
The Significance of Mall Roles in Accelerating Halal Certification Policies: A Case Study of Plaza Balikpapan Mall

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Abstract: This research describes the application and strategy of Mall Plaza Balikpapan in accelerating the implementation of Halal policy in Indonesia. The research method used is qualitative by using data collection through interview, observation and documentation study. Then the data analysis uses descriptive analysis to explain the applied policies and strategies regarding halal issues at Plaza Balikpapan Mall. The results found in this research that the mall is very serious in ensuring tenants, retailers or tenants to follow the halal policy in the form of mandatory. Then the conclusion of the field findings at Mal Plaza Balikpapan Mall, the mall becomes a mediator of the halal policy, proven through mall circulars to each of their tenants, balanced by taking a persuasive approach, by directly visiting each tenant to understand and follow the halal policy. The mall then educates its tenants with the help of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Balikpapan and the Campus of The Institute of Technology Kalimantan. As another result of the findings in the field, Mall Plaza Balikpapan mediates education and promotion of halal value chain in collaboration with Bank Indonesia Balikpapan by organizing Festival Pekan Syariah Nusantara. In the festival, the mall held a bazaar of creative producers of halal food products, this is an event for the mall to promote the halal industry. Then, regarding education in the mall festival, the head of the Halal Registration and Certification Centre of BPJPH and the Deputy Director of Sharia Business Incubation at KNEKS at Plaza Balikpapan Mall.

Keywords: *Halal, Policies, Mediator, Strategy, Mall*

INTRODUCTION

Changes in the food industry and advancements in technology have made the food and beverage processing process increasingly complex. Products

now often contain a variety of mixed ingredients, raising concerns about critical points related to taste, nutrition, and overall quality in food products (Rasdiyatno & Hasibuan, 2024). Food products can be categorized into various types, including ready-to-eat meals and processed foods, which may be prepared using either modern or traditional methods (Rasdiyatno & Hasibuan, 2024).

materials such as gelatin, enzymes, animal fats, and meat-based raw ingredients are commonly used in food production. However, these ingredients represent critical points in terms of halal compliance, as they may include substances that are forbidden or derived from halal animals that were not slaughtered according to Islamic law (Alzeer et al., 2018). Food business operators must ensure that their products are processed without contamination by non-halal materials. From the initial stages of production to presentation and sales, maintaining the halal integrity of a product is crucial and must be carefully managed (Alzeer et al., 2018).

Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance in Indonesia that has been in place since 2014 stipulates that all products circulating in the market, both food and non-food, must have a halal certificate (Citra & Widyanti, 2023). Specifically, Article 4 of Law No. 33 of 2014 states: "Products that enter, circulate, and are traded within Indonesia must be halal-certified. "Halal certification involves a series of steps, including submitting an application, undergoing an audit, and obtaining a certificate as formal legal recognition that the product meets halal requirements (Akim et al., 2019). Furthermore, business operators are required to include a halal label on their product packaging (Citra & Widyanti, 2023).

The determination of halal certification is essential as it serves as a guarantee of Islamic religious principles, where the concepts of halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden) are explicitly defined in Islamic law. These principles are fundamental to the practice of Islam. From a social perspective, halal certification provides clarity and transparency regarding the halal status of food products, ensuring the safety and trust of Muslim consumers. This highlights the critical importance of halal certification in safeguarding both religious compliance and consumer confidence.

Previously, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) oversaw Halal Certification, and it is the authorized body for issuing fatwas and supervising halal products. However, these halal policies were not entirely effective in safeguarding Muslim consumers, primarily because, under the prevailing regulations, business actors were only required to apply for halal certification on a voluntary basis (Akim et al., 2019).

The Halal Product Assurance Organizing Body (BPJPH) now holds the primary responsibility for overseeing halal product assurance, it is established

based on the mandate of Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Products Assurance (JPH). As a government entity, BPJPH is responsible for supervising and managing the halal certification process, including the development and implementation of halal standards in accordance with sharia principles (Akim et al., 2019). The fundamental difference between BPJPH and MUI lies in the aspect of legality. As a government institution, the later holds the authority to issue legally recognized halal certification labels (Anas et al., 2023). While the former retains the authority to issue fatwas, these fatwas serve as recommendations and their implementation depends on BPJPH and other accredited halal certification institutions.

