



Social Learning and Community Empowerment in Halal Certification: A Qualitative Study of P3H Mentoring at LP3H IAIN Bone

Nurkhadijah N¹, Lukman Arake², Kamiruddin³

¹Department of Islamic Economics, Postgraduate Program, IAIN Bone, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

²Department of Islamic Economics, Postgraduate Program, IAIN Bone, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

³Department of Sharia Economics, Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, IAIN Bone, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received Jun 7, 2026

Revised Jun 30, 2026

Accepted Jul 29, 2026

Online First Jul 31, 2026

Keywords:

Halal certification

Legal awareness

LP3H

MSMEs

P3H assistance

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study analyzes social learning processes and community empowerment, framing P3H mentoring as a form of social intervention that drives changes in MSMEs' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, through the transformation of halal certification awareness among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through Halal Product Process Assistance (P3H) conducted by the Halal Product Process Assistance Institution (LP3H) of IAIN Bone in Bone Regency, departing from the issue that increased access to halal certification programs has not always been followed by changes in MSME understanding and awareness regarding the substance of halal product assurance.

Methodology: This study employs a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach with data collection through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, selecting informants via purposive sampling consisting of LP3H management, P3H assistants, and MSME actors, and analyzing data through reduction, coding, data display, and conclusion verification, with data validity tested through triangulation and member checking.

Main Findings: The P3H assistance takes place through four stages: preparation, pre-certification, data input and field verification, and post-certification, driving a shift in MSME awareness across cognitive, affective, and conative aspects from viewing halal certification as an administrative obligation toward seeing it as an instrument for consumer protection and business development, supported by the SEHATI program, proactive assistance approaches, and religious-economic motivations, while hindered by low digital and legal literacy, data security concerns, and SIHALAL system constraints.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study offers a distinct novelty by examining the transformation of awareness in resolving the specific phenomenon of 'cultural halal', the deep-rooted community belief that food produced by fellow Muslims inherently guarantees halal status without formal certification through structured P3H mentoring, highlighting that certification effectiveness depends on bridging traditional assumptions with formal legal compliance across cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license



Corresponding Author:

Nurkhadijah N,

Department of Islamic Economics, Postgraduate Program, IAIN Bone, H.O.S. Cokroaminoto Street, Macanang Village, West Tanete Riattang District, Watampone City, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Email: dhija566@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the halal industry in Indonesia is currently entering a strategic phase in supporting national economic development based on the halal industry [1]. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia aims to become one of the world's halal industry hubs [1]. According to data from the World Population Review for 2026, Indonesia's Muslim population will reach approximately 247.3 million, placing the country first in the world in terms of Muslim population [2]. The government, through the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH), continues to strive to accelerate the halal certification process, particularly for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) through the Self, declaration pathway [3].

From a sociological perspective, education and mentoring programs are not merely administrative mechanisms, but serve as vital instruments for social change and community empowerment. As argued by Elliott et al., educational interventions must address real social issues to help individuals navigate future challenges inclusively and sustainably [4].

The government is focusing its efforts to accelerate halal certification on the food and beverage sector, given that this sector directly impacts the daily needs and consumption of the general public [3]. However, the government's expectations do not yet fully align with the reality on the ground [3]. Data from the Ministry of Industry's Halal Industry Information System reveals a significant gap [5]. Out of millions of existing businesses, only 140,950 halal industrial units have been registered, with a total of 162,117 certificates issued, covering 584,609 halal products [5].

Table 1. Recapitulation of Halal Industry Data in Indonesia (2025)

Number of Halal Industries	140.950
Number of Halal Certificate	162.117
Number of Halal Products	584.609

Source: Ministry of Industry (2025).

Due to this lack of preparedness and awareness, the government ultimately decided to postpone the mandatory halal certification requirement for food and beverage products until October 2026 [3]. This postponement indicates that issues regarding awareness and technical challenges among culinary MSME operators have not yet been fully resolved [3]. The issue of halal certification is not only related to quantitative aspects but also to changes in business operators' behavior [5]. Although data show that halal certificates are dominated by the food sector (approximately 130,111 certificates), this figure remains very small compared to the total population of culinary SMEs (Food and Beverages) in Indonesia [5].

This national trend is also evident in South Sulawesi Province, particularly in Bone Regency [6]. As a food, producing region, South Sulawesi is home to 2,919 halal industries [6]. However, from an economic and business demographic perspective, Bone Regency's potential is immense [6]. The regency is supported by 28,842 microenterprises, 7,529 of which operate specifically in the food and beverage sector, which has direct contact with consumers [6].

Table 2. Number of Culinary Micro Business Actors (Food and Beverages)
in Bone Regency, 2024 (n = 7,529)

Sub-district	Number of Culinary Businesses
Bontocani	103
Kahu	222
Kajuara	117
Salomekko	177
Tonra	165
Patimpeng	118
Libureng	199
Mare	289
Sibulue	244
Cina	178
Barebbo	229
Ponre	126
Lappariaja	169
Lamuru	136
Tellu Limpoe	85
Bengo	167
Ulaweng	267
Palakka	655
Awangpone	311

Tellu Siatinge	151
Amali	146
Ajangale	177
Dua Boccoe	190
Cenrana	160
Tanete Riattang Barat	929
Tanete Riattang	1.250
Tanete Riattang Timur	569
Aggregate Bone Regency	7.529

Source: Department of Cooperatives of Bone Regency (2024).

