Antmind: Global Halal Perspectives in Minority Region

ISSN xxxx-xxxx (Print), ISSN xxxx-xxxx (Online)
Newspaper homepage: https://journal.aye.or.id/index.php/antmind-halal/index
Email: antminhalal@gmail.com

Minority Muslim Resilience Strategy in Access to Halal Food in Manado City

Nasruddin Yusuf[1], Roy Marthen Moonti[2], Muslim A. Kasim[3]*

[1]Institut Agama Islam Negeri Manado, Indonesia
[2,3]Universitas Gorontalo, Indonesia
*Corresponden Email: nasruddin.yusuf@iain-manado.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study explores how Muslim minority communities in Manado, Indonesia, navigate the challenge of accessing halal food in a predominantly non-Muslim sociocultural environment. Despite Indonesia being the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, regional disparities reveal gaps in halal availability, especially in minority contexts. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research draws on in-depth interviews with 29 Muslim respondents and field observations to analyze the adaptive strategies employed to maintain religious dietary obligations. The findings identify three core strategies: (1) reliance on official halal certification and labeling; (2) symbolic recognition through Islamic cultural cues such as attire, language, and signage; and (3) self-declared halal judgment based on personal risk assessment. These strategies reflect not only religious resilience but also reveal an emergent grassroots halal ecosystem shaped by trust, negotiation, and community-based reasoning. The study argues that halal inclusion must move beyond regulatory frameworks to embrace contextual, cultural, and social dimensions of access. Manado, in this regard, becomes a social laboratory for understanding how halal ethics are maintained in peripheral spaces. This research contributes to expanding the discourse on halal integrity and minority inclusion and recommends a participatory, decentralized halal governance model responsive to local realities.

ARTICLEINFO

Article History:
Submitted/Received 18 January 2025
First Revised 23 April 2025
Accepted 09 May 2025
First Available online 29 June 2025
Publication Date 30 June 2025

Keywords:
Halal,
Minority,
Resilience,
Manado,
Inclusion.

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of access to halal products has developed from just a religious issue to part of the discourse on minority rights and social justice (Johnson et al., 2017; Nuryanto et al., 2025). The consumption of halal food is not only an expression of an individual's obedience to his or her religious beliefs, but it is also a fundamental right inherent in the identity of the Muslim community as part of a pluralistic society (Makiah et al., 2022; Mumuni et al., 2018). The main challenge faced by minority Muslim communities in various parts of the world, including in Indonesia, which is nationally majority Muslim, is how to ensure that their needs for halal food can be adequately met in the midst of a market system that is not always responsive to those needs. In this situation, access to halal food becomes a negotiating ground between religious beliefs, economic realities, and state policies (Bamba et al., 2017; Mumuni et al., 2018). The absence of halal-certified products, limited Muslim producers, and lack of regulatory control in non-Muslim majority areas create the so-called halal inclusion gap, which is a systemic gap in the provision and recognition of Muslim minority rights to halal products that are religiously valid and socially safe.

The city of Manado in North Sulawesi is a concrete example of a social landscape that demonstrates the complexity of these challenges. Although Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, local realities show that Muslim communities in areas such as Manado live as a minority amid the dominance of non-Muslim populations that demographically, politically, and economically influence the orientation of the local market (Henaulu, 2019; Mangkarto, 2016). In this context, non-halal foods such as processed pork, dogs, or syubhat ingredients are not only widespread in the open market, but also become part of the dominant culinary culture that is familiar to the majority of the population (Yusuf, Botutihe, et al., 2023; Yusuf, Sarib, et al., 2023). In conditions like this, Muslims in Manado not only face limited availability of halal products, but also have to develop various adaptive strategies to maintain the principle of halal in daily consumption (Mangkarto, 2016). The strategy is not just an individual response to market conditions, but a reflection of the community's efforts to maintain their religious integrity through contextual, symbolic, and social means.

The growing literature on halal food access in minority communities generally focuses on Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, or Australia, highlighting the marginalization of halal in state policies and the challenges of cultural discrimination (Adekunle & Filson, 2020; Johnson et al., 2017). However, the Indonesian context presents its own complexity that is interesting to study: how is it possible that in the world's largest Muslim country, Muslim communities continue to experience marginalized halal access at the local level? The answer lies in Indonesia's internal dynamics as an archipelagic country that is ethnically and religiously plural, with national policies that often do not fully reach or are sensitive to the diversity of local conditions. This indicates the need for a more micro and contextual approach in looking at halal issues, by exploring the practices, experiences, and adaptations of minority Muslim communities in areas such as Manado which are actually weak points of the national halal system.