In terms of differences in the certification process and procedures. BPJPH has developed a structured certification system based on clear regulations (Anas et al., 2023). Meanwhile, MUI operates as a fatwa commission, focusing on assessing halal compliance from the perspective of Islamic law (Hasan, 2014). It needs synergy between the two institutions, MUI provides halal fatwas based on Islamic principles (sharia), while BPJH formalizes these fatwas through certification labeling.

Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, faces unique challenges and opportunities in developing halal policies, particularly concerning food products. These policies have implications for health, economics, and social welfare extending beyond religious considerations. However, significant challenges are encountered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in implementing these policies on food products. One of the main issues is the lack of understanding and awareness among both producers and consumers regarding the importance of halal certification, largely due to insufficient education and socialization efforts (Yulia, 2015).

For the effective halal policy implementation, supervision of halal products is a critical aspect. However, government supervision remains insufficient, still, products are distributed in the market without halal certification, even when they are halal. This is largely due to weak law enforcement and a lack of knowledge about halal product policies (Suzery et al., 2022). Strict law enforcement is essential to ensure that all products in the market comply with established halal standards. The involvement of all stakeholders, including the government, producers, consumers, and investors is necessary to accelerate the improvement of halal policies. Last but not least, education and socialization regarding the significance of halal certification must be enhanced, as many business operators still lack halal certification (Astuti, 2020).

The regulations of halal certification already in place and clearly defined, but their implementation remains weak. Many products distributed in the market bypass adequate inspection processes, that could lead the products

labeled as halal may not actually meet the required standards. It means their implementation still falls short of expectations despite of the existence of clear policies (Syamsiyah & Ardana, 2024). This inadequate supervision harms consumers and creates an unfair market environment for producers who have made significant efforts to comply with halal standards.

Given the urgency of accelerating and increasing compliance with halal policies, the involvement of all parties including the government, producers, and consumers is essential. Around 15 million Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (UMKM) have yet to receive halal certificates according to Haikal Hasan in CNN Indonesia. In this context, malls play a pivotal role in addressing various weaknesses in the understanding of halal policies and the supervision of halal products among their tenants. Malls can significantly contribute to supporting the implementation of halal certification policies, accelerating the adoption of halal standards, and strengthening halal value chains.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach, utilizing data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and documentation studies (Busetto et al., 2020). Direct interviews were conducted with mall management and tenants, and site observation by visiting the mall was undertaken to examine the types of tenant products offered. Additionally, as data complement, we requested the documentation from the mall management. The data analysis technique applied was qualitative descriptive analysis to interpret and explain the findings from interviews, observations, and documentation regarding the implementation of halal policies at Plaza Balikpapan Mall.

This research is complex due to the interactions between various actors, regulations, and real-world practices. An in-depth exploration is required to understand the subjective perspectives and experiences of various stakeholders involved in the halal certification process in the mall.

The goal of this study is to evaluate how halal policies are implemented in practice, especially for tenants as business actors. Policy implementation often faces various challenges, including issues related to socialization, supervision, and the alignment of policies with on-the-ground realities. Top-down and bottom-up which are two patterns of policy implementation are commonly observed. In the context of halal regulations, this study attempts to explore which are the most effective whether a top-down approach (directed by the central government and BPJPH) or a bottom-up approach (driven by initiatives from business actors and the community).

The intermediary role of malls in the implementation of halal certification policies cannot be overlooked. Various regulations related to halal certification has been introduced by the Indonesian government, and this

regulation must be proactively and wisely responded by mall as key hubs for product distribution and presentation. In this context, public policy theory can be used to analyze how malls adapt to government policies. malls not only familiarize themselves with the relevant regulations but also take concrete steps to ensure compliance. This includes collaborating with halal certification institutions to ensure that the products of tenants in the mall have received halal certification.

Functionally, malls act as intermediaries that are able to act as mediators and controllers to ensure tenant compliance with halal regulations and become protectors of consumer interests. However, they can also unintentionally become obstacles, potentially slowing down the implementation and acceleration of halal certification policies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Implementation of Halal Certification Policy at Plaza Balikpapan Mall

1. Mall Application: Malls as Mediator of Halal Policy

Plaza Balikpapan Mall is the first shopping center in Balikpapan City, it is strategically located in the city center and covering an area of 5.2 hectares, and surrounded by hotels, offices, banks, shops, modern housing, and a tourist beach. According to research by Ratmananda & Ulimaz (2024), Plaza Balikpapan is the main choice for Balikpapan residents due to its various facilities, including open and enclosed public spaces, The mall offers scenic views of the beach and lush greenery, making it a popular destination. F&B tenants are the most frequently visited among amenities including shopping facilities, cinemas, children's play areas, and electric bicycle rides.

Mall Plaza Balikpapan is a member of the APPBI (Indonesian Shopping Center Association). Coincidentally, Aries Adriyanto, the General Manager of Mall Plaza Balikpapan, also serves as the Chair of APPBI East Kalimantan, through Aries' statement, the APPBI Central Board imposes mall managers to respond positively and wisely to the mandatory halal certification policy in accordance with each mall's policies. As for Plaza Balikpapan Mall, the management is committed to respond the instructions from both the association and the government regarding the halal certification policy, and it is directly overseen the policy by the Marketing Communication Manager, coordinated by Adistya Pratama and Yesi Novia said Aris.

Through coordinated and ongoing efforts, Aries, as the General Manager of Plaza Balikpapan Mall and the chair of APPBI East Kalimantan, states that they have participated in at least two Zoom meetings to discuss halal certification policies with the government, represented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, on May 17 and July 20, 2024. The meeting emphasized that all mall managers

should focus on implementing halal policies in malls, aligning with the government's target to achieve compliance in all malls across Indonesia by October 2024.

The mall management has implemented the halal certification policy at the mall by issuing a circular to all tenants. The circular was distributed in stages using a persuasive approach to engage mall tenants with aiming to assure mall visitors can enjoy halal food and beverages, this can contribute to overall consumer satisfaction, said Aris during an interview. These efforts reflect the mall management's commitment to accommodating the government's halal certification policy while also addressing the growing demand from consumers who are increasingly aware of the importance of halal products.

The halal certification policy is more a response to the growing market demand rather than complying with government regulations. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has seen a significant increase in the consumption of halal products, both in physical shopping centers like malls and online platforms such as Shopee (Juliana et al., 2022). Therefore, Mall Plaza Balikpapan, as a prominent shopping center in the city, has a significant opportunity to cater to Muslim consumer preferences by requiring its tenants to meet halal standards.

The circular issued by mall management serves as a reminder for tenants to comply with the regulations set by the government and halal certification institutions. The implementation of the halal certification policy in the mall using this circular is a strategic step that requires support from various parties. Furthermore, it is significant also to involve other key stakeholders, such as the government, certification bodies, and the community. Therefore, Collaboration among these groups will enhance the success of the halal certification policy in the mall rather than rely solely on mall management and tenants. Based on Kurniawan's study, a good strategy includes both internal and external approaches which is recommended for achieving optimal results in terms of effectiveness and efficiency (Hafiyyan Kurniawan et al., 2024).

In the internal context, A mutually supportive relationship will develop between tenants who have successfully obtained halal certification and those who have not. tenants who are halal certified function as examples of the success of halal businesses for tenants who do not have it, This creates a collaborative environment aimed at achieving halal standards, even for those who have not yet received certification (Abi Anwar et al., 2024). Halal certification, coupled with the availability of quality halal products, can attract more visitors to the mall. This has the potential to boost the income of tenants, which is called by the research of Sabuhari et al (2023) the dominant factor influencing the success of the product business.

This aligns with Aries's perspective that tenant certification, particularly in

the culinary sector, demonstrates a commitment to providing halal and high-quality products to consumers. He emphasizes the importance of tenants promptly meeting the requirements set by the mall. The implementation of the circular regarding the halal certification policy is expected to contribute significantly to the development of a more robust and sustainable business ecosystem in the mall.

Plaza Balikpapan Mall through Aries' appeal, is truly committed to proactively supervising its tenants to ensure the halal integrity of products offered to mall visitors. This includes verifying halal certification for each tenant. In addition, mall management has also required culinary tenants wishing to collaborate and join with the mall must obtain halal certification first.

The serious implementation of the halal certification policy at Mall Plaza Balikpapan holds significant potential for contributing to the growth of the halal industry in Balikpapan. With the increasing number of tenants who have halal certification, especially restaurant tenants which almost reach 80%, it is expected to encourage more businesses to follow in these footsteps. This will not only increase the availability of halal products at Mall Plaza Balikpapan but could also serve as a turning point for elevating the importance of halal standards in other malls across the city. Mall Plaza Balikpapan can be a pioneer in the implementation of halal certification in shopping centers, while contributing to inclusive and sustainable economic development.

To achieve the above objectives, mall management needs continuous supervision and evaluation. Comprehensive monitoring and periodic evaluations should be conducted for tenants who have fulfilled halal certification requirements, those still in the certification process, and even those yet to begin. Based on this, management is able to adjust policies and strategies based on the results of the evaluation. With a persuasive and adaptive approach, mall management can ensure that the halal certification policy remains relevant and effective in addressing the needs of both tenants and consumers. Therefore, the efficiency of halal certification depends on a holistic system with a good management model complemented by an emotional and rational understanding of religious principles (Noordin et al., 2014).

Aries stated that mall management plays a role as the overall facility manager. However, regarding the halal policy, Plaza Balikpapan is responsible for ensuring that culinary tenants comply with government standards and regulations. Currently, the mall is still socializing halal certificates for culinary tenants with F&B products. Aries explained that this focus on culinary tenants due to their significant representation, as restaurants and F&B outlets constitute 40% of the tenants in the mall.

In an interview with Marketing Communication Managers Adistya Pratama

and Yesi Novia, they outlined the main process involved in implementing the halal certification policy in the mall. The first step, mall management conducts socialization to all tenants regarding the importance of halal certification. As part of this step, circular letter is issued serving as an official document detailing the procedures and policies for Mandatory Halal Certification by October 2024.

After conducting monitoring and evaluation of the policy implementation, the mall management identified several limitations including neglect, lack of personalization, tenant unpreparedness, and insufficient direct interaction. To address these issues, the second step is carried out by the Marketing Communication Manager, an internal strategy is adopted utilizing a persuasive approach. Mall management actively engages with tenants, directly ensuring their efforts to meet the requirements and providing support to those facing difficulties in the certification process. According to Yesi's experience as the person responsible for overseeing halal certification in the mall, one of the significant challenges is with Micro and Small Enterprises (UMK) tenants, they rarely or never meet their owners directly, leaving only guards or employees in the mall. In contrast, tenants with multinational brands typically have their own internal monitoring systems in place to ensure compliance.

The third step, mall management invites tenants to understand the criteria and processes required to obtain halal certification, by collaborating with the Kalimantan Institute of Technology through a focus group discussion held on October 23, 2024. The event was attended by tenants who had not yet obtained halal certification, accompanied by representatives from the mall management. Other participants included government representatives, such as the Head of the Balikpapan Ministry of Religion, as well as halal product assistants based in Balikpapan. The final step is an external strategy implemented by Mall Plaza Balikpapan to provide clarity on the circular's intent, particularly regarding technical guidance for obtaining halal certification. This includes detailed explanations of the required documents, certification mechanisms, and types of halal certificates to ensure tenants are well-equipped to meet the necessary standards.

Collaboration between malls, tenants, and halal certification institutions creates an ecosystem that supports the implementation of halal policies. As a facilitator, malls serve as a bridge for communication between various stakeholders in the halal industry. By building strong mediation, malls assist tenants in understanding and fulfilling halal certification requirements. Overall, malls play a significant role in facilitating the implementation of halal policy regulations. With their influence and resources, malls have the potential to significantly enhance tenant awareness and comprehension of halal policies, as well as encourage the growth of the halal industry as a whole.

2. Mall Opportunities: Malls as Mediator of Education and Promotion of the Halal Value Chain

Post-pandemic, the concept of halal value chain has become a major concern in various sectors, including food, beverages, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and tourism. The halal value chain refers to the entire process, from production, distribution, to marketing, and consumption in accordance with Islamic sharia principles (Sari et al., 2023). Halal value chain encompasses various industrial sectors, such as food and beverages, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, fashion, and, tourism, all of which operate in accordance with Islamic sharia principles (Mu'is et al., 2023).

Malls can play a role in making the halal value chain a strategic solution that contributes to inclusive and sustainable economic growth. As a modern shopping center, Malls have great potential to become a facilitator in promoting the halal value chain. Moreover, malls can support the halal value chain by promoting halal-based products and services. According to Wahidah. R the private sector must provide a strong foundation to build trust and sustainability for the halal industry. The halal industry requires innovation by complying with regulations in order to provide economic, social and health benefits (Wahidah R et al., 2024).

Masood, an expert in the halal field from Malaysia, stated that deepening and developing the leading halal value chain sector should be a priority, not only for economic recovery, but also for building a more resilient economic foundation in the future. This requires synergy between the government, business actors, industries, and society to create an integrated, innovative, and competitive halal ecosystem in the global market (Masood & Lee, 2024).

Optimizing the halal value chain as a leading sector can provide dual benefits for the post-pandemic economy. First, it can encourage the growth of halal industries that have proven to be resilient and have survived the crisis. Second, strengthening the halal value chain ecosystem can create new jobs and increase the competitiveness of UMK in the global market (Masood & Lee, 2024).

As the global economy becomes more integrated, the concept of the halal value chain has gained significant attention, especially in countries with large Muslim populations such as Indonesia. The Indonesian government has the challenge of becoming the world's halal center in the coming year by optimizing the halal industry, halal product certification, and halal logistics (Aida et al., 2024). Malls, as shopping centers, serve not only as venues for economic transactions but also as strategic mediator in the education and promotion of the halal value chain.

Understanding malls as mediator in the context of education and promotion

of the halal value chain means ensuring that accurate and relevant information about halal products is available, functioning as a source of knowledge for the halal ecosystem. This education not only covers legal and regulatory aspects related to the halal logo, but also emphasizes the importance of understanding the fundamental principles of halal, such as choosing products that are in accordance with halal principles (Jailani, 2024). Malls can facilitate this through the organization of talk shows, workshops, or exhibitions involving business actors, consumers, sharia economic institutions, the government's sharia creative industry community, halal certification institutions and other relevant stakeholders (Wahidah R et al., 2024).

Mall Plaza Balikpapan as a mediator that can encourage the growth of the halal industry. The strategic role of malls in terms of positioning, providing platforms, consumer education, and collaboration between stakeholders can be an effective model for developing the halal value chain. The success of malls as mediators of halal policies will be more complete if the malls also act as mediator of education and promotion of halal values, then malls can be pioneers in promoting halal values and contributing to inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Our field observations on June 7, 2024, revealed that Mall Plaza Balikpapan hosted the Pekan Ekonomi Syariah Nusantara Festival in collaboration with Bank Indonesia Balikpapan. This event was significant and well-organized, invited guests who attended from various parties both from Sharia Institutions and local governments. Additionally, the mall organized a bazaar for UMK that have halal certification and for Islamic boarding schools that have businesses as a promotional event.



Figure 1. Photo

(Source: Documentation of Pekan Ekonomi Syariah Nusantara in Plaza Balikpapan Mall)

Malls act as a mediator between producers, distributors, and halal service providers. By providing affordable business space for UMK halal. In doing so, they have become halal business incubators and encourage the growth of the local halal ecosystem, when we asked Yesi from mall management whether there would be another similar event in the near future, the response was that there are no immediate plans, but they hope to host another event like this at

Mall Plaza Balikpapan in the future, depending on circumstances.

The Pekan Ekonomi Syariah Nusantara Bazaar at Plaza Balikpapan Mall attracted a large crowd, with collaboration between producers and mall distributors, the festival and halal bazaar featured new products from various food brands such as Bonting, Cake Salak Kilo, Wedang Dayak, Trubus drinking water etc. All of these producers are new and local products that are ready to export to compete with other international products. Through this festival and bazaar, it will provide an opportunity for industry players to interact directly with consumers. Therefore, this kind of activity not only increases sales, but also strengthens the network in the halal ecosystem.

Plaza Balikpapan Mall, as a promotional platform for halal products, play a significant role in increasing the visibility of halal products among consumers, by holding a halal food festival and a local halal product bazaar. This initiative creates a positive experience that can increase awareness of the existence of halal products. Through these events, the mall can help strengthen the position of halal products in the public market and encourage more business actors to adopt halal standards in their production.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the mall can serve as a bridge to introduce halal products from various countries to local consumers. By holding an international showcase in collaboration with halal brands from abroad, the mall can enrich the range of products available to consumers. This will not only increase product diversity, but also provide opportunities for local business actors to learn from practices in other countries. This can be a key element in the development of the halal value chain, with the mall playing a central role in the distribution and marketing of halal products.

Malls which are commercial entities for economic transactions have a unique capacity to integrate various halal products from various sectors, such as food and beverages, cosmetics and fashion. There is another role of the Mall as a mediator, namely providing an educational platform space about the halal value chain, where the mall can act as a bridge between producers and consumers, by providing relevant information about halal certification, production processes, benefits of halal products, and even exports of halal products.

An example of one of the challenges in the halal value chain is the issue of exports, various standards and regulations related to halal certification in various countries, differences in procedures and institutions responsible for providing halal certification can cause confusion among halal food industry producers, and uncertainty in the global market. Therefore, Mall Plaza Balikpapan at Pekan Ekonomi Syariah Nusantara, organized an educational session on the development of halal certification and the challenges of local UMK halal products towards the global. This event invited the Head of Halal

Registration and Certification Center of BPJPH, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Siti Aminah and Helma Agustiawan as Deputy Director of the Sharia Business Incubation KNEKS.

During this event, Siti Aminah emphasized to business actors the importance of halal certification, halal certification is not just a document, but also a guarantee for consumers that the products they consume meet halal standards. Therefore, producers must be proactive in obtaining certification and ensuring that the entire production process complies with halal principles.

The second speaker, Helma Agustiawan, highlighted that in this era of globalization, competition in the international market is becoming increasingly fierce. Therefore, Indonesia needs to utilize its comparative advantages, such as its abundant natural resources and cultural diversity, to create unique and attractive halal products. Innovation in product development, both in terms of taste, packaging, and branding, can be the key to winning the competition in the global market.

In addition, the results of our participation in several activities related to halal issues at the Pekan Ekonomi Syariah Nusantara. First, the launching of the Halal Center of the Kalimantan Institute of Technology (ITK) which has been officially registered as the Halal Product Process Assistance Agency (LP3H). Second, the submission of 60 halal certificates to business actors in Balikpapan as part of a joint program with the Halal Center of Mulawarman University. Third, the provision of initial training certificates to halal slaughterers in Balikpapan.

Discussion

On November 23, 2021, the Head of BPJPH, Muhammad Aqil Irham, encouraged the halal certification program to enter supermarkets and malls, while encouraging UMK to be able to expand their marketing networks for both export and domestic in producing halal products. This initiative was supported by Alphonzus Widjaja, the Chairperson of the Indonesian Shopping Center Association (APPBI), who expressed that APPBI would commit to supporting the government's program in strengthening UMK actors in participating in halal certification carried out by BPJPH.

During a virtual audience in 2021 with APPBI, the government will continue to provide guidance and also facilitate halal certificates for UMK actors. Aqil Irham explained that halal certificates are a form of legal certainty regarding the availability of halal products consumