Japar et al., 2024). The Halal Supervisor is tasked to ensure that raw materials used are not contaminated by prohibited materials and to maintain the integrity of the halal assurance system during the production process. This is part of a self-supervision mechanism so that halal standards remain consistent from when products are registered until reaching consumers, supported by inclusion of the Indonesian Halal Logo on packaging as authentic proof. The success of integrating this halal assurance system heavily depends on how internal management functions covering HR, marketing, production, and finance are coordinated synergistically in supporting company operations (Darmawan, Mardikaningsih, & Putra, 2013).

Implementation of this regulation also includes international cooperation in the form of mutual recognition of halal certificates from foreign institutions registered with BPJPH (Chasanah & Muzammil,

2024a). This aims to facilitate global halal product trade flows while providing protection for Muslim consumers in Indonesia against imported products. However, challenges still arise in online transactions on e-commerce platforms, where consumer legal protection against circulation of fake products labeled halal requires more comprehensive supervision (Amin et al., 2023). Through digital integration via the SIHALAL system, all registration processes and certification status monitoring can now be conducted transparently, providing legal certainty for producer giving public safety in consuming daily products. Ultimately, implementation of Good Corporate Governance becomes the main foundation in increasing transparency and business sustainability in the increasingly competitive global market (Rojak & Al Hakim, 2023).

Low halal certification rates for micro enterprise products can be explained through a layered cause framework, where certification decisions are the result of weighing between normative obligations and operational capabilities (Mutafarida et al., 2024). In micro enterprises, decision-making structures are often centered on owners who simultaneously become production, marketing, and finance managers (Muin & Tahir, 2023). When roles are centered, priorities tend to be given to activities maintaining daily revenue flows. Halal certification is perceived as an activity outside production routines, thus requiring additional time and attention allocation. At the initial stage, business actors assess whether certification will provide direct benefits to sales. When benefits are perceived as not immediate, certification is placed as an agenda that can be postponed. This postponement can become a pattern because there is no forcing trigger, especially when local consumers already trust. In the normative realm, decisions to postpone are not always rejection of halal principles, but rather reactions to imbalance between procedural demands and organizational capacity. Organizational capacity includes ability to compile documents, ability to organize processes, and ability to maintain material consistency. When capacity is low, certification is viewed as a failure risk that can be embarrassing or detrimental. The causes of low certification need to be read as a combination of benefit perception, procedural burden, and micro enterprise work structure.

Limited comprehension of certification standards becomes one of the causes that is conceptual in nature and influences decisions. Halal standards

do not stop at prohibiting certain materials, but rather encompass methods to ensure material sources, methods to prevent contamination, and methods to maintain traceability through records (Jailani, 2024). Many micro business actors understand halal as a choice of materials considered common, for example avoiding materials clearly prohibited according to everyday knowledge (Azizah et al., 2024). This understanding can create false security, because business actors do not consider it necessary to check additional materials or process auxiliaries. At the same time, certification standards demand more systematic proof. When proof is understood as something complicated, business actors feel the distance between production habits and certification requirements is too far. This distance forms an avoidance attitude that is rational from a time management perspective. Additionally, technical terms in certification documents can create comprehension barriers, especially when business actors are not accustomed to reading formal documents. Comprehension barriers lead to dependence on others, for example facilitators or parties considered experts. Dependence increases cost perception and enlarges worries about errors. Within the normative framework, comprehension is a prerequisite for voluntary compliance, because people tend to comply with rules they understand and consider executable.

Administrative burdens are often understood by micro business actors as burdens not commensurate with enterprise scale. This burden includes compiling product data, material lists, supplier lists, purchase records, and production procedures (Rachman et al., 2024). In micro operations, material purchases are often flexible, following market availability and price changes. This purchase flexibility collides with the need for material specification stability in certification. When suppliers change, documents must adjust. Repeated adjustments are perceived as additional work that does not produce goods. Additionally, administrative burdens often contain archiving and update needs, so certification is perceived as a long-term commitment, not merely a one-time completed activity. Long-term commitment perception creates caution because business actors fear inability to maintain consistency. On the other hand, micro enterprises often lack clear administrative task division. Owners must choose between completing administration and serving customers. This choice places administration in a lower position. Within the

normative framework, administrative burden becomes a cause of low certification because it transforms certification into a managerial capacity issue. Certification demands internal governance, while internal governance in micro enterprises is often based on habits and verbal communication, not based on records.