This study aims to explain how the minority Muslim community in Manado City builds resilience strategies in maintaining access to halal food. Departing from a qualitative approach, this study examines the ways in which communities identify the halalness of products, assess the risks of *syubhat*, and form social and symbolic mechanisms in maintaining their religious integrity. Furthermore, this study aims to place the experience of Manado Muslims within the theoretical

framework of halal inclusion, in order to show that access to halal cannot be understood only as a regulatory and economic issue, but must be seen as part of the community's identity rights that require cultural recognition, social protection, and policy affirmation. Thus, the main contribution of this study is to expand our understanding of the resilience of minority Muslim communities, while encouraging the birth of more inclusive and social justice-based halal policies, not only in Indonesia but also in a global perspective.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with an exploratory case study design (Baskarada, 2014), which aims to deeply understand the social, cultural, and religious dynamics that shape the strategy of the minority Muslim community in Manado City in maintaining access to halal food. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for exploring meanings, values, and actions that are subjective and contextual in nature that cannot be reduced to quantitative numbers. The city of Manado as the location of the study was chosen purposively because it is representative in describing the situation of the Muslim community living as a religious and cultural minority in the midst of the dominance of the non-Muslim majority in various aspects of social life, including food production and consumption (Henaulu, 2019; Mangkarto, 2016).

Data collection was carried out through an in-depth interview technique with 29 informants who are members of the Muslim community in Manado City, including religious leaders, housewives, students, small entrepreneurs, and civil servants. The selection of informants was carried out by purposive and snowball sampling, taking into account the diversity of their age, social background, and frequency of interaction with food consumption from the open market. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner (Karatsareas, 2022), allowing flexibility in data mining while maintaining a focus on the main themes, namely halal standards, syubhat risk perception, and adaptation strategies to halal product limitations.

In addition to primary data from interviews, this study also uses secondary data in the form of legal documents such as Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance, fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), as well as various scientific publications, journal articles, and reports related to halal consumption practices in minority communities. Non-participatory observations were also carried out in several traditional markets, restaurants, and grocery stores to map the pattern of providing halal and non-halal products and read symbolic practices such as the use of Islamic attributes in the sales space.

Data were analyzed using descriptive-qualitative methods and inductive approaches, following the stages from Huberman & Miles (2014): data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction was carried out by sorting out the relevant informant narratives on three main forms of resilience strategies: reliance on certification, symbolic halal cue recognition, and self-declared halal judgment. The data are then presented thematically and explained with interpretive narratives to capture the social context surrounding these choices. The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation techniques and cross-checking between informants, as well as collegial discussions with fellow researchers to ensure consistency of interpretation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conceptual Framework of Halal Inclusion in the Context of Muslim Minorities

The discourse on halal access in the context of minority Muslim communities has evolved as awareness of religious identity rights has increased in pluralistic societies. The global literature highlights how Muslim communities in Western countries such as the United Kingdom, France, and Canada experience marginalization in accessing halal food, both as a result of the lack of state regulation on the provision of halal, the dominance of the non-halal food market, and the cultural resistance of the majority group (Adekunle & Filson, 2020; Bahçıvan, 2025; Johnson et al., 2017). In this context, halal is not just a consumer product, but a symbol of identity struggle related to religious freedom, social recognition, and justice in the distribution of resources (Kholilah et al., 2024). This problem becomes more complex when minority communities not only grapple with limited supply, but also have to deal with the ambiguity of the status of products that fall within the territory of *shubhat* the gray area between halal and haram that demands careful and sometimes compromising personal judgment (Islam, 2025; Kamali, 2021).

In Indonesia, studies on halal are more focused on regulatory aspects (such as the implementation of Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance), sharia economics, or the strategy of the national halal food industry (Bahrudin et al., 2024; Marnita, 2024). However, studies that raise the gap in halal access in minority areas are still very limited. In fact, Indonesia is not a homogeneous space; It is made up of hundreds of social entities that coexist in a dynamic majority-minority configuration. Research by Mahbubi & Uchiyama (2019) shows that even though Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world, the distribution capacity of halal products is not even and tends to be concentrated in Muslim-majority urban areas. In the context of areas such as Manado, Muslims are a minority community that has to deal with market conditions that do not structurally provide halal food as a common norm (Yusuf, Sarib, et al., 2023). Therefore, this study is important to close the literature gap on how the Muslim minority in Indonesia a Muslim-majority country itself faces limited halal access, not because of persecution, but because of the absence of an inclusive halal ecosystem at the local level.

To understand this phenomenon, this study uses a conceptual framework of halal inclusion combined with the concept of community resilience. Halal inclusion refers to the extent to which social, economic, and policy systems are able to guarantee the right of Muslim groups, especially minorities, to access halal products equally and with dignity (Muslimin, 2019). This inclusion not only means the presence of halal products, but also affordability, clarity of information (label transparency), and social acceptance (Nusran et al., 2023). Meanwhile, the concept of community resilience is understood as the capacity of social groups to adapt to environmental pressures in this case, the dominance of non-halal markets by establishing mechanisms for value protection, adaptation of consumption behaviors, and social innovations to maintain the integrity of their beliefs. Within this framework, the consumption decisions of the Muslim community are not only seen from the point of view of compliance with religious laws, but also as a survival strategy in the midst of the structural and symbolic pressures they face in their daily lives (El-Gohary, 2016). Thus, this approach allows us to understand halal consumption not only as a normative practice, but also as an active, reflective, and strategic social expression of Muslim minority communities in shaping a religious and dignified living space.

Reliance on Halal Certification and Labeling

The first strategy that is the most prominent and relatively dominant in the minority Muslim community in Manado City is the high dependence on the existence of official halal labels and certifications from authoritative institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH). For most of the informants in this study, halal labels on product packaging and halal certificates displayed in restaurants or food outlets are not only a guide in choosing products, but also a kind of religious guarantee that replaces their need to conduct their own inspections of raw materials, production processes, and business owner status (Mahbubi & Uchiyama, 2019; Makiah et al., 2022; Yusuf, Botutihe, et al., 2023). In many interviews, the informants stated that,

> *"As long as there is a halal logo from the MUI, we believe the food is safe to eat"* (Interview, N, MUI North Sulawesi Province, Manado, 2023)

This statement reflects the collective form of trust in the formal certification system as a legitimate and reliable halal verification tool.

This strategy suggests that the forms of halal consumption practiced by minority Muslim communities are not only based on individual knowledge or direct interaction with food producers, but have been institutionalized through religious institutions and the state. Halal labels and certificates are not just visual symbols, but represent structural trust in an authoritative mechanism that is idealized to be able to control, verify, and supervise the halalness of a product as a whole (Dashti et al., 2024). Within the framework of halal literacy, the reliance on certification reflects a structured religious literacy, in which knowledge and consumption decisions are based on external legality and credibility, rather than mere personal intuition or symbols of Islam (Calder, 2020).

Theoretically, this phenomenon is in line with the concept of trust-based inclusion put forward by Adekunle & Filson (2020), which is a form of halal inclusion that relies on trust in formal authority as a link between religious principles and consumption practices. Consumers in this model do not act as active inspectors, but rather as passive recipients of the halal verification process which is assumed to have been carried out with strict and accountable procedures. In the context of minority communities such as Manado, this model also shows that halal labeling serves as a form of symbolic and psychological protection, where Muslims feel they have a "safe space" to practice the sharia without having to contend with social realities that do not always support their religious needs.

However, this reliance on certification strategy faces serious challenges in terms of implementation in the field. Based on the results of observations and interviews, it was found that the number of restaurants, restaurants, and food outlets that officially have halal certificates in Manado City is still very limited. In addition, access to halal products in the form of certified packaging is also uneven, both in terms of distribution and availability in traditional markets and small shops in Muslim settlements. Halal-certified products are often only available in modern shopping centers, such as supermarkets or large convenience stores that are generally located in city centers, rather than in suburbs or pockets of Muslim population (Islam, 2025; Mahbubi & Uchiyama, 2019; Osman et al., 2017). This creates barriers of access, especially for consumers from the lower economic class who do not have vehicles, leisure, or adequate access to information.

On the other hand, the price of halal-certified products tends to be higher compared to similar products without halal labels. Some informants complained that to buy snacks or staples that already have a halal label, they have to spend more than buying local products that do not have certification. This condition creates a kind of halal inequality, where only a small part of the Muslim community has good economic ability and access to information who are able to practice halal consumption ideally (Karimullah, 2023; Osman et al., 2017). From a halal inclusion perspective, this situation shows that the halal certification system currently in force in Indonesia even though it is on a national scale has not fully reached minority communities effectively, both in terms of distribution, availability, and affordability.

Furthermore, if studied through the perspective of *maqashid sharia*, the strategy of reliance on certification is ideally able to realize three main dimensions of Islamic law protection: *hifdz al-din* (safeguarding religion), *hifdz al-nafs* (safeguarding life and health), and *hifdz al-mal* (safeguarding property) (Jauhar, 2023; Wahyudi, 2023). However, in practice, when access to certification becomes spatially and financially limited, only a small percentage of Muslims can fully meet these three goals. For people who cannot afford to access halal-certified food due to price or distance, they are faced with a dilemma: choose to remain compliant and limit consumption choices (which can interfere with health and nutrition), or risk *syubhat* consumption for the sake of affordability. This opens up space for another practice of resilience, namely the search for symbolic signs or personal judgments (which will be discussed in the next section).

Thus, reliance on certification is the most idealized but most functionally uneven halal strategy in the context of minority Muslim communities. It provides a sense of theological security and social legitimacy to the practice of halal consumption, but at the same time creates a gap of exclusion when the instrument is not equally available and affordable. The implications of these findings show the need to expand access to halal certification to minority areas and strengthen subsidy or incentive schemes for small businesses in non-Muslim areas to obtain halal certification easily, quickly, and cheaply, so that the principle of halal inclusion truly reaches the entire spectrum of Muslim communities in Indonesia.

Relying on Islamic Attributes and Cultural Symbols

In situations where products or services that have official halal certification are difficult to reach either due to geographical limitations, economy, or lack of penetration of national halal authorities into minority areas the Muslim community in Manado City developed a second resilience strategy based on the reading of Islamic symbols and attributes. This strategy relies on visual, verbal, and cultural signs associated with Muslim identity as informal indicators of the halalness of a food or product. This practice does not rely on institutional legality, but on collective perceptions and social experiences built in spaces of multicultural interaction.

The concrete form of this strategy includes the choice to eat at restaurants or stalls that use business names with Islamic nuances such as "RM Padang", "RM Lamongan", "RM Gorontalo", or geographical identity labels that are sociologically associated with Muslim ethnicity. In addition, personal attributes such as the use of hijab by female waitresses, *peci* by male business owners, Arabic writings such as the words Allah or Muhammad on the walls, and the holy verses of the Qur'an pasted as decorations in the business space are important indicators for Muslim consumers in making decisions. In fact, the use of certain languages or dialects such as Javanese, Bugis, or

Gorontalo dialects associated with ethnic Muslims is also an implicit marker that the food sold is "assumed" halal (Yusuf, Sarib, et al., 2023).

This practice reflects what in anthropological studies is called symbolic recognition, which is the tendency of individuals or groups to interpret social reality based on cultural symbols that can be recognized collectively. In the context of minority Muslim communities, such symbols serve as cultural proxies for halalness informal substitutes for formal halal certifications to which they do not have direct access. This strategy is adaptive in that it allows Muslim consumers to continue to practice their beliefs without having to rely entirely on regulatory authorities that are not effectively present in their local space.

However, this symbolic strategy cannot be separated from the problem of ambiguity. Not all Islamic symbols guarantee that food production materials and processes meet sharia halal standards. For example, the use of hijab by a waiter does not necessarily guarantee that the food served is free from contamination of haram materials, or that the slaughter of animals is carried out in accordance with the sharia. This ambivalence forms a tension between the perception of external piety and the substantial reality of the halal product itself. Some informants stated that they still avoid restaurants that only display symbols without formal legal evidence, while others feel quite confident as long as there are strong Islamic nuances in the representation of the business.

In the theological dimension, this condition results in a dynamic between belief (yaqin), doubt (syubhat), and prudence (wara'). Those who are cautious tend to avoid consumption if it is based solely on symbols, while those who are more flexible consider Islamic symbols to be sufficient to guarantee halal, especially when compared to the absence of other options. This situation can conceptually be understood as a form of navigated compliance (Marheni Muhammad, 2024), which is a form of compliance that is negotiated within social and symbolic boundaries when formal halal regulations are not available or cannot be reached by the community.

This strategy also shows the existence of a horizontal belief system within minority communities, where halal is not only determined by vertical authorities such as the state or certification bodies, but also by social relations, kinship networks, and community closeness. For example, a seller who is known to be Muslim by local consumers will be more trustworthy even if it does not have a formal halal label (Sayogo, 2018). In this case, the relational dimension and social reputation replace formal verification structures. This is important in understanding how minority communities reproduce their belief in halal through culture and social interaction, not just through the legality of documents (El-Gohary, 2016).