The large number of food and beverage microenterprises stands in stark contrast to the reality of halal certification ownership on the ground. According to data from the Halal Product Assurance Supervisor of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) in Bone Regency, out of the total thousands of culinary businesses, only 687 business operators have obtained halal certificates [7]. The low rate of halal certificate ownership in this sector stems from two main obstacles: cultural and technical. From a cultural perspective, the phenomenon of “cultural halal” has emerged, the widespread belief that a product is guaranteed to be halal simply because it is made by fellow Muslims or people known within the community [8]. This culturally based belief makes the public feel safe consuming such products, leading business operators to assume that a legally issued halal certificate from the government is no longer necessary [8]. Meanwhile, from a technical perspective, low digital literacy in accessing the registration application (SIHALAL) poses a major obstacle for rural food-based MSMEs. Understanding the dynamics and determinants of micro and small businesses is crucial, as business growth and compliance are heavily influenced by structural and contextual factors within rural economies [9]. Examining these determinants provides deeper insight into how small-scale business operators navigate regulatory requirements and operational barriers [9].

Strategic communication and mentoring in development projects act as essential tools for addressing real social issues, fostering community engagement, and driving sustainable behavioral transformation [10]. In line with community development frameworks, successful programs must move beyond top-down administrative compliance to cultivate genuine community ownership and shift public consciousness [10]. In the context of micro and small business mentoring, the process transcends technical assistance; it operates as a socio-educational intervention that shapes social behavior and fosters a critical understanding of regulations. This aligns with the perspective that educational programs act as dynamic arenas for shifting public consciousness and building sustainable community capacities [11]. Research on halal certification has been extensively conducted by various academic circles from diverse perspectives [12]. A synthesis of previous studies can be classified into four main aspects: (1) halal literacy and the halal lifestyle act as the primary catalysts in shaping consumer purchasing decisions, particularly among Generation Z demographics [13] (2) certification challenges and internal barriers, such as limited technological literacy and a poor understanding of regulations, as well as knowledge and cost perception variables that constitute structural obstacles [14] (3) the costs and effectiveness of educational methods and their impact on business performance, which have been shown to enhance entrepreneurs’ literacy and motivation [15] (4) digitalization and the institutional role of Halal Centers on campuses and in cities in facilitating the Self, Declaration scheme [16] and (5) halal certification assistance, which has demonstrated positive progress through various outreach and facilitation programs [17].

However, a critical review of this literature reveals a fundamental weakness: the majority of educational approaches are incidental in nature (one-off, short-term seminars) and of short duration [18]. Such approaches often fail to provide comprehensive support to business operators, even though, empirically, successfully obtaining halal certification yields positive economic impacts [19]. Recognizing the limitations of incidental educational models, the fourth research aspect specifically focuses on the institutional role of the Halal Center as a structured support solution. Nevertheless, the majority of these studies have only highlighted administrative effectiveness during the initial phase of regulatory acceleration [20]. There remains a research gap regarding how these support institutions must adapt amid the dynamics of policy delays (the 2026 regulatory relaxation). This study fills that gap by offering a novel research perspective on adaptation strategies for assistance in agricultural regions, focusing on resolving “cultural halal” issues through a more intensive persuasive approach [17]. A number of previous studies have examined halal certification among MSMEs from various perspectives, such as halal literacy, legal awareness, cost barriers, digital literacy, and its impact on business performance. However, most of these studies still treat halal certification as a variable of administrative compliance or as a decision by business owners to obtain a certificate. Perspectives that explain how the mentoring process gradually changes the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of MSME entrepreneurs toward halal certification are still relatively limited. In fact, the success of halal certification policies is determined not only by the number of certificates issued but also by the ability of mentoring programs to foster substantive understanding and sustainable compliance. Based on this gap, this study positions P3H mentoring as a socio-educational process that can foster a transformation in the awareness of MSME

operators. Based on this gap, this study positions P3H mentoring as a socio-educational process that can foster a transformation in the awareness of MSME operators. The primary novelty of this study lies in its focus on dissecting and transforming the 'cultural halal' phenomenon, where business operators rely solely on traditional communal trust rather than formal assurance into a structured legal and substantive awareness. By analyzing this transformation through cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions linked to the institutional mechanisms of LP3H in an agricultural region, this study does not merely assess whether assistance leads to certification, but explains how mentoring successfully shifts the mindset of MSME operators away from local cultural assumptions toward sustainable halal compliance.

In response to this need for technical assistance, the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Bone has taken on the role of a supporting institution through the Halal Product Process Support Agency (LP3H). The presence of IAIN Bone's P3H facilitators plays a strategic role in bridging the gap between government certification regulations and the technical limitations faced by MSME operators [21]. This assistance is expected to shift the business operators' mindset from merely fulfilling administrative obligations to recognizing the importance of halal certification as a guarantee of product quality. Based on internal data from LP3H IAIN Bone, the trend in halal certification assistance for culinary SMEs has fluctuated across implementation periods, but the overall trajectory shows an upward trend [22]. Thus, although the number of assisted SMEs does not always increase every year, the scope of assistance generally demonstrates positive progress. In 2023, 116 certificates were issued, a figure that subsequently declined to 31 certificates in 2024. Nevertheless, this figure surged significantly by 670.97% in 2025 with the issuance of 239 certificates. This positive trend continues; based on data compiled as of April 1, 2026, the mentoring program has recorded a total of 428 certificates issued. Additionally, there are ongoing processes, including 3 cases before the Fatwa Committee, 2 applications completed at the P3H stage, and 5 applications in the initial stage. Furthermore, this assistance program does not merely pursue quantitative administrative targets but seeks to shift the paradigm of culinary industry stakeholders: from merely fulfilling regulatory obligations to a comprehensive awareness of the importance of halal certification as a form of legal validity and a guarantee of product quality [23].