Cost perception has broad dimensions and often exceeds official payment costs. Micro business actors assess cost as a combination of material change costs, equipment organization costs, room separation costs, packaging costs containing information, and time costs for following application flows (Rachman et al., 2024). Time costs have special meaning because every hour spent managing certification can reduce production hours or selling hours. In situations where income depends on daily sales, production hour reduction is perceived as direct risk. Additionally, material change costs can arise when materials long used are considered to have unclear origins and need to be replaced with more guaranteed materials. Material changes can alter product taste, texture, or durability, thus creating worries about losing customers. This worry can drive business actors to maintain old materials and postpone certification. Cost perception is also influenced by social experience, for example stories that certification processes require many stages. This story forms an image that certification is a big matter. Within the normative framework, cost perception transforms certification from moral obligation into investment decision. Business actors assess whether investment will return through the market. When the market does not give strong signals, investment is postponed. Thus, low certification can be understood as the result of feasibility calculation according to business actors, not merely indifference.

Market benefit perception is an important cause because certification is often understood as a tool to expand markets, not as a necessity for local markets (Izzah & Irfany, 2023). Micro enterprises selling in surrounding environments often rely on regular customers, familiarity, and personal reputation. In this pattern, customer trust is viewed as more valuable than formal labels. If customers do not ask about certification, business actors assess there is no real competitive advantage. Even when business actors understand that certification can increase new consumer trust, they can assess that production capacity is not ready for additional demand. Thus, market benefit is perceived as a benefit that cannot yet be

utilized. This perception drives certification to become an agenda waiting for larger enterprise scale. Additionally, some business actors consider that certification is only relevant for products sold in modern retail or on platforms requiring documents. When main sales channels are still informal, certification is considered not urgent. Within the normative framework, benefit perception is a factor connecting compliance with demand structure. When demand does not provide incentives, certification-based compliance weakens. Therefore, low certification can be read as a reflection of market signals that are not strong enough or not sufficiently understood.

Social norms and consumption habits around micro enterprises also shape tolerance toward uncertified products. Consumers can assess halal through the identity of business actors, for example because business actors are known to be devout or come from certain communities (Rahmatika & Bashori, 2024). Identity-based assessment reduces the need for formal proof. Additionally, consumers can assess that home products tend to be simple and use easily understandable materials. This assessment can overlook the use of modern additives that are becoming increasingly common. When consumers do not demand certification, business actors do not feel social pressure. Within the normative framework, social pressure is one of the compliance drivers, because business actors want to maintain reputation. If reputation is already maintained without certification, certification is viewed as an unnecessary addition. Social norms can also shape the view that certification is a matter for large enterprises. This view separates the micro enterprise world from the formal world, so business actors feel certification is beyond reach. When this view becomes entrenched, any program will face interpretive barriers. Therefore, social norms need to be understood as a cause of low certification because it organizes the meaning of certification in communities. Certification is not understood as consumer assurance, but rather understood as a symbol of bureaucracy irrelevant to local transactions.

Material traceability is a technical aspect with major normative consequences. Certification demands the ability to show material origins and ensure that materials used are consistent. In micro enterprises, material purchases are often made at general markets with simple receipts or even without proof (Khabbazi et al., 2011). Materials can be purchased in small quantities according to daily needs. This practice facilitates

production but complicates material origin proof. Additionally, suppliers can change due to price, location, or availability. Supplier changes alter material inconsistency risks. When traceability is weak, business actors feel unprepared to submit certification because they worry about rejection. Worry about rejection increases avoidance. Within the normative framework, traceability is a requirement that transforms halal from personal belief into a claim that can be accounted for. This transition requires administrative discipline. Administrative discipline is often not part of micro enterprise culture. Without this culture, certification is perceived as a burden that changes work methods. Business actors can choose to maintain old work methods because they better fit their production rhythms. Thus, traceability weakness becomes a cause of low certification because it places business actors in a position of complete uncertainty, namely feeling halal but unable to prove it.

