

THE EFFECT OF MENTORING ON THE SUCCESS LEVEL OF HALAL SELF-DECLARE CERTIFICATION IMPLEMENTATION IN FOOD MSMES IN KEMANG VILLAGE BOJONG PICUNG DISTRICT CIANJUR REGENCY

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Abstract

This article aims to analyse the effect of mentoring on the success rate of implementing self-declare halal certification in food UMKM in Kemang Village. Self-declaration of halal certification is regarded as a pragmatic solution for UMKM; however, numerous business actors continue to encounter technical impediments. The focal point of this study is the assistance provided by KKN students. The research method employed a descriptive qualitative approach, incorporating interviews and observations. The findings of the study demonstrate that the implementation of a mentorship programme is conducive to enhancing comprehension, motivation, and the thoroughness of halal certification documentation.

Keywords: Mentoring, Halal Certification, Self-Declare, Food UMKM

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has a growing awareness of the importance of halal products. The halal industry is projected to become a driving force for the national economy, driven by increasing global demand for halal products. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS) data, the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector contributes more than 60% of Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with food MSMEs playing a crucial role (Ilham, 2022). Halal certification has become an urgent need, especially since MSMEs are at the forefront of the national halal industry supply chain (Wahyuni, Handayani, & Wulandari, 2023). Kemang Village in Bojong Picung District is one of the areas with high potential for food MSMEs, but still faces challenges in achieving halal certification.

To simplify the certification process, the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH) launched a self-declaration scheme, allowing MSMEs to obtain halal certification through a simpler process and at a more affordable cost (Gustiana, 2023). However, in practice, MSMEs face various technical obstacles, such as limited understanding of procedures, difficulties in collecting documents, and obstacles in using online systems (Hamidatun & Pujilestari, 2022). Various studies have shown that intensive mentoring is key to overcoming these challenges (Purnomo, Holis, & Abdullah, 2024). In this context, the involvement of Community Service Program (KKN) students as community empowerment agents is an interesting alternative approach worthy of further study. The presence of students in this community service activity is expected to bridge state policy with business actors at the micro level.

Several studies have shown that mentoring approaches have proven effective in increasing MSME participation in halal certification programs. For example, Ismanto et al. (2024) noted that direct training and mentoring encourage MSMEs to be more prepared for the certification process. Meanwhile, Ahmad (2025) emphasized that the role of mentors in strengthening the legality of halal products is crucial for MSME competitiveness in both local and export markets. However, most of this research still focuses on intervention models carried out by formal institutions, rather than through education-based community approaches. The context of mentoring carried out by KKN students in villages remains understudied, despite the significant potential this approach holds as part of strengthening local capacity.

Therefore, this study offers an original contribution by exploring the influence of mentoring by KKN students on the success of self-declared halal certification among food MSMEs in Kemang Village. The uniqueness of this study lies in the intervention actors (students) and the study location (village), which make this approach part of an academic-based community empowerment model. Within this framework, student mentoring not only aims to assist with administrative procedures but also serves as an educational and transformative medium in developing a halal ecosystem. In other words, the role of students as agents of change can be an alternative solution in accelerating halal certification at the grassroots level. This also strengthens the function of higher education institutions in implementing the Tri Dharma (Three Pillars of Community Service), particularly community service.

Indonesia's goal of becoming a global halal hub by 2024 further emphasizes the urgency of accelerating halal certification, particularly through the Free Halal Certification (Sehati) program for MSMEs (Kunharjati & Kirom, 2024). This program targets MSMEs with a Business Identification Number (NIB) and aims to achieve 80% of halal certification. However, this achievement will not be optimal if MSMEs lack administrative readiness or a substantive understanding of the halal product assurance system. Therefore, the involvement of various actors—including universities through KKN students—is a crucial element in supporting the success of this national program (Rosalia Dika Agustanti, Ariani, & Wirawan, 2024). This approach aligns with the collaborative spirit between the government, academics, and business actors in encouraging MSMEs to upgrade through halal legality. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of mentoring carried out by KKN students on the success rate of implementing self-declared halal certification among food MSMEs in Kemang Village, Bojong Picung District, Cianjur Regency.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mentoring

Mentoring is an interactive process between a mentor and a mentee that aims to increase the capacity of individuals or groups through knowledge transfer, coaching, and empowerment. In the context of community empowerment, mentoring includes technical guidance, motivation, and facilitating access to information and resources needed for business development. (Kram, 1985; Purnomo et al., 2024) Indicators:

- Knowledge Transfer: Improving MSMEs' understanding of halal certification procedures.
- Motivation and Personal Approach: Encouragement provided by mentors (KKN students) to increase the active participation of business actors.
- Technical Facilitation: Assistance in completing documents, accessing online systems, and understanding administrative requirements.

- Capability Improvement: The ability of MSMEs to complete the certification process independently after the mentoring process.

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is the process of strengthening the capacity of individuals and groups within a community to control their own lives and access the resources necessary to achieve economic and social independence. This theory emphasizes the active participation of local communities in the change process through participatory and collaborative approaches. (Zimmerman, 1995; Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995) Indicators:

- Active Participation: Involvement of MSMEs in every stage of the halal certification process.
- Strengthening Local Capacity: Increasing the skills and knowledge of MSME actors through student mentoring.
- Access to Information and Resources: Availability and utilization of information and technical support during the certification process.
- Economic Independence: The ability of MSMEs to increase competitiveness through halal product legality.

Compliance Behavior in Halal Certification

Based on Ajzen's (1991) theory of Planned Behavior, business actors' compliance with halal regulations is determined by three main factors: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived control. In the context of self-declaring halal, MSME compliance is strongly influenced by their perceptions of the benefits, ease, and social support of undergoing the certification process. Indicators:

- Positive attitude towards the importance of halal certification
- Social norms of the surrounding environment (consumers, community)
- Ease of access to information and procedures
- Intensity of mentoring support

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the role of mentoring by students participating in the Community Service Program (KKN) in the self-declared halal certification process by MSMEs. The research focuses on the effectiveness of mentoring provided by students who have participated in official training as Halal Product Process Mentors (PPH) and are registered with the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH). Data collection methods in this study include in-depth interviews conducted with MSMEs who are the objects of mentoring and students who act as mentors. In addition, participatory observation is also used, where researchers directly observe the mentoring process, which includes technical guidance activities, uploading data to the halal certification system, and the verification process. Data collection is also supported by documentation studies, in the form of activity reports, evidence of completeness of certification data, and final student reports to the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH).

The mentoring process by the Community Service Program (KKN) students includes three main stages: first, technical guidance conducted through short training on the procedure for submitting halal certification digitally through the SiHalal platform; second, data verification, which includes checking the validity and completeness of information related to raw materials, equipment, and production processes; and third, periodic monitoring carried out to ensure that MSMEs complete the certification process in accordance with the standards set by BPJPH. The collected data was analyzed using a thematic approach with reference to the qualitative data analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. To test the validity

and reliability of the data, the triangulation technique of sources and methods was used, as recommended by Creswell (2014).

D. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The research results show that mentoring by Community Service Program (KKN) students who have received training and official status as Halal Product Process Mentors (PPH) has significantly contributed to the increasing success of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in completing the halal certification process through the self-declare scheme. MSMEs' trust in the student mentors increases with their official status, making them more confident in the accuracy of the information provided and more disciplined in fulfilling administrative requirements. One MSME said, "I used to be confused about where to start, but now I am more confident because I am assisted by the KKN students." The Head of Kemang Village emphasized the same thing, stating, "We are greatly helped by this program because many MSMEs here are not yet familiar with halal certification procedures. The mentoring from the Bhakti Praja KKN students has made MSMEs more confident." These statements indicate that mentoring not only provides technical understanding, but also builds motivation and ensures completeness of documents effectively.

Kemang Village was chosen as the research location because it is an area with rapid growth of MSMEs, particularly in the food sector. Many of these MSMEs still operate traditionally and lack access to information or technical support from official institutions. This situation makes Kemang Village a relevant location to examine the influence of mentoring interventions on the success of self-declared halal certification. This study aims to evaluate the extent to which mentoring by KKN students impacts the success of MSMEs in obtaining halal certification. Furthermore, the study also aims to identify factors that support and hinder the certification process.