To analyze this phenomenon comprehensively, this study integrates two core theoretical frameworks within the P3H mentoring process. As the primary theory, Reza A.A. Wattimena's theory of consciousness transformation is employed to trace the psychological and internal shifts among business operators in overcoming cultural hurdles such as 'cultural halal' through a continuum of shift in perspective, followed by a reflection process, leading to attitude change, and culminating in behavioral change [24]. Simultaneously, as a supporting theory, Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal awareness is utilized to examine how micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) operators progress through a sequential structural mechanism: moving from legal knowledge to legal understanding, advancing into legal attitude, and ultimately manifesting as legal behavior [25]. By explicitly weaving these theoretical sequences into the introductory framework rather than merely applying them post-findings this study establishes a robust analytical foundation to evaluate how institutional mentoring successfully reshapes culinary MSME compliance.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Type of Research

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the implementation of the Halal Product Process Assistance (P3H) mechanism and its impact on micro and small enterprise (MSE) operators [26]. A qualitative descriptive design is well-suited for exploring complex social phenomena, participant behaviors, and community engagement within real-world settings, allowing researchers to capture detailed insights directly from the field [27]. Furthermore, qualitative research emphasizes natural settings as the direct source of data and the researcher as the key instrument [28].

2.2. Research Subjects

A total of twelve informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique where subjects are chosen based on specific criteria and direct relevance to the research focus to yield information-rich cases [29]. The informants comprise culinary micro and small enterprise (UMK) owners in Bone Regency under the *Self Declare* scheme, Halal Product Process Assistants (P3H) of LP3H IAIN Bone, and the management/head of LP3H IAIN Bone [30]. These informants were chosen due to their direct involvement and relevance to the halal certification assistance process [31]. Secondary data were obtained from official documents issued by LP3H IAIN Bone and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as well as relevant scholarly literature on halal awareness, Islamic business ethics, and UMK ecosystems [32].

2.3. Instruments and Data Collection Techniques

To ensure systematic and structured data collection, the instruments utilized in this study are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Research Instruments

Data Collection Technique	Instrument Used	Indicators / Aspects Measured	Informants / Data Sources	Purpose
Observation	Observation checklist	(1) Real conditions and cleanliness of UMK production kitchens; (2) Separation of cooking utensils and sanitation hygiene according to SJPH standards; (3) Direct interaction between P3H Assistants and UMK actors during field verification and validation (<i>verval</i>).	Culinary UMK production kitchens and LP3H IAIN Bone assistance locations	To capture real conditions, layout compliance, and direct interactions in a natural setting without intervention.
Interview	Semi-structured interview guide	(1) Changes in knowledge, attitude, and practice (CAP) of UMK actors; (2) P3H assistance experiences (communication tactics, pedagogical barriers, and strategies to overcome cognitive bottlenecks); (3) Institutional policies, training modules, and the "jemput bola" strategy of LP3H IAIN Bone.	- Culinary UMK actors in Bone Regency (<i>Self Declare</i> scheme) - P3H Assistants of IAIN Bone - Head/Management of LP3H IAIN Bone - SIHALAL accounts & UMK documents	To explore in-depth regarding the process of consciousness transformation, barriers, and halal certification assistance strategies.
Documentation	Document review sheet	(1) Copies of issued halal certificates; (2) Screenshots of UMK SIHALAL accounts; (3) Photos of verified critical ingredients and NIB documents; (4) Halal certification recapitulation reports of LP3H IAIN Bone and relevant regulations (Law No. 33/2014, Government Regulations).	- Recapitulation reports of LP3H IAIN Bone - Regulations (Law No. 33/2014, PP No. 39/2021)	To support, validate, and triangulate findings from observation and interviews by compiling administrative track records.

The interview guide was structured around specific domains covering cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of consciousness transformation, institutional policies, and assistance strategies [33]. An observation checklist was also employed to examine physical conditions, sanitation hygiene, and direct field interactions [34]. Data collection was carried out until reaching data saturation, which was marked by no new information, themes, or categories emerging from follow-up interviews, indicating that the data obtained were redundant and sufficient to answer the research problems comprehensively [35].

2.4. Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative data analysis model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification [31]. Collected interview transcripts, observations, and documentation data were systematically coded and categorized to identify key themes related to legal awareness, communication strategies, and the transformation of consciousness among UMK operators [36]. This interactive approach allows continuous movement between data collection and data analysis throughout the research cycle [37].

2.5. Research Procedures

The research procedure followed a structured sequence to maintain systematic execution [38]:

- a. Preparation Stage: Conducting a preliminary literature review, formulating research focus, and designing data collection instruments (interview guides and observation checklists) [26].

- b. Implementation/Data Collection Stage: Going to the field in Bone Regency, executing observations, conducting in-depth interviews with informants, and gathering administrative documentation [28].
- c. Data Analysis Stage: Transcribing interview results, reducing unnecessary data, displaying data in structured tables/narratives, and performing source triangulation to ensure credibility [39].
- d. Reporting Stage: Synthesizing the final findings and drafting the comprehensive research report following academic presentation standards [40].

To provide a clear and systematic overview of the entire investigative process ranging from the initial preparation to the final reporting stage, the operational workflow is structured into a sequential framework as illustrated in the research flowchart below in Figure 1:

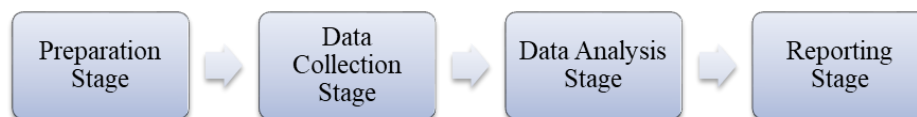


Figure 1. Research Procedure Flowchart
Source: Processed by the researcher (2026)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of an in-depth field analysis, the process of assisting MSMEs with halal certification through the Self-Declaration scheme in Bone Regency does not stop at merely fulfilling administrative requirements, but rather involves a series of stages that trigger a gradual transformation in awareness. The main findings of this study are classified into four main stages: preparation, pre-certification, data entry/verification, and post-certification. To facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the contributions and flow of these findings, a model of the main findings is presented in the following table:

Tabel 4. Model of Key Findings on the Stages of Awareness Transformation and P3H Mentoring

Stage	Activities	Awareness Shift	Barriers	Output
Preparation	SOP & mentor recruitment	Initial knowledge	Limitation of human resources	Mentor readiness
Pre-certification	Socialization & education	Cognitive	Business actors' hesitation	Understanding of regulations
Input/Verification	SIHALAL & material inspection	Cognitive-conative	Digital literacy	Document completeness
Post-certification	Monitoring & evaluation	Affective-conative	Further supervision	Sustainable compliance

The research findings are analyzed using cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions to capture the shift in MSME operators' awareness. This framework aligns more closely with the concept of consciousness transformation the central focus of this study rather than merely measuring formal legal compliance.