Furthermore, from the perspective of halal inclusion, this symbolic strategy is a form of grassroots adaptation, which is a bottom-up process that allows minority communities to remain included in halal practices even though the state has not provided adequate infrastructure. Although not ideal in a contemporary fiqh perspective that emphasizes transparency and verification, this strategy is important to be understood as a form of cultural resistance to structural marginalization and as a mirror of Islam's flexibility in responding to diverse social conditions (Auda, 2022).

Thus, reliance on symbolic halal recognition is an expression of the collective intelligence of the minority Muslim community to create alternative belief systems in the context of limitations.

It is not only a form of pragmatism, but also a manifestation of how religion, culture, and survival strategies come together in forming an informal but meaningful halal space for the community. This study emphasizes that strengthening halal inclusion in minority areas cannot rely solely on legalistic approaches, but must open up space for symbolic recognition, contextual education, and strengthening social networks that are able to guarantee trust without having to rely on formal legality that is not necessarily equally present.

Personal Decisions in the Space of Ambiguity

The third strategy that is developing widely in the minority Muslim community in Manado City is consumption decision-making based on individual judgment, or what is often referred to as self-declared halal judgment (Yusuf, Sarib, et al., 2023). This strategy arises when formal certification is not available and there are not enough symbolic indicators of Islam that can be used as a handle to assess the halalness of a product. In this context, Muslim individuals decide for themselves whether a food can be categorized as halal or fit for consumption, based on their understanding of the ingredients, the context of production, and assumptions about cleanliness and avoidance of haram elements. This assessment is made intuitively and situationally, taking into consideration that not all food sold by non-Muslims is automatically haram, especially if the food does not contain slaughtered meat or other haram ingredients (Nuryanto et al., 2025).

Some informants described this situation concretely. They say that buying fish, eggs, tempeh, tofu, or processed vegetables from non-Muslim sellers is acceptable, as long as the food is not sold along with pork, dogs, or other types of haram food. This decision is also often accompanied by verbal questions to the seller regarding foodstuffs, although there is no guarantee that the answer is given with halal standards in accordance with sharia (Al-Teinaz et al., 2020). In the case of ready-to-eat foods, consumers usually avoid meat menus, but still consume seafood or vegetables that look "clean" and "safe". In this case, halal decisions are no longer based on institutions or symbols, but rather the result of each individual's personal reflection and risk assessment of what they eat.

Sociologically, this strategy reflects an individual's agency-based form of resilience that is adaptive, flexible, and contextual. When the formal system is absent or does not reach the territory where they live, then the individual takes over the authority to establish halal-haram through his own knowledge and belief. In the literature, this kind of strategy can be categorized as substitutive agency (Wilson, 2016), which is a condition when individuals or groups replace the role of formal institutions in determining criteria and decisions related to religious beliefs and adherence. It also shows that in the absence of structural support, minority communities are still able to maintain their basic principles through creative and independent means.

However, this strategy also has risks that cannot be ignored, both from a theological point of view and from the protection of Muslim consumers themselves. When halal decisions are based entirely on personal assumptions and are not supported by external verification, then the potential to fall into the territory of *syubhat* becomes enormous. In Islamic law, *syubhat* is a gray area that cannot be categorised definitively as halal or haram, and is recommended to be abandoned as a form of prudence (wara'). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said that "halal is clear and haram is clear, and between the two there is a shubhat, which is unknown to most people. So whoever strays away from what is shubhat, then he has preserved his religion and his honor." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim). Thus, even though the intention of the individual's decision in self-declare is intended to maintain religion (hifdz al-din), but because it is not supported by health insurance (hifdz al-

nafs) and the potential for waste of wealth due to ignorance (hifdz al-mal), the maqashid sharia has not been fulfilled comprehensively (Auda, 2008, 2022).

Furthermore, in the context of halal inclusion, this strategy shows the systemic limitations of the national halal product assurance system that is not fully inclusive of the needs and conditions of Muslim communities in minority areas. When certification bodies are not present at the local level, halal education has not reached all levels of society, and the distribution of halal products is only concentrated in certain areas, it is natural for communities to develop their own standards that are practical and functional (Nuryanto et al., 2025; Nusran et al., 2023; Yusuf, Botutihe, et al., 2023). In the short term, this can answer consumption needs and maintain religious identity, but in the long term, this strategy opens up opportunities for fragmentation of halal standards that are not uniform and have the potential to cause confusion, both among Muslim consumers themselves and non-Muslim business actors who want to serve the Muslim market.

However, this self-declare strategy also has a positive dimension that is important to be appreciated in the context of contextual piety, that is, the expression of religiosity rooted in everyday experience and concrete situations, rather than just formal compliance with the law. He pointed out that minority Muslim communities are not resigned to the limitations of the system, but actively seek to preserve the basic principles of their religion, even when they do not have access to external controls (Al-Teinaz et al., 2020; Osman et al., 2017). In this sense, the consumption decision becomes not only an individual action, but also a representation of the collective struggle in maintaining religious dignity in an unaccommodating system.

Thus, self-declared halal judgement is an important but risky form of resilience. It is a reflection of contextual faith and adaptive piety, as well as a reminder of the need for states, religious institutions, and civil society to expand access to equitable and inclusive halal education, certification, and distribution, so that Muslims including those living as minorities do not have to constantly rely on the gray space between halal, *syubhat*, and haram.

Reflection on the Concept of Halal Inclusion and Resilience

The three resilience strategies implemented by the minority Muslim community in Manado City reliance on certification, symbolic recognition, and self-declared judgment collectively form a halal ecosystem that is local, adaptive, and complex. This ecosystem is not built through a single, formal pathway, but rather through a layered combination of formal regulations, contextually read cultural symbols, and individual moral judgments that are carried out with a full awareness of religious responsibility (Dashti et al., 2024). These findings indicate that halal inclusion in the reality of minority communities cannot be reduced to just the availability of product labels or certifications, but demands recognition of the diversity of the way communities understand, negotiate, and practice halal principles in their daily lives.

From a theoretical perspective, this shows that halal inclusion must move from a centralistic approach oriented towards the fulfillment of formal standards to a more participatory and contextual model. It is not enough for countries and halal certification bodies to regulate and certify products in a uniform scheme, but rather to develop a more inclusive approach to the specific conditions faced by minority communities (El-Gohary, 2016; Muslimin, 2019). Halal inclusion is not only administrative, but also cultural: it demands openness to local value systems, collective ways of thinking, and the unique social structures within each community. In the context

of Manado City, where Muslims coexist peacefully with the majority of non-Muslims in an atmosphere of high tolerance, it is precisely how the community builds its own belief system, which is able to filter halal values in an environment that structurally does not prioritize their consumption needs.

The resilience practices found in this study illustrate how minority communities are able to maintain their religious integrity in the midst of systemic limitations and the absence of adequate structural support. In social resilience theory, conditions such as these suggest that even vulnerable social groups still have the capacity to navigate external pressures through social innovation, value repositioning, and the creation of new contextual norms. Halal in the context of minority communities is not just a matter of adherence to fiqh norms, but also part of the existential struggle to maintain identity, strengthen internal social cohesion, and express religious beliefs in a limited space.

The findings also offer criticism of the technocratic approach to the national halal assurance system. When the state's approach focuses too much on document legality, industry standards, and administrative certification, it risks ignoring the cultural, affective, and social needs of grassroots communities. Therefore, a community-based halal assurance approach is needed, which is a halal implementation model based on the active role of local communities, both in the halal education process, facilitating small business certification, and in forming a social control mechanism that is rooted in tradition and community solidarity.

In this context, Manado City is not only an example of how limited access to halal products can occur even in a Muslim-majority country like Indonesia, but also a rich social laboratory for understanding how minority Muslim communities build creative and dignified halal resilience strategies. This study proves that formal regulation and certification are important, but not the only way to build halal justice. The experience of Manado Muslims shows that social flexibility, symbolic beliefs, and individual ethical judgments can go hand in hand and become an important foundation in creating a halal space that is inclusive, fair, and rooted in the social reality of society.

Thus, reflection on the halal practices of the Manado Muslim community paves the way for the development of a new approach in halal studies, namely a community-centered halal inclusion approach. This approach recognizes that halal is an integral part of the life of the Muslim community that must be respected not only as an industrial regulation, but also as a value system that is lively, flourishing, and actively negotiated in a diverse social space. For this reason, the state and stakeholders need to expand their role from mere regulators to facilitators and dialogue partners who are on par with the community, so that the principles of sharia maqashid can be achieved holistically in a plural and dynamic society like Indonesia.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has revealed how the minority Muslim community in Manado City developed three main strategies in maintaining halal food consumption amid structural limitations and non-halal market dominance. These three strategies namely reliance on certification, symbolic recognition, and self-declared halal judgment not only reflect variations in forms of religious obedience, but also demonstrate a high level of social resilience. In the context of plural territories that are not fully accommodated by the national halal product assurance system, local Muslim communities independently establish verification and trust systems that are informal but functional.

The reliance on certification strategy reflects a reliance on a formal halal system that provides religious legitimacy and a sense of security for consumers. However, the limited availability of halal-certified products makes this strategy exclusive, only accessible to some communities with certain economic and information capabilities. Meanwhile, symbolic recognition shows how communities build halal beliefs through socio-cultural attributes such as Islamic business names, Islamic symbols, and ethnic identities. Although this strategy opens up space for cultural inclusion, it is also full of ambiguity and the potential for syubhat. The self-declared halal judgement strategy is a form of individual agency that tries to negotiate the religious space in the absence of formal authority, but risks opening a gap in the non-fulfillment of the principles of maqashid sharia in its entirety.

Overall, the three strategies represent a minority halal ecosystem formed collectively by the Manado Muslim community, based on experience, religious awareness, and social flexibility. These findings confirm that halal inclusion cannot be built with a normative-regulatory approach alone, but must consider the cultural, geographical, and socio-economic dimensions that are unique to each region. Halal in the context of minority communities is not just a legal instrument, but an expression of identity, community resilience, and a form of participation in public spaces that are often not friendly to their religious needs.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all participants from the Muslim communities in Manado who generously shared their time, experiences, and insights throughout this research. Their openness was vital in exploring the complexities of halal food access in a minority context. I also extend my appreciation to local religious leaders and food vendors who contributed valuable perspectives during fieldwork. Special thanks to my academic institution for providing the support and resources necessary for this study, as well as to colleagues and reviewers whose constructive feedback helped refine the analysis. Lastly, I am deeply thankful to my family and mentors for their constant encouragement and support during the research process.

6. REFERENCES

Adekunle, B., & Filson, G. (2020). Understanding halal food market: Resolving asymmetric information. *Food Ethics*, *5*(1–2), 13. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41055-020-00072-7

Al-Teinaz, Y. R., Spear, S., & Abd El-Rahim, I. H. A. (2020). *The halal food handbook*. John Wiley & Sons.

Auda, J. (2008). *Maqasid Al-Shariah A Beginner's Guide*. The International Institut of Islamic Thought.

Auda, J. (2022). Maqasid Al-Shari'ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law. *International Institute of Islamic Thought*.

Bahçıvan, S. (2025). Muslim Minorities in Europe. In *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Islamic Finance and Economics* (pp. 1–12). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93703-4_48-1

Bahrudin, M., Iqbal, M., Saefurrohman, G. U., & Walsh, J. (2024). Halal food industry: Reinforcing the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Body (bpjph) in the development of the among urban Muslim community in Indonesia. *Akademika : Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, *29*(1), 61. https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v29i1.9039

Bamba, A., Talek, Y., & Kaba, A. M. (2017). Halal food in multi African society and Muslim christian relations formation: A strategic vision in political and economic dimension. *Humanities and Social Sciences Review*, *7*(1), 81–94.

Baskarada, S. (2014). Qualitative case study guidelines. *Baškarada, S.(2014). Qualitative Case Studies Guidelines. The Qualitative Report*, *19*(40), 1–25. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2559424

Calder, R. (2020). Halalization: Religious Product Certification in Secular Markets. *Sociological Theory*, *38*(4), 334–361. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275120973248

Dashti, L. A. H. F., Jackson, T., West, A., & Jackson, L. (2024). Enhancing halal food traceability: a model for rebuilding trust and integrity in Muslim countries. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, *15*(12), 3382–3408. https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-06-2023-0167

El-Gohary, H. (2016). Halal tourism, is it really Halal? *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *19*, 124–130. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2015.12.013

Henaulu, M. S. (2019). Impact of Mui Halal Labels on Volume of Sales of Holland Bakery in Manado City. *Tasharruf: Journal Economics and Business of Islam*, *3*(2). https://doi.org/10.30984/tjebi.v3i2.786

Huberman, A., & Miles, M. B. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis a methods sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, Califorinia SAGE Publications, Inc.

Islam, M. M. (2025). Applying the "Halal" and "Tayyib" Norms in Marketing. In *Implementing Halal Principles and Regulations in Business Governance* (pp. 229–262). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-3917-7.ch009

Jauhar, A. A.-M. H. (2023). *Maqashid syariah*. Amzah.

Johnson, G. D., Thomas, K. D., & Grier, S. A. (2017). When the burger becomes halal: a critical discourse analysis of privilege and marketplace inclusion. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, *20*(6), 497–522. https://doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2017.1323741

Kamali, M. H. (2021). *Shariah and the halal industry*. Oxford University Press.

Karatsareas, P. (2022). Semi-structured interviews. In *Research methods in language attitudes*. Cambridge University Press Cambridge.

Karimullah, S. S. (2023). Rethinking Halal: Exploring the Complexity of Halal Certification and its Socio-Economic Implications. *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Hukum Dan Ekonomi Islam*, *3*(2), 102–121. https://stainwsamawa.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/al-bayan/article/view/170

Kholilah, S., Maminirina Fenitra, R., Hati, S. R. H., & Thurasamy, R. (2024). Food for the soul: religious identity and ethical halal labelling in sharing economy apps. *Identities*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2024.2444105

Mahbubi, A., & Uchiyama, T. (2019). A comparison of halal beef consumer preferences in majority and minority Muslim areas in Indonesia. *International Journal of Islamic Marketing and Branding*, *4*(3/4), 195. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMB.2019.107283

Makiah, Z., Hasan, N., Aisyah, L., & Sodiqin, A. (2022). A convergence in a religion commodification and an expression of piety in halal certification. *Khazanah: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Humaniora*, *20*(2), 153. https://doi.org/10.18592/khazanah.v20i2.7113

Mangkarto, M. (2016). Sertifikat halal dan pengaruhnya terhadap Kepercayaan Konsumen pada Restoran (Studi Kasus Restoran Kentucky Fried Chicken Cabang Manado). *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir'ah*, *3*(2). https://doi.org/10.30984/as.v3i2.339

Marheni Muhammad, C. L. (2024). *The Concept of Islam Nusantara as Viewed by Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals: Proponents and Opponents*.

Marnita, M. (2024). Directions for the Development of the Halal Ecosystem in Public Policy: A Study of Islamic Law and Legislation in Indonesia. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum*, *27*(2), 156–177. https://doi.org/10.56087/aijih.v27i2.477

Mumuni, A. G., Veeck, A., Luqmani, M., Quraeshi, Z. A., & Kamarulzaman, Y. (2018). Religious identity, community and religious minorities' search efforts for religiously sanctioned food: The case of halal food in non-Muslim majority markets. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *42*(6), 586–598. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12423

Muslimin, J. (2019). Halal Product Guarantee in Indonesia: Regulation and Social Inclusion. *Shirkah: Journal of Economics and Business*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.22515/shirkah.v4i1.259

Nuryanto, U. W., Basrowi, B., Quraysin, I., Pratiwi, I., & Utami, P. (2025). Empowering the

Marginalized through the Halal Industry in Indonesia: A Systematic Literature Review. *Share: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Keuangan Islam*, *14*(1), 343–368. https://doi.org/10.22373/share.v14i1.27622

Nusran, M., Nasution, E. N., Prayitno, M. A., & Sudarmanto, E. (2023). Halal Certification in The Digital Age: Leveraging Online Platforms for Enhanced Transparency and Accessibility. *Jurnal Ekonomi, Akuntansi Dan Manajemen Indonesia*, *2*(01), 105–115. https://doi.org/10.58471/jeami.v2i01.379

Osman, I., Hassan, F., Haris, B., & Kassim, E. S. (2017). Religion and Halal consumption. In *Islamic Marketing and Branding* (pp. 69–101). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315590035-5

Sayogo, D. S. (2018). Online traceability for halal product information: perceptions of Muslim consumers in Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, *9*(1), 99–116. https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-07-2016-0057

Wahyudi, Y. (2023). Maqashid Syari'ah dalam Konteks Pengantar Makanan Non-Halal oleh Driver Go-Jek Muslim Kota Manado. *Al-'Aqdu: Journal of Islamic Economics Law*, *3*(2), 93–103.

Wilson, B. R. (2016). *Religion in secular society: fifty years on*. Oxford University Press.

Yusuf, N., Botutihe, M., & Gonibala, P. M. A. (2023). Buying and Selling Cosmetics Not Labeled Halal in Bitung City Perspective of Muamalah Jurisprudence. *JUSTISI*, *9*(3), 374–388. https://doi.org/10.33506/jurnaljustisi.v9i3.2461

Yusuf, N., Sarib, S., & Evra, W. (2023). The Difficulty of Finding Halal Food for Muslim Minorities: Analysis of Maqashid Shariah. *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, *8*(2 November), 325–346. https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v8i2.8182