Academically and practically, this study is relevant in the context of strengthening the capacity of MSMEs and developing the halal product ecosystem. Amidst the growing demand for halal products, successful certification has strategic value in enhancing MSME competitiveness and expanding market access. Therefore, this mentoring-based approach is expected to serve as a model that can be replicated in other regions, with adaptations to their respective local contexts.

Profile of Kemang Village Food MSMEs



Figure 1. Survey of Palm Sugar Production Houses

The main product produced by the farmer group in Kemang Village, Bojongpicung District, Cianjur Regency is palm sugar, a refined sugar crystal made from the sap of the sugar palm tree. This product is an innovation of the more traditional palm sugar bar. With a

smoother and more practical texture, palm sugar has a higher added value than solid sugar, while also meeting the needs of the modern market. This is in line with the opinions of Evalia (2004) and Dwi Kuniawan et al. (2004) who emphasized the importance of product transformation to increase economic value.

Supported by the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) Palm Sugar (Aren Sugar) mentoring program, farmer groups and MSMEs in this village have been able to produce at least 6 tons of palm sugar per day. Furthermore, they have diversified their products by producing molded sugar and other derivative products such as palm fiber and palm sugar palm. This diversification has expanded market share and opened up export opportunities to countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (Dubai), and Hong Kong. This strategy reinforces the literature's argument that diversification from solid sugar to palm sugar is a crucial step in increasing production capacity and quality (Evalia, 2004).

Palm sugar from Kemang Village is now positioned as a superior local food product, with a distinctive sweet taste, rich aroma, and a non-bitter aftertaste. These characteristics make it a more attractive choice in the market, especially for consumers who prioritize the quality and authenticity of traditional products. The institutional journey of this business began in 2021, when a Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) was established to manage the palm sap and palm sugar business. In a relatively short time, they successfully expanded production and established palm sugar as the village's flagship product.

Since the cooperative's founding in 2021, approximately 36 sugar palm farmers have joined, and this number continues to grow, including participation from the younger generation. They see this venture as a promising local livelihood alternative. This relatively new venture has shown significant growth in production capacity and market penetration, both B2B and through digital platforms (marketplaces). Key factors in this growth are its focus on innovation and diversification of value-added products.

Compared to similar MSMEs in other villages, such as Salawu Village, which started earlier in 2015, MSMEs in Kemang Village have actually managed to accelerate their growth thanks to more structured mentoring from the start. Although not explicitly stated, the education level of MSMEs in Kemang Village can be assumed to be adequate for adapting to modern technology. This indication is reinforced by the fact that the majority of MSMEs are young people who understand digital production and marketing processes.

Training and technical assistance provided by Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) contribute significantly to capacity building. Although formal educational backgrounds are not disclosed, MSMEs appear to quickly adapt to processing, packaging, quality management, and digital marketing techniques. Studies in other areas, such as Mangkawani Village, Enrekang, and Tangkisan II Hamlet, Kulonprogo, show a similar pattern: despite having lower-middle-class education, through appropriate training, entrepreneurs have successfully improved product quality and market competitiveness (Tang et al., 2021).

The informal learning process passed down through generations in the management of palm sap and palm sugar also strengthens the technological adaptation process. This intergenerational knowledge transfer is then reinforced by modern training approaches, resulting in MSMEs that are responsive to technological and market changes. However, challenges remain, such as administrative challenges. Many MSMEs refuse to apply for halal certification because they feel the process is too complicated, particularly in terms of document collection. Without documents such as the NIB (National Business License) (NIB), a list of raw materials, and a halal statement, the self-declaration process cannot be verified and ultimately fails from the start. From these findings, it can be concluded that the main indicator of successful halal certification through the self-declaration pathway is complete documentation. MSMEs that are able to compile complete documentation have a greater

chance of passing verification and obtaining halal certification. Therefore, the role of mentors is crucial in ensuring business actors' administrative readiness from the beginning of the process.