3.1. The Halal Product Process (P3H) assistance mechanism implemented by LP3H IAIN Bone for MSME operators in Bone Regency

The Halal Product Process (P3H) assistance mechanism begins with the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that comply with the regulations of the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH). These SOPs serve as guidelines for facilitators in carrying out all stages of halal certification, ranging from outreach, administrative assistance, on-site verification, to the submission of halal certificate applications through the SIHALAL system. In addition, LP3H IAIN Bone also provides support for MSME operators through free assistance services so that business operators can participate in the halal certification program without being burdened by administrative costs.

In addition to developing SOPs, LP3H IAIN Bone implements an open recruitment system for halal mentors, open to individuals who meet the requirements and have completed training from BPJPH. The recruited mentors come from diverse professional backgrounds, enabling them to reach communities with varied characteristics. Grounded primarily in Reza A.A. Wattimena's Theory of Consciousness Transformation, the presence of mentors from within the community accelerates changes in the attitudes of MSME operators. Based on field findings, sustained, intensive interactions have been effective in dispelling SME owners' initial doubts regarding the objectives of the mentoring program [24]. In alignment with strategic communication frameworks

for social development, effective mentoring in community development projects must go beyond rigid top-down administration; it requires fostering genuine community engagement, local ownership, and active participation to ensure sustainable behavioral transformation [10].

Complementing this internal transformation process, the mentoring mechanism also provides procedural certainty for business owners. From the perspective of Soerjono Soekanto's Theory of Legal Awareness as a supporting framework, procedural certainty acts as a vital factor that supports the development of legal awareness among the public. Thus, the SOPs implemented by LP3H IAIN Bone contribute to enhancing SME operators' legal knowledge regarding the importance of halal certification as part of compliance with statutory regulations [25].

The pre-certification phase begins with proactive outreach, involving direct visits to the business locations of SME owners. Empirical findings from the field indicate that during the initial outreach phase, some SME owners initially showed resistance due to concerns that their personal data or product recipes might be disclosed. To overcome this psychological barrier, mentors employed a direct, persuasive approach at the business sites. From the perspective of Soerjono Soekanto's Theory of Legal Awareness, this approach effectively enhances MSME operators' legal knowledge and understanding of Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Guarantee [41].

These findings are strongly supported by previous research conducted by Liani et al. (2025), which demonstrated that structured socialization and halal certification outreach play a pivotal role in enhancing public knowledge, motivation, and comprehensive understanding regarding the urgency, procedures, and consumer protection benefits of halal product assurance. Furthermore, their study highlighted that such initiatives successfully foster a collective awareness of adopting a halal lifestyle in daily routines for both business actors and consumers [16]. Nevertheless, despite the positive impacts in boosting halal literacy, such implementation programs face notable limitations, particularly regarding relatively short implementation timeframes that constrain deep material exploration and practical registration simulations. To address these constraints, future initiatives are strongly recommended to move beyond short-term socialization by providing direct, continuous, and hands-on mentoring, such as the Self-Declare assistance mechanism, thereby ensuring that micro and small enterprise (MSE) operators achieve true independence in securing halal certification and maintaining product quality sustainably.

3.2. Transforming Awareness of Halal Certification Among MSME Operators in Bone Regency

The P3H mentoring program conducted by LP3H IAIN Bone has brought about changes in the cognitive aspects of MSME operators, particularly in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of halal certification. Based on Reza A.A. Wattimena's Theory of Consciousness Transformation, this shift in business owners' perspectives occurred because halal certification was initially perceived as a complex administrative requirement that offered few direct benefits; however, after receiving guidance, MSME business owners began to understand that halal certification serves as an instrument that ensures product quality while simultaneously boosting consumer trust through the provision of knowledge, experience, and ongoing interaction [24]. Before receiving the mentoring, most business owners assumed that products manufactured by a Muslim automatically met halal requirements; consequently, they had not paid attention to other factors that also determine a product's halal status, such as the origin of raw materials, food additives, production processes, storage, and the potential for cross-contamination. After participating in the mentoring process, their understanding of the concept of halal changed; SME operators began to realize that a product's halal status is determined not only by the producer's religious identity but also by the entire production process, which must comply with Halal Product Assurance regulations. This shift was facilitated by education on critical halal control points for raw materials, the use of clearly halal-certified ingredients, and the importance of maintaining hygiene.

Based on an analysis of Soerjono Soekanto's Theory of Legal Consciousness, this shift indicates an improvement in the indicators of legal knowledge and legal understanding, where by SME operators not only recognize the obligation for halal certification but also comprehend the purpose and benefits of such regulations as a form of consumer protection and product quality enhancement [25]. In line with Reza A.A. Wattimena's Theory of Consciousness Transformation, the shift in business owners' perspectives occurred because halal certification was initially perceived as a complex administrative requirement that offered few direct benefits; however, after receiving guidance, MSME business owners began to understand that halal certification serves as an instrument that ensures product quality while simultaneously boosting consumer trust through the provision of knowledge, experience, and ongoing interaction [24]. This shift in cognitive perspective aligns with the values in Surah Al - Baqarah, verse 168, which commands Muslims to consume food that is halal and thayyib. The understanding of thayyib (good, safe, clean, healthy, and free from questionable elements) encompasses the identification of raw materials, production processes, storage, and distribution to avoid cross-contamination as an implementation of the principle of prudence (ihtiyath).