Production governance changes demanded by certification are often perceived as changes disrupting operational stability (Wahid, 2023). Certification demands separation of tools for certain materials, standardized cleaning, and storage control. For micro enterprises using household spaces, this separation can be difficult without room organization. Room organization requires costs and requires changes to family habits. Additionally, micro enterprises often rely on family workers who learn through direct practice. Procedure standardization can be perceived as formalities incompatible with family learning methods. When standardization is perceived as incompatible, business actors assess certification will add complexity. Within the normative framework, governance change is the core of certification because it ensures consistency. However, for micro enterprises, consistency is often measured through taste and customer satisfaction, not through records. This difference in consistency measurements creates a judgment gap. Business actors can consider that as long as customers are satisfied and there are no complaints, the process is good. Certification demands different standards, namely standards that can be inspected. When business actors do not see added value from inspection standards, they postpone. Thus, governance change demands become a cause of low certification because it requires business actors to redefine quality from experience-based to procedure-based.

Procedural uncertainty often emerges in business actors' perceptions regarding application steps, process duration, and result certainty (Dejuan-Bitria & Mora-Sanguinetti, 2020). Although rules may be available, micro business actors often understand procedures through stories and others' experiences. When dominant stories emphasize complexity, business actors will form an image that the process is difficult to predict. This difficult-to-predict image lowers the intention to start. Additionally, business actors can worry that applications will open space for inspections highlighting other deficiencies, for example cleanliness or other permits. This worry makes certification perceived as an entry point for risk. Within the normative framework, procedural certainty is part of administrative justice, because business actors need to know what is requested and how to prepare. When certainty is not felt, compliance weakens. Procedural uncertainty is also related to facilitation access. Micro enterprises without facilitation access tend to assess the process as more frightening. When facilitation is unavailable or not trusted, business actors rely on self-experimentation. Self-experimentation increases error chances, thus adding worries. Thus, procedural uncertainty becomes a cause of low certification because it adds psychological risk and unmeasurable cost risk. Business actors tend to avoid risks they cannot calculate.

Psychological and reputation dimensions often become causes that are less noticed, yet they influence decisions. Certification involves inspection of materials and processes. Micro business actors can feel that this inspection is an assessment of their abilities as entrepreneurs (Oemar et al., 2022). When they feel their work methods so far are accepted by customers, inspection can be perceived as judgment from outside. This judgment perception creates defensiveness and reluctance. Additionally, there is worry that if business actors submit certification and then inconsistency is discovered, business reputation can decline. This reputation risk feels heavy because micro enterprises rest on trust. Within the normative framework, reputation risk transforms certification from a quality improvement process into a threat to business identity. When certification is understood as a threat, business actors choose not to start. On the other hand, some business actors can feel ashamed to ask or seek help, because they fear being considered unknowing. Shame hinders information search. This barrier maintains incomprehension. Incomprehension maintains

postponement. Thus, psychological and reputation factors form a cause circle that can lock behavior. This discussion shows that low certification cannot always be explained through cost and procedure factors alone.

Compliance in micro enterprises is often based on habits and personal values (Bello et al., 2024). Business actors can assess that they have already implemented halal principles according to beliefs, for example by choosing materials considered safe and avoiding materials known to be prohibited. This personal value-based compliance produces a sense of moral correctness. However, certification demands compliance that can be proven. The tension between feeling correct and formal proof is an important cause. Business actors can assess that formal proof is unnecessary because they do not intend to deceive. Within the normative framework, good intentions do not replace the need for information certainty for consumers, because consumers are entitled to obtain clear grounds. However, in business actors' logic, good intentions are the main guarantee. When this logic dominates, certification is perceived as distrust toward business actors. This distrust perception can trigger subtle rejection, namely postponing without conflict. Additionally, micro enterprises often operate in communities having trust norms. This norm strengthens the assessment that formal proof is not important. Thus, low certification can be explained as a difference in understanding compliance. Compliance for business actors is practice piety, while compliance for certification is verifiable consistency.

Administrative and digital competence aspects are also relevant as conceptual causes (Bekim, 2021). Many modern licensing processes rely on forms, document uploads, and written communication. For micro enterprises, this competence is not always available (Darmadi et al., 2022). Business actors accustomed to oral transactions can struggle to adjust to document language. This difficulty creates dependence on others. Dependence creates cost worries and service fraud worries. Within the normative framework, equitable access to certification requires ability to understand procedures. When this ability is low, access equality weakens. Business actors can avoid processes because they fear filling incorrectly, fear data is considered incomplete, or fear being called for repeated corrections. Fear of being wrong is often stronger than benefit drive, especially when market benefits are not yet clear. Additionally, administrative competence relates to ability to organize purchase documents and production records.

This recording demands discipline. Discipline is a habit that must be built. Building habits requires time. Time is a scarce resource in micro enterprises. Thus, low administrative competence becomes a cause of low certification because it increases time costs and increases perceived procedural error risks.

Micro enterprise supply chains are often mixed between official suppliers and informal suppliers (Silva et al., 2021). Materials can be purchased at general markets, wholesale stores, or intermediary traders. In this mixed structure, material status certainty can change. Business actors may not have access to material documents, for example certificates for certain materials. When documents are unavailable, business actors cannot compile proof. Within the normative framework, proof is part of responsibility, yet business actors' responsibility is limited by access they possess. Access limitations to material documents can make business actors feel certification is impossible. Feeling impossible locks the decision to postpone. Additionally, micro enterprises often choose suppliers based on relationships and price. Supplier relationships can become sources of trust, so business actors assess there is no need to request documents. Requesting documents can be perceived as distrust. When relationship norms are more dominant, document requests are difficult to perform. Thus, supply chain structure and supplier relationship norms become causes of low certification because it limits ability to ensure materials. When materials cannot be ensured, business actors are reluctant to submit. This discussion confirms that causes are not only on business actors, but also on the supply ecosystem shaping business actors' capabilities.

The asynchronization between micro enterprise work tempo and certification procedure tempo is a cause that frequently emerges in practical reasoning (Micheline, 2021). Micro enterprises work with daily tempo, even hour by hour, to meet demand. Many decisions are made quickly. Certification procedures work with administrative tempo demanding preparation, inspection, and determination. When these two tempos are not aligned, business actors assess certification as an activity that disrupts. This disruption feels real because micro enterprises rarely have labor reserves. Within the normative framework, tempo asynchronization creates opportunity costs. Opportunity cost is income lost because time is used to manage procedures. When daily income is needed for household needs, opportunity costs become very sensitive.

Additionally, business actors can worry that during the process they must hold production or hold product variations. Holding product variations can reduce sales appeal. This worry makes them wait for times considered more relaxed, yet relaxed times rarely come. Finally certification continues to be postponed. Thus, tempo asynchronization is a cause of low certification because it makes certification always lose priority. In the policy framework, this issue relates to how procedures can be understood as aligned with micro enterprise rhythms, yet in this writing the focus is mapping cause relationships normatively.

Facilitation quality is perceived by business actors as a determining factor in the courage to start (Mouammer & Bazan, 2021). Facilitation here is understood as help understanding standards, organizing documents, and preparing production processes. When facilitation is perceived as clear and trustworthy, business actors tend to be more confident. When facilitation is perceived as unclear, business actors tend to avoid. Within the normative framework, facilitation is a bridge between formal standards and daily practices. Micro enterprises need this bridge because knowledge gaps are quite wide. Without the bridge, business actors must interpret themselves, and self-interpretation increases uncertainty. Uncertainty lowers intention. Facilitation also relates to communication language. When facilitation uses difficult terms, business actors feel excluded. When facilitation uses operational language close to practice, business actors feel capable. Thus, perception of facilitation affects sense of capability, and sense of capability affects compliance. This discussion explains causes of low certification as a capability problem shaped by knowledge relations. Knowledge relations can strengthen or weaken motivation. In micro enterprises, motivation is often fragile because influenced by production pressure. Therefore, facilitation is perceived as a factor transforming certification from burden into a process that can be executed, even though this writing does not establish program forms.

Micro enterprise product segmentation affects certification relevance in business actors' minds (Archana, 2023). Some products are produced quickly and sold directly, for example ready-to-eat food. Some products are produced to be stored longer, for example packaged snacks. Business actors can assess that ready-to-eat products are socially safer because made themselves and sold quickly, thus not requiring certification (Sudarmiatin et al., 2020). Conversely, packaged products are perceived closer to formal

markets, thus needing labels more. However, this division is not always consistent, because ready-to-eat products also use additives and processes that can create uncertainty. Within the normative framework, this segmentation perception becomes a cause of low certification because it forms imaginary boundaries about products worthy of certification. Imaginary boundaries direct priorities. When products are considered unnecessary, certification is not handled. Additionally, high product variation in micro enterprises, for example changing menus according to season, can make business actors assess certification is difficult because products are unstable. Product stability is often viewed as a certification requirement. This view strengthens postponement. Thus, product portfolio structure and stability perception become causes of low certification through priority mechanisms and feasibility perception. This shows that cause factors are also on how business actors interpret their own product categories.

The relationship between certification and packaging also becomes a source of postponement. Many micro enterprises sell without complete labels or use simple packaging (Oemar et al., 2022). Certification is often associated by business actors with the need for more formal packaging and more complete information. When business actors are not ready to change packaging, certification is also postponed. Packaging changes require costs and require access to packaging suppliers. Additionally, business actors can worry that new packaging raises selling prices, so local consumers reject. This worry locks changes. Within the normative framework, packaging is an information medium that gives consumers the right to know. When packaging is minimal, information rights weaken. However, business actors view packaging as cost. The tension between information rights and packaging costs explains why certification is postponed. On the other hand, packaging also relates to business identity. Micro business actors often have identity built from taste and closeness, not from design. When certification is associated with formal design, business actors feel it is not their business style. Thus, the relationship between certification and packaging affects business actors' attitudes toward formalities. Attitudes toward formalities are part of the cause of low certification, because formalities are perceived as far from how micro enterprises operate.

Legal and social incentive structures can affect certification decisions (Lamin & Livanis, 2020). When certification obligations are perceived as

weak in enforcement or lacking visible consequences, business actors postpone more easily. However, in normative discussion, enforcement is not the only factor, because compliance is also influenced by rule legitimacy. Rule legitimacy means business actors view rules as fair and relevant. When business actors view certification as consumer needs, legitimacy increases. When business actors view certification as bureaucratic burden, legitimacy decreases. Legitimacy is influenced by experiences dealing with public services. When service experiences are perceived as complicated, legitimacy declines. Additionally, social incentives can come from markets, for example demands from resellers or sales partners. When partners demand certification, business actors have clear reasons. When partners do not demand, reasons weaken. Thus, low certification can be explained as the result of combining rule legitimacy and market incentive signals. This combination forms priorities. In micro enterprises, priorities are the main mechanism because resources are limited. When priorities are filled by production and sales, certification is postponed. Therefore, cause factors must map how priorities are formed by legitimacy, incentives, and administrative experiences.

Knowledge ownership about critical materials often becomes the divider between business actors who are ready and those not yet ready (Panggiarti et al., 2022). Critical materials are materials whose halal status is not easily determined by intuition, for example certain additives. Micro business actors can consider all materials in markets are safe, because of the assumption that freely sold goods have been inspected. This assumption shifts responsibility to others and reduces the drive to check. Within the normative framework, this kind of responsibility shift explains low certification because business actors do not feel necessary to strengthen proof. Additionally, business actors can use mixed materials without brands, so no clear information exists. When clear information is unavailable, business actors choose pragmatics, namely using available materials. This pragmatism maintains production but weakens formal compliance. Knowledge about critical materials also relates to ability to read composition labels. When business actors are not accustomed to reading, they will not see risks. When risks are not visible, certification does not become a necessity. Thus, critical material knowledge is a cause of low certification through risk perception mechanisms. Risk perception

guides action. When risks are perceived as low, certification action does not occur. This discussion is important because it shows that increasing certification demands perception change, yet this writing remains focused on mapping causes normatively.

Internal governance aspects of micro enterprises are often personal and informal. Procurement, production, and sales decisions can change quickly based on owner intuition (Darmadi et al., 2022). In certification, quick changes without records can create inconsistencies. Business actors accustomed to flexibility can view certification as creativity limits and improvisation limits. These limits are perceived as harmful because micro enterprises often survive through quick adaptation to tastes. Within the normative framework, certification demands consistency as a form of responsibility. Consistency can be viewed as contradictory to adaptation. This tension becomes a cause of low certification because business actors choose adaptation as survival priority. Additionally, family structures in micro enterprises can make responsibility division informal. When everyone can change recipes or change suppliers, consistency is difficult to maintain. To change this, internal rules are needed. Internal rules can trigger family conflicts because they change habits. Family conflicts are social costs wanting to be avoided. Thus, low certification can be explained through difficulties building stable internal governance in family structures. This is not merely a matter of intention, but rather an organizational matter. When organizations are fluid, certification becomes difficult because it demands fixed standards.

Perceptions about audits and inspections often relate to fear of errors. Micro business actors can imagine audits as processes searching for deficiencies, not as coaching processes (Darmayasa et al., 2021). This shadow can emerge from general experiences facing administrative inspections. When audits are understood as threats, business actors tend to avoid. Within the normative framework, fear is a cause working through self-protection mechanisms. Business actors choose safety by not opening themselves to inspection. However, this choice maintains status without certification. Fear can also be strengthened by uncertainty about what is assessed and how assessment is conducted. When assessment criteria are not understood, business actors do not know how to prepare. Ignorance makes them postpone. Additionally, fear can relate to social costs when enterprises are

assessed as not meeting. Micro enterprises in close social environments can experience gossip or negative assessments when deficiencies are discovered. Therefore, business actors choose maintaining image by staying as usual. Thus, audit as inspection symbol can become a cause of low certification. This discussion confirms the need to distinguish between certification systems as standards and business actors' perceptions toward processes. Perceptions can transform neutral standards into psychological threats.

The structure of business actors' relationships with religious institutions and community institutions can also affect decisions. Some business actors obtain halal certainty through informal guidance from local figures, thus feeling sufficient without certification (Izzah & Irfany, 2023). This certainty can strengthen value compliance, yet does not automatically lead to formal compliance. Within the normative framework, there is a difference between social legitimacy and administrative legitimacy. Social legitimacy is obtained from community recognition, while administrative legitimacy is obtained from certification. When social legitimacy is already strong, the need for administrative legitimacy is perceived as low. Additionally, business actors can consider that certification is a government matter, while halal is a moral matter. This separation makes them implement morality without handling certification. However, for wider consumers, certification is a proof tool. The tension between community scale and market scale becomes a cause of low certification because business actors are oriented toward communities. Thus, low certification can be read as the result of limited market orientation. When orientation is limited to surrounding customers, certification is viewed as unnecessary. When orientation expands, certification becomes more relevant. This discussion connects causes with social relation scales, without requiring data.

Within the compliance framework, there is a difference between compliance due to belief and compliance due to incentives (Jackson et al., 2018). Compliance due to belief originates from religious values and ethics. Compliance due to incentives originates from market benefits or rule consequences. Micro enterprises can have compliance due to belief, yet incentives for certification are not strong enough. When these two compliance paths do not meet, certification remains low. Within the normative framework, this explains why halal value socialization alone is not

enough, because business actors already feel compliant. What is needed is comprehension that certification is a form of public accountability. However, when public accountability is not perceived as necessary, certification continues to be postponed. Additionally, compliance due to incentives can emerge when consumers demand, yet when consumers do not demand, incentives weaken. Thus, low certification is a product of compliance path asynchronization. This explanation helps answer the problem formulation because it positions causes as relationships between factors, not as lists. This relationship can be formulated as a relationship between benefit perception, capacity to execute procedures, and market incentive structures. When these three are not aligned, certification is low.

Halal certification also relates to information responsibility accompanying products (Irwansyah & Saleh, 2024). In micro enterprises, product information is often minimal. Minimal information facilitates production and suppresses costs, yet reduces certainty for new consumers (Masyhuri & Risdiyanti, 2022). Within the normative framework, certification is one way to strengthen certainty. When business actors are not oriented toward new consumers, the need for certainty is not felt. This reaffirms that causes of low certification relate to market orientation. Additionally, business actors can view that their consumers buy because of taste, not because of labels. When taste becomes central, certification is viewed as irrelevant. However, certification does not replace taste, but rather adds trust dimensions. When business actors do not assess formal trust as added value, certification is postponed. Thus, the relationship between certification and marketing needs to be understood conceptually. Certification is perceived as a formal marketing tool. Micro enterprises often use relational marketing through closeness. Relational marketing reduces the need for formal tools. This is a cause of low certification through substitution mechanisms, namely personal trust replacing formal proof. This substitution can work well in small communities, yet becomes weak when markets expand. However, as long as markets have not expanded, certification remains low.

Cause factors for low halal certification on micro enterprise products can be mapped into five major interconnected groups. The first group is internal enterprise capacity covering task division, recording discipline, and procedural stability. The second group is cost and risk perceptions

covering time costs, material change costs, and reputation risks. The third group is comprehension and administrative competence covering standard understanding, ability to manage documents, and ability to access information. The fourth group is demand structure and social norms covering consumer pressure, community trust, and consumption habits tolerant without certification. The fifth group is supply chain structure and traceability covering access to material documents and supplier stability. Within the normative framework, these groups form cause relationships that can be explained through priorities. When priorities are dominated by production and sales, certification is postponed. When market pressure and rule legitimacy are not strong enough, postponement becomes habit. Thus, the problem formulation is answered through mapping showing that low certification is the result of linking capacity factors, perceptions, and governance, working together to form micro enterprise decisions.

Conclusion

This writing concludes that low halal certification rates on micro enterprise products can be explained through conceptual relationships between internal enterprise capacity, benefit perceptions, and certification process governance. Limited internal capacity makes fulfilling recording, material traceability, and procedural standardization perceived as burdens disrupting daily production rhythms. Market benefit perceptions often are not yet felt in local sales channels resting on personal trust, so certification is understood as a necessity for larger enterprise scales. Certification governance is perceived as an administrative process demanding standard comprehension and document competence, so procedural uncertainty, audit worries, and reputation risks can trigger postponement. Mixed supply chain factors weaken material and document certainty, so business actors feel unprepared for proof. Social norms tolerant toward products without certification, along with halal meanings stopping at personal belief, strengthen community trust substitution over formal proof. Thus, causes of low certification are not one factor, but rather factor interconnections forming priorities and postponement decisions.

Implications and suggestions emphasize that cause mapping needs to be used as a framework for reading micro enterprise behavior variations without making blame-generalizations toward business actors. Organizing

concepts of internal capacity, procedural comprehension, cost perceptions, market orientation, and supply chain traceability helps clarify which points form postponement decisions. Academic discussions can develop propositions about relationships between community trust and formal compliance, and between production flexibility and proof consistency needs. In the guidance realm, approaches emphasizing standard comprehension and recording habits need to be understood as governance change processes, not merely socialization activities. For normative legal science development, it is important to organize discussions regarding consumer information obligations in micro enterprise products and certification positions as forms of public accountability. Subsequent research based on written sources can build taxonomies of business actors' perceptions about audits, time costs, and market benefits, so conceptual frameworks become more precise and comparable across studies.

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