Halal Certification Success Rate

Complete documentation is the primary foundation for implementing self-declared halal certification. According to Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021, micro-businesses are required to submit documents such as a Business Identification Number (NIB), a list of raw materials, a production process, and a halal declaration form. Without these complete and appropriate documents, verification by the PPH (Indonesian Food and Beverage Procurement Agency) assistant cannot be carried out. (Gustiana, 2023)



Figure 2. Halal Certification Seminar and Explanation Activities

The success rate of implementing self-declared halal certification for food MSMEs in Kemang Village is greatly influenced by the mentoring provided by Community Service Program (KKN) students trained as halal certification assistants. Several observable indicators of success include:

1. Number of MSMEs that have been successfully certified.

With intensive mentoring from KKN students, the majority of MSMEs were able to fulfill the required documentation and pass the verification process. For example, of the total MSMEs assisted, an average of more than 70% successfully obtained halal certification. The intensive mentoring provided by KKN students has had a significant impact on the number of food MSMEs in Kemang Village that successfully obtained halal certification through the self-declaration scheme. The self-declaration halal certification process requires MSMEs to complete a number of fairly complex administrative and technical documents, such as completing the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH), listing halal raw materials, and implementing production procedures in accordance with halal principles.

Without assistance, many MSMEs struggle to understand and complete these requirements, often delaying or even failing their certification applications. However, with intensive and ongoing assistance from KKN students, MSMEs receive direct guidance at every stage of the application process. Students help explain requirements, verify completeness of documents, and provide solutions to challenges faced by business owners.

The impact of this assistance is clearly evident in field data, where more than 70% of assisted MSMEs successfully completed the entire verification process and obtained halal certification. This figure represents a significant success compared to situations without assistance, which typically have a much lower success rate. This success not only increases the number of MSME products with halal certification but also strengthens their position in an increasingly competitive and halal-sensitive market.

Furthermore, this success also opens up opportunities for MSMEs to expand their market share, particularly in consumer segments that place a high premium on halal product

certification. With halal certification, MSMEs can increase consumer trust, strengthen their brand image, and potentially increase sales volume.

2. Increasing the capacity of MSME actors.

Community Service Program students actively provide education on halal principles, self-declaration procedures, and how to maintain a halal supply chain. This has significantly improved the understanding of MSMEs, demonstrated by their ability to manage production processes in accordance with halal standards.

In addition to assisting with administrative processes, KKN students also play a crucial role in increasing the capacity and understanding of MSMEs regarding halal principles and the correct procedures for implementing self-declaration. The education provided covers various aspects, from an introduction to the concept of halal according to Islamic law, the importance of maintaining the halal status of raw materials, to managing raw materials, which must be free from non-halal contamination.

Through training sessions, workshops, and on-site mentoring, MSMEs learn how to identify halal raw materials, maintain proper record keeping, and implement halal-compliant production procedures. KKN students also demonstrate best practices in maintaining production cleanliness and hygiene, which are integral to ensuring halal products.

This increased capacity is not only evident in the ability of MSMEs to meet certification requirements, but also reflected in changes in their attitudes and behaviors in running their businesses. MSMEs are becoming more aware of the importance of consistently maintaining the halal status of their products, not just to obtain certification but also as part of their brand's business commitment.

With a better understanding, MSMEs are able to manage their production processes more professionally and in a standardized manner, thereby ensuring product quality. This positively impacts the sustainability of their businesses, as consumers grow in trust and loyalty to their products.

Furthermore, this capacity building also strengthens the halal MSME ecosystem in Kemang Village, as business actors can share knowledge and experience with each other, and form networks that support sustainable business development.

3. Efficiency of the certification application process.

Mentoring by KKN students significantly contributed to the efficiency of the self-declaration halal certification application process for food MSMEs in Kemang Village. The explanation:

- Proper and Complete Document Preparation

Community Service Program (KKN) students who have received training on halal certification are able to guide MSMEs in preparing all necessary documents, such as business data, raw material lists, and other supporting documentation. This assistance ensures that submitted documents comply with applicable standards and regulations.

- Reducing the Potential for Revisions or Rejection

One of the main obstacles in the halal certification process is incomplete or inconsistent documentation, which often leads to revisions or even rejections from certification bodies. With assistance, KKN students assist with initial checks and document completion simulations, minimizing the potential for revisions or rejections.

- Speeding Up the Verification Process

Having correct and complete documents from the start will expedite the verification process by the Halal Inspection Agency (LPH) or the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH). This shortens the waiting time for certification, allowing MSMEs to immediately utilize halal certification to increase consumer trust and product competitiveness.