These findings align with the research by Dewe Saktia Ardiantono, which states that an understanding of the halal supply chain and the identification of halal critical control points influence business operators' ability to maintain the consistency of product halal status [42]. Nevertheless, this study also found that changes in understanding have not been uniform across all MSME operators, as some informants still view halal certification

as merely an administrative requirement to comply with government regulations or to obtain assistance. This indicates that some business operators remain at the stage of legal knowledge without a deeper understanding, and that the process of consciousness transformation is occurring gradually, according to Reza A.A. Wattimena's Theory of Consciousness Transformation [20]. Furthermore, viewed from the perspective of social change and knowledge transformation, the P3H mentoring process serves as a vital mechanism to buffer the external pressures of halal regulations so that they do not become disruptive forces, but rather transform into internal motivations for business operators. As highlighted by Purnama, the internalized understanding of halal certification acts as a framework or worldview that shapes MSME actors' mindsets, ultimately driving substantive behavioral changes in their operational practices, interaction patterns, and active participation [43]. To further dissect this phenomenon, this dynamic can also be explained through Everett M. Rogers's Theory of Diffusion of Innovations. In this context, P3H assistants function as change agents who actively introduce halal certification and digital processes (SIHALAL) to culinary MSME operators. Through persuasion, continuous mentoring, and the proactive 'jemput bola' approach, traditional barriers and hesitations among business operators are gradually minimized, accelerating the adoption rate from mere awareness toward the implementation of standard halal production and active community participation [44].

This process of social change and innovation adoption unfolds systematically through the four stages of P3H mentoring implemented by LP3H IAIN Bone under the Self-Declare scheme via the SIHALAL application: (1) Preparation, involving SOP formulation and mentor recruitment ; (2) Pre-certification, where change agents (mentors) overcome initial psychological barriers and cultural halal assumptions through persuasive socialization; (3) Data input and field verification, where MSME operators shift from mere legal knowledge to conative action by navigating the digital system and inspecting halal critical control points; and (4) Post-certification, which ensures sustainable behavioral compliance, transforming halal certification from a mere administrative obligation into an integrated business standard.

These findings are supported by previous research conducted by Latifah, which examined halal product literacy socialization and demonstrated a positive impact, including an 11.21% increase in halal literacy and the initiation of halal certification processing for business actors. There are clear similarities between this current study and Latifah's work, as both investigate educational efforts to enhance literacy and are oriented toward driving business actors to obtain halal certificates [15]. However, a distinct difference lies in the approach and institutional base: while Latifah focused on community organization-based socialization in an urban setting (Surabaya), this study specifically analyzes structured institutional intervention from an academic body (LP3H IAIN Bone) through P3H mentoring to foster the transformation of MSME awareness in the agricultural and regional context of Bone Regency [15].

3.3. Supporting and Hindering Factors in the Implementation of P3H Assistance to Transform Awareness of Halal Certification Among MSME Operators in Bone Regency

Supporting factors in the implementation of P3H assistance indicate that the success of P3H assistance in Bone Regency is supported by complementary internal and external factors. From an external perspective, government support through the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI) has been one of the key factors driving increased participation by MSME operators in the halal certification program. The policy of waiving certification fees reduces the economic barriers that have long been the main reason business owners have delayed applying for halal certification, making it easier for MSME operators to access certification services without having to bear relatively high administrative costs.

In addition to government policy support, this study also found that business owners' motivation to develop their businesses is a key factor in the success of the mentoring program, as some business owners recognize that a halal certificate not only serves as proof of regulatory compliance but can also boost consumer trust, expand market access, and open opportunities for collaboration with modern retail markets and other institutions. This awareness encourages MSME entrepreneurs to actively seek information and participate in the halal certification process. From the perspective of Reza A.A. Wattimena's Theory of Consciousness Transformation, this situation indicates that the transformation of consciousness is influenced not only by the educational guidance provided by mentors but also by the entrepreneurs' internal motivation to improve the quality and competitiveness of their businesses [24]. Mentors serve as a stimulus that reinforces this awareness, so that MSME entrepreneurs no longer view halal certification as merely an administrative obligation, but as part of a sustainable business development strategy.

Furthermore, this internal transformation is reinforced by external dimensions through the lens of Soerjono Soekanto's Theory of Legal Awareness, where by easier access to certification services increases MSME operators' acceptance of the Halal Product Guarantee policy, making them more willing to voluntarily undergo the certification process [25]. This indicates that government policy support can serve as a factor that strengthens public legal awareness by providing services that are easily accessible and tailored to the needs of business operators. These research findings align with the results of Irma Yuliani's, which states that the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI) is able to increase the interest of MSME operators in applying for halal

certification by reducing economic barriers while simultaneously improving perceptions regarding the benefits of halal certification for business development a similar situation was also observed at LP3H IAIN Bone [45]. This, the success of the P3H mentoring program in Bone Regency is influenced by the synergy between government policy support through the SEHATI program and the motivation of MSME entrepreneurs to improve the quality of their businesses, where these two factors reinforce each other, thereby driving increased community participation in the halal certification program.

Meanwhile, the implementation of P3H assistance still faces several obstacles stemming from both internal factors among MSME operators and external factors related to the halal certification system, which affect the effectiveness of the assistance process from the outreach phase, through data entry, to the issuance of halal certificates. From an internal perspective, the study found that low levels of digital and legal literacy among some SME operators remain a challenge in the implementation of the assistance program. Some business owners are not yet accustomed to using digital-based services, so they have difficulty understanding the registration process through the SIHALAL application. Additionally, in the early stages of assistance, doubts were still expressed regarding the security of personal data used in the certification process, which required facilitators to provide repeated explanations so that business owners could understand the purpose of data use and the halal certification mechanism.

Based on Reza A.A. Wattimena's Theory of Consciousness Transformation, these barriers indicate that changing the community's mindset is a gradual process, in which MSME operators need time to adapt to new policies, particularly those related to technology use and changes in administrative procedures [24]. Thus, facilitators not only provide information but also help the community adjust to changes in the public service system. In alignment with this, based on Soerjono Soekanto's Theory of Legal Awareness, this situation also indicates that the public's level of legal knowledge and understanding remains varied; although some MSME operators have grasped the importance of halal certification, limitations in legal and digital literacy prevent the policy implementation process from running optimally. Consequently, enhancing legal awareness requires a continuous educational process tailored to the characteristics of the community.

In addition to internal factors, this study also identified external barriers in the form of limitations in the SIHALAL digital system and several administrative policies that affect the halal certification process. Based on the interview results, disruptions to the SIHALAL system caused delays in both data entry and certificate issuance, in addition to quota restrictions in the free halal certification program, which meant that not all products owned by MSME operators could be submitted immediately within a single service period. From the perspective of Islamic values, this situation warrants attention because the delivery of public services should be carried out based on the principle of justice as explained in Surah Al -An'am, verse 152, which emphasizes the importance of acting justly and granting rights to each party proportionally; in the context of this study, the principle of justice can be interpreted as an effort to provide equal opportunities for MSME operators to gain access to halal certification services in accordance with applicable regulations. The findings of this study align with the results of research by Salihah Khairawati, which state that the implementation of the SIHALAL application still faces various obstacles, including limitations in digital infrastructure, resource capacity, and administrative barriers in the halal certification process, and affirm that strengthening digital systems and simplifying procedures are key factors in enhancing the effectiveness of halal certification services [46]. This indicates that the effectiveness of mentoring at LP3H IAIN Bone is not only determined by the quality of the mentors but is also influenced by the readiness of the service system in use. Based on this discussion, it can be understood that obstacles in the implementation of P3H mentoring do not stem solely from the limitations of MSME actors, but are also influenced by institutional and service system factors; therefore, improving the effectiveness of the halal certification program requires strengthening the legal and digital literacy of MSME operators, accompanied by improvements to the service system and interagency coordination so that the halal certification process can proceed more effectively, efficiently, and sustainably.

From the perspective of innovation adoption and social change, the hindering factors, such as low digital literacy and constraints within the SIHALAL system represent classic friction points during the implementation phase of new public policies. According to Rogers's framework, when the complexity of an innovation (such as digital registration) is high and user readiness is low, it creates an adoption gap that requires intensive intervention from change agents (P3H mentors). Therefore, overcoming these technical and digital barriers requires not only simplifying administrative procedures but also strengthening continuous mentoring across the four implementation stages from preparation to post-certification to ensure that MSME operators can sustainably transition toward full halal compliance [21].

These findings are further supported by previous research conducted by Nurul Dzakyia Syifa, which examined the factors influencing the halal certification process among micro-enterprise food and beverage operators in Bone Regency [26]. Their study demonstrated that business operators' knowledge, awareness of the importance of halal certification, and certification costs significantly affect the certification process [26]. There is a very strong relevance and similarity between this current study and Syifa et al.'s work, as both share the same research locus (Bone Regency), subject (micro enterprises), and focus on halal awareness variables [26]. However,

a distinct difference lies in the analytical angle: while Syifa et al. captured internal factors influencing the current certification process, this study specifically investigates the external intervention, namely how LP3H IAIN Bone actively shapes and transforms that awareness through the practical field work of P3H mentors [47].

Despite providing valuable insights into the determinants of halal certification within the same regional context, such studies predominantly focus on broad factor analyses without delving deeply into the micro-processes of interpersonal communication and institutional assistance during mentoring [47]. Consequently, they often overlook how psychological barriers and traditional community assumptions are actively negotiated on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, future research is encouraged to integrate quantitative determinant assessments with qualitative or longitudinal analyses to capture the dynamic interplay between institutional mentoring and the evolution of micro-enterprise compliance over time.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the P3H mentoring program conducted by LP3H IAIN Bone has contributed to a shift in awareness regarding halal certification among MSME operators in Bone Regency. This transformation occurred through the stages of preparation, pre-certification, data entry and field verification, as well as post-certification. The changes were evident not only in increased knowledge regarding halal certification requirements but also in a shift in business owners' perspectives toward product halalness as a process encompassing raw materials, production, storage, and distribution.

This shift in awareness was influenced by the interaction between proactive mentoring, support from the free halal certification policy, and the religious and economic motivations of MSME operators. Conversely, low digital and legal literacy, concerns about data security, limitations of the SIHALAL system, and quota restrictions were factors that hindered the optimization of mentoring efforts. These findings underscore that the success of halal certification policies cannot be measured solely by the number of certificates issued but must also be assessed in terms of changes in the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of business operators following the receipt of assistance. Theoretically, this study expands the body of research on legal awareness by demonstrating that P3H assistance can function as a socio-educational mechanism in transforming legal knowledge into more substantive understanding and compliance. Practically, LP3H and policymakers need to strengthen the digital and legal literacy of MSME operators, enhance post-certification mentoring, and improve digital service systems so that the halal certification process can proceed in a more inclusive and sustainable manner.

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the findings indicate that the transformation of halal certification awareness is a process that does not occur instantaneously, but rather develops through interactions among knowledge, experience, mentoring, and changes in business owners' attitudes. The legal awareness approach becomes relevant to explain the shift from merely knowing certification requirements toward acceptance and compliance with the substance of halal product assurance.

Practically, LP3H needs to develop a mentoring model that does not stop at certificate issuance, but continues through post-certification monitoring. The mentoring program should also integrate digital literacy, legal literacy, and an understanding of the critical points of product halalness. For the government and BPJPH, findings regarding the limitations of the SIHALAL system highlight the importance of simplifying procedures, improving system stability, and providing technical support for MSMEs with limited digital capabilities. This study has several limitations. First, the research focuses on LP3H IAIN Bone and MSME operators within its mentoring scope, meaning the findings cannot be generalized to all MSMEs or LP3H institutions across Indonesia. Second, the study employs a qualitative approach, meaning that changes in MSME operators' awareness are analyzed based on informants' experiences and narratives rather than quantitative measurements. Third, the study does not longitudinally evaluate the sustained compliance of MSME operators after the halal certificates are issued. Future research could develop comparative studies across LP3H institutions or use mixed methods approaches to measure awareness changes and compliance more quantitatively. In addition, future studies are encouraged to utilize mixed-methods or longitudinal tracking across various LP3H organizations to precisely measure long-term behavioral compliance and assess the wider socio-economic effects of halal certification support."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express our deepest gratitude to all parties who have contributed and supported the completion of this research. Special thanks are extended to the Head and Management of LP3H IAIN Bone, as well as the Halal Product Process Assistants (P3H), for their valuable time, data, and cooperation throughout the fieldwork. We also gratefully acknowledge the culinary micro and small enterprise (UMK) owners in Bone Regency who willingly participated and shared their experiences during the interviews and observations. Finally, we thank the anonymous reviewers and editors for their insightful comments and suggestions that significantly improved the quality of this manuscript.

REFERENCES

- [1] Kemenperin RI, "Strategi industri halal Kemenperin: Dari infrastruktur nasional ke pasar dunia," Kementerian Perindustrian Republik Indonesia. Diakses: 27 Januari 2026. [Daring]. Tersedia pada: <https://halal.kemenperin.go.id/berita/strategi-industri-halal-kemenperin-dari-infrastruktur-nasional-ke-pasar-dunia>
- [2] Prayer Times, "Global Muslim population," Prayer Times. Diakses: 9 Juli 2026. [Daring]. Tersedia pada: <https://timesprayer.com/en/muslim-population/>
- [3] BPJPH, "Masa penahapan usai, kewajiban sertifikasi halal berlaku mulai 18 Oktober 2024," Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal. Diakses: 18 Januari 2026. [Daring]. Tersedia pada: <https://bpjph.halal.go.id/detail/masa-penahapan-usai-kewajiban-sertifikasi-halal-berlaku-mulai-18-oktober-2024>
- [4] G. Elliott, C. Fourali, dan S. Issler, *Education and social change*. London: Continuum, 2012.
- [5] Kemenperin RI, "Sistem informasi industri halal," Kementerian Perindustrian Republik Indonesia. Diakses: 27 Januari 2026. [Daring]. Tersedia pada: <https://halal.kemenperin.go.id/informasi-publik/sistem-informasi-industri-halal>
- [6] BPS Kabupaten Bone, *Kabupaten Bone dalam angka 2025*, 20 ed. BPS Kabupaten Bone, 2025.
- [7] D. Erlangga dan A. Patimbangi, "Analisis minat pelaku UMK dalam menggunakan sertifikat halal pada Kecamatan Tanete Riattang Barat Kabupaten Bone," *J. Ikraith-Ekonomika*, vol. 8, no. 3, hal. 786–795, 2025, doi: 10.37817/ikraith-ekonomika.v8i3.
- [8] A. Sukamto, E. Nurachmad, A. Mulyana, D. Hendrawan, A. A. Sugiarto, dan D. R. Wandika, "Penguatan kapasitas UMK dalam sertifikasi halal melalui pendampingan teknologi aplikasi SiHalam di Kota Bogor," *J. Abdimas Dedik. Kesatuan*, vol. 7, no. 1, hal. 53–58, Jan 2026, doi: 10.37641/jadkes.v7i1.4964.
- [9] Y. Khaskheli, S. Shaikh, dan I. Khoso, "Determinants influencing the growth of women-owned micro and small businesses: A quantitative study of rural areas in Sindh Province," *J. Manag. Sci. Res. Rev.*, vol. 5, no. 1, hal. 336–356, 2026.
- [10] B. Joshi, "Strategic communication for social development: Lessons for communication practice in community development projects," *J. Commun. Manag.*, vol. 30, no. 1, hal. 41–55, Jan 2026, doi: 10.1108/JCOM-09-2024-0191.
- [11] W. Ayers, T. M. Quinn, dan D. Stovall, *Handbook of social justice in education*. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- [12] Z. A. Fauziah, R. S. Sabilla, R. Khoerunnisa, dan L. Marlina, "Dampak literasi halal food dan kesadaran sertifikasi halal terhadap keputusan pembelian Korean food (Studi kasus Generasi Z)," *Ekon. Keuang. Syariah dan Akunt. Pajak*, vol. 2, no. 4, hal. 30–43, Okt 2025, doi: 10.61132/eksap.v2i4.1584.
- [13] Heriyani, A. I. Fahrika, dan Fitriani, "Penerapan perilaku halal lifestyle terhadap minat beli produk berlabel halal di platform e-commerce Shopee (Studi pada Gen Z di Kabupaten Bone)," *EKOMA J. Ekon. Manajemen, Akunt.*, vol. 4, no. 4, hal. 6616–6630, 2025, doi: 10.56799/ekoma.v4i4.9183.
- [14] A. Sartika G., I. Amir, Satriadi, Rosita, dan Ilmiyati, "Urgensi sertifikasi halal dan pencantuman label halal terhadap produk Usaha Mikro Kecil dan Menengah," *Const. Law Rev.*, vol. 1, no. 2, hal. 92–101, Okt 2022, doi: 10.30863/clr.v1i2.4002.
- [15] L. Latifah, F. Huda, Krisdianto, M. Sya'roni, dan I. Hozaini, "Sosialisasi literasi produk halal dan sertifikat halal di PCM Krembangan Surabaya," *J. Serambi Abdimas*, vol. 6, no. 01, hal. 17, Jun 2025, doi: 10.20884/sa.v6i01.15096.
- [16] A. Liani *et al.*, "Improving halal literacy through socialization of halal product certification for the Menjangan Village community," *BATIK J. Pengemb. dan Pengabd. Masy. Multikultural*, vol. 3, no. 3, hal. 141–147, 2025, doi: 10.57152/batik.v3i3.2423.
- [17] I. D. Lestari, Engkus, dan W. S. Abdillah, "Efektivitas pelayanan Sertifikasi Halal Gratis (SEHATI) melalui mekanisme self declare bagi UMK di LP3H UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung," *Din. J. Ilm. Ilmu Adm. Negara*, vol. 12, no. 3, hal. 3–12, 2025.
- [18] A. Tarhib dan S. Zulaikha, "Strategi Metro Halal Center dalam meningkatkan kesadaran pelaku UMK terhadap sertifikasi halal," *At-Thullab J.*, vol. 6, no. 2, hal. 1762–1781, 2024, doi: 10.20885/tullab.vol6.iss2.art11.
- [19] R. Fitri dan A. A. Anindya, "Sertifikasi halal dan pengaruhnya terhadap kinerja UMK," *J. J-Pro*, vol. 5, no. 2, hal. 324–336, 2024.
- [20] K. Nurhidayat, Afdawaiza, dan A. P. Handayani, "Pengaruh kepemilikan sertifikasi halal dan modal usaha terhadap pendapatan usaha: Studi empiris pada pelaku usaha mikro kecil dan menengah (UMK) bidang kuliner di Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta," *Al-Masharif J. Ilmu Ekon. dan Keislam.*, vol. 12, no. 2, hal. 139–155, 2024.
- [21] S. Wahyuningsih, "Peran pendamping proses produk halal terhadap pelaku usaha mikro di Kota Parepare," IAIN Parepare, 2024.
- [22] BPJPH, "Lembaga pendampingan proses produk halal," Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal. Diakses: 13 April 2026. [Daring]. Tersedia pada: <http://app.halal.go.id/dashboard/html/lp3hprofile?id=7fc31673-07d3-4379-9e47-cc1ac3a9bcc8>
- [23] Zakaria, *Laporan LP3H IAIN Bone: Wawancara 01 April 2026*. 2026.
- [24] R. A. A. Wattimena, *Teori transformasi kesadaran dan pengembangannya*, 1 ed. Rumah Filsafat, 2025.
- [25] S. Soekanto, *Kesadaran hukum dan kepatuhan hukum*. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 1982.
- [26] J. W. Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Washington: Sage Publications, 2014.
- [27] L. J. Moleong, *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*, Revisi. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2017.
- [28] R. Bogdan dan S. K. Biklen, *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*, 5 ed. Boston: Pearson, 2007.
- [29] Sugiyono, *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019.
- [30] M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*, 4 ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015.
- [31] M. B. Miles, A. M. Huberman, dan J. Saldaña, *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*, 13 ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2014.

- [32] B. G. Glaser dan A. L. Strauss, *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967.
- [33] J. P. Spradley, *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Waveland Press, 1979.
- [34] C. Marshall dan G. B. Rossman, *Designing qualitative research*, 6 ed. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2016.
- [35] Y. S. Lincoln dan E. G. Guba, *Naturalistic inquiry*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 1985.
- [36] J. Corbin dan A. Strauss, *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2014.
- [37] K. F. Punch, *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, 2005.
- [38] U. Sekaran dan R. Bougie, *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach*, 7 ed. Wiley, 2016.
- [39] N. K. Denzin dan Y. S. Lincoln, *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2017.
- [40] K. L. Turabian, *A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations*, 9 ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.
- [41] U. Unisara, T. I. Purnamasari, dan L. F. Cahyadi, “Kesadaran hukum pelaku Usaha Mikro dan Kecil (UMK) produk makanan dalam melaksanakan sertifikasi halal melalui self declare perspektif hukum Islam di Desa Sedau Kecamatan Narmada Kabupaten Lombok Barat,” *Muamalat J. Kaji. Huk. Ekon. Syariah*, vol. 16, no. 1, 2024.
- [42] D. S. Ardiantono, G. D. Ardyansyah, M. F. Sugihartanto, M. U. Al Mustofa, dan N. Lisdiantini, “Mapping the barrier and strategic solutions of halal supply chain implementation in small and medium enterprises,” *J. Islam. Mark.*, vol. 15, no. 7, hal. 1673–1705, Jun 2024, doi: 10.1108/JIMA-08-2022-0229.
- [43] M. Y. Purnama dan R. Ulinnuha, “Transformasi pengetahuan dan realitas sosial pelaku UMK tentang label halal,” *J. Anal. Sociol.*, vol. 12, no. 4, Okt 2023, doi: 10.20961/jas.v12i4.71327.
- [44] V. Hoffmann, *Knowledge and innovation management (KIM): Module reader M 4301-410 (A 7020)*. Stuttgart: Universität Hohenheim, 2011.
- [45] I. Yuliani, “Implementasi program sertifikasi halal gratis (Sehati) dalam mendorong minat pelaku UMK Indonesia mengajukan sertifikasi halal,” *J. Manag. Sharia Bus.*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2023, doi: 10.30983/krigan.v1i2.7630.
- [46] S. Khairawati, S. Murtiyani, Wijiharta, I. Yusanto, dan M. B. Murtadlo, “Kendala sertifikasi halal pada UMK di Indoneisa: Sebuah kajian literatur,” *J. Akuntansi, Manaj. dan Ilmu Ekon.*, vol. 5, no. 2, hal. 242–256, 2025.
- [47] N. D. Syifa, S. N. Marzuki, dan R. Novianty, “Analisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi proses mendapatkan sertifikasi halal di kalangan para pelaku usaha mikro di Kabupaten Bone,” *J. Innov. Creat.*, vol. 5, no. 2, hal. 10224–10245, Jul 2025, doi: 10.31004/joecy.v5i2.1743.