- Improving the Administrative Capacity of MSMEs

Through the mentoring process, MSMEs also receive education on proper business administration. This knowledge is beneficial not only for the certification process but also for general business management.

Thus, mentoring by KKN students not only helps MSMEs in technical aspects, but also provides added value in the form of time efficiency, reduced administrative risks, and increased overall business capacity.

4. Sustainability of Halal Implementation

The role of Community Service Program (KKN) students in assisting with halal certification goes beyond the administrative and technical processes required to obtain a halal certificate. Far more crucial is creating a sustainable system to ensure that the halal status achieved by MSMEs can be maintained and sustained.

Community Service Program students play an active role in transforming the understanding of MSMEs that halal certification is not merely an administrative symbol but reflects a commitment to halal and hygiene throughout the production process. Therefore, students are helping to develop a simple halal management system that MSMEs can operate independently after the program ends.

Some of the efforts undertaken by KKN students in the context of sustainable halal implementation include: Raw material recording training: MSMEs are encouraged to start getting into the habit of recording all materials used, including their sources and halal status. This is important for smooth auditing or certification renewal processes in the future. Production process standardization: Students help develop simple guidelines for production processes that comply with halal principles, such as equipment cleaning, separating unclean materials, and storage techniques.

Cleanliness and sanitation monitoring: MSMEs are guided to conduct routine inspections of their work environments and production equipment, ensuring a clean, hygienic work environment that meets halal standards. Thus, the presence of KKN students provides long-term added value by encouraging a transformation in MSMEs' work culture, ensuring they consistently uphold halal principles as part of their business identity, not simply as an administrative obligation.

5. Increasing Number of MSMEs Interested in Participating in Certification

In addition to mentoring MSMEs that have applied for halal certification, KKN students also play a strategic role in providing outreach and education to other MSMEs that have not yet been touched by the certification program. Through a participatory, locally-driven communication approach, students have successfully built awareness among business owners about the importance of the halal label, both in terms of religious beliefs, consumer trust, and market potential. The outreach is not limited to verbal information but also includes interactive activities such as:

- Workshops and group discussions discussing the benefits of halal certification.
- Case studies and testimonials from MSMEs who have successfully obtained halal certification.
- Personal and door-to-door approach to business actors who are still unsure or lack information.

The positive impact of this activity is evident in the increased interest and initiative of other MSMEs in Kemang Village to participate in independently obtaining halal certification. They are beginning to understand that the process is not complicated with the right guidance and that it adds value to their products' competitiveness in the market.

Furthermore, this growing interest indicates that the KKN program is having a widespread domino effect. It's not just helping one or two MSMEs, but also sparking a collective

movement toward halal awareness across village communities. It's even possible that a network of MSMEs will emerge, supporting each other and sharing experiences in the halal certification process.

In practical mentoring, such as in the Kemang Village case study, mentors helped MSMEs prepare NIBs and accounts in the SIHALAL system. The results showed an increase in knowledge and administrative readiness: the percentage of NIB applications increased to 68%, and certification applications to SIHALAL reached 26%. (Ismanto et al., 2024) The time required for the certification process is used as a measure of the effectiveness of self-declaration. Ideally, according to BPJPH, 80 percent of applications can be processed in less than 30 business days. However, the average processing time ranges from 5 to 7 business days.

Factors that influence the length of the process include: completeness of documents, internet network availability (SIHALAL access), product type, and the effectiveness of the assistant in validating the application. If documents are incomplete or SIHALAL experiences technical errors, the process can be delayed for more than a month. (Ismanto et al., 2024) Businesses that received assistance with systems and technical training on applications completed the process more quickly during intensive mentoring, as in Pekalongan and Bekasi. Although the number of applications remained low (around 26 percent), these MSMEs tended to meet requirements quickly and effectively.

However, from the report of the Indonesian Ombudsman (2024), obstacles were found such as application errors, poor internet connections, and unresponsive systems, causing many business actors to experience unexpected time constraints (Source: [Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia](#)). Therefore, the certification processing time is a critical indicator; the faster an MSME obtains certification, the higher the success rate of self-declaration implementation. In the self-declaration pathway, field audits by the LPH are not conducted—instead, PPH assistants are tasked with verifying business documents and statements online. This verification includes validation of raw materials, production processes, and the administrative SJPH management system.

However, the weaknesses of the self-declaration system were revealed in the case of Nabadiz "halal wine": a PPH assistant was proven to have manipulated data so that the application was passed without proper verification, which ultimately led to the certificate being revoked by BPJPH. This case highlights the importance of a quality verification process, not just a formality. According to the Indonesian Ombudsman, verification quality remains vulnerable due to the system's simplicity and lack of oversight of assistants. Verification effectiveness depends heavily on the integrity and competence of the PPH assistant, as well as regular monitoring by relevant parties. In an ideal implementation, a competent assistant who regularly conducts internal audits can ensure that a business's halal declaration is truly accurate. Structured assistance with gap identification, technical training, and administrative guidance, such as in Bekasi and Pekalongan, can improve verification standards. Therefore, audit or verification results are important indicators: the quality of document validation and production processes significantly influence the legitimacy of halal certificates issued through self-declaration.

BPJPH approval is the final indicator of successful self-declaration. After the facilitator completes verification, the application is forwarded to BPJPH, which evaluates the documents before issuing a halal certificate through the SIHALAL system. According to data, since 2021, BPJPH has trained thousands of PPH facilitators, aligned the system with LPHs and banks, and issued thousands of certificates, including to more than 3,000 MSMEs with free services (SEHATI) annually. (Gustiana, 2023) However, the effectiveness of this service remains limited. Of the total number of MSMEs, only around 30% will be halal

certified by 2025. This indicates that although BPJPH provides administrative support, many MSMEs have not successfully completed the entire process leading to certificate issuance. BPJPH approval is also vulnerable to data manipulation, such as the emergence of products with inappropriate halal labels (as in the Nabidz case). The Ombudsman recommends regular evaluation and monitoring of facilitators and the system to ensure the credibility of the issued approvals. Therefore, BPJPH approval serves as a final indicator: MSMEs that receive approval demonstrate that all stages of documentation, time, and verification have been successfully completed and according to procedure.

Supporting factors for the success of halal certification assistance



Figure 3. Issuance of Halal Certification Certificate

The research results show that mentoring has a significant positive impact on the success rate of self-declaration halal certification implementation among food MSMEs in Kemang Village. MSMEs receiving mentoring tend to be better prepared in preparing documents, understanding procedures, and meeting established requirements. One of the main factors contributing to the success of this mentoring is the involvement of Al-Ghifari University Community Service Program students in the socialization process, administrative techniques, and halal certification registration assistance.

The role of students in assisting MSMEs is certainly strategic because they not only convey information regarding the importance of halal certification clearly and systematically, but also provide direct assistance in completing administrative documents, which often poses a challenge for MSMEs. With student guidance, the registration process becomes more structured and efficient, thereby increasing MSMEs' chances of successfully obtaining halal certification. Student involvement also provides added value in the form of knowledge transfer regarding the importance of halal certification for the advancement of food products/MSMEs in Kemang Village and skills that can empower MSMEs sustainably. The mentoring provided by Al-Ghifari University Community Service Program students creates communicative and collaborative relationships, so that MSMEs feel supported and motivated to properly complete all certification stages. This practice confirms that mentoring, involving competent human resources, such as students, can increase the effectiveness of the halal certification program. Therefore, the continued role of students in the halal certification

mentoring program is highly recommended to accelerate the certification process and increase the competitiveness of food MSMEs in Kemang Village.

Forms of Mentoring Carried Out



Figure 4. Provision of Briefing to Halal Certification Companions

Socialization is a crucial initial step in building MSMEs' understanding of self-declared halal certification. This activity typically involves face-to-face or online meetings featuring speakers from the BPJPH (Indonesian Halal Product Supervisory Agency) or the Halal Product Assistance Agency (P3H). For example, the program in Pandanarum Village (Blitar) encompassed preparation, socialization of regulations and registration mechanisms, and evaluation—the result: increased participant understanding of the importance of self-declared halal certification. This demonstrates that a systematic initial approach significantly helps build MSME awareness. (Kunharjati & Kirom, 2024) (Azis Ahmad, n.d. 2025)

Furthermore, in the program in Banyuwangi (SEHATI BPJPH), socialization accompanied by information on creating a SiHalal account and the certification process, succeeded in increasing MSMEs' understanding of the value of halal certification, consumer trust, and the number of certified individuals (Purnomo et al., 2024). This means that socialization should be detailed, covering the benefits, mechanisms, and expected outcomes. In the context of self-declaration, socialization should address regulations related to free schemes, limits on "low-risk" products, and application procedures. This is crucial considering that some MSMEs may misunderstand the requirements, which can hinder the process. A study in the Tanggamus journal showed that in-depth socialization regarding the OSS and SIHALAL system ensured that all participants understood all stages of registration, including submitting a halal fatwa (certification). (Azis Ahmad, n.d. 2025)

So instead of that, The socialization program builds a foundation for collaboration between district governments, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the Halal Certification Agency (P3H), and academics, ensuring that MSMEs feel secure in this process. This dialogue platform also creates a continuous network for regular regulatory updates and

sharing of best practices. Mentoring is a follow-up step after the socialization program, aimed at building MSMEs' practical competency in meeting halal requirements. Training typically includes modules on hygiene management, documentation, internal audits, and the technical aspects of completing the OSS-SIHALAL form.(Azis Ahmad, 2025).In Kemang Village, intensive training covering technical and administrative aspects, as well as simulations of document uploading and form completion, demonstrated improved business actors' ability to prepare certification documents and successfully access the OSS and SiHALAL applications. This demonstrates that practical and hands-on assistance with the OSS system significantly contributes to MSME readiness. The assistance also strengthens digital literacy, as some MSMEs are often unfamiliar with accessing digital tokens, scanning documents, and updating forms online.

The mentoring also helps MSMEs understand the audit and fatwa verification process. Through simulations and case studies, participants are better prepared for the LPH audit. After the mentoring, MSME owners were able to complete the requirements and obtain official halal certification. This mentoring fosters a network of MSMEs, allowing them to share experiences and support each other. Participants can discuss challenges and joint solutions related to raw material recording, processing SOPs, and document formats, and can improve the effectiveness of certification efforts on an ongoing basis.

Furthermore, registration technicalities also cover account management, such as password resets, uploading revised documents, and tracking application status on the OSS (Online Online Registration). Mentors guide MSMEs in using these features and understanding statuses such as document verification, factual visits, and fatwa submissions. Finally, technical assistance extends beyond a single product, encouraging MSMEs to register multiple product types.

Follow-up involves regular reporting from MSMEs regarding technical or administrative issues. The assistant assists with document revisions based on the auditor's recommendations and assists with preparation for field visits, ensuring a smoother audit.

In Kemang Village, follow-up includes assistance during the NIB (National Business Entity Registration) and certification processes, until the MSMEs obtain halal certification. Sustainable support ensures MSMEs gain experience using the platform, opening up opportunities for re-registration when certificates expire. Follow-up also generates reflections and recommendations for further support programs, such as improving digital literacy, updating the OSS system, and developing strategies for fostered groups. This creates a long-term, impactful synergy between MSMEs, the government, and facilitators.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that mentoring by KKN students has a significant influence on the successful implementation of self-declared halal certification in food MSMEs in Kemang Village. Mentoring activities that include socialization, technical guidance, document verification, and education on the importance of halal principles as a whole, have been proven to be able to increase the number of certified MSMEs—more than 70% of the assisted MSMEs successfully obtained halal certification. In addition, this mentoring also increased the capacity of MSMEs in understanding halal principles and appropriate production standards, accelerated the efficiency of administrative processes through the SIHALAL system, encouraged the sustainability of halal practices through regular training and a simple management system, and aroused the interest of other MSMEs to participate in certification, which shows a positive domino effect on the halal business ecosystem in the village. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the local government and BPJPH expand the scope of the mentoring program to other villages by

utilizing trained KKN students as PPH Mentors, as well as conducting further training and regular evaluations to maintain the competence and integrity of the mentors, especially in the document verification process to prevent data manipulation. Furthermore, digitalization and access to technology need to be strengthened, especially in rural areas with limited connectivity, to ensure certification is free from technical challenges. Ongoing post-certification support is also crucial through periodic internal audits and follow-up training. Finally, multistakeholder collaboration between the government, universities, village-owned enterprises (BUMDes), and religious institutions is needed to create an inclusive and sustainable halal ecosystem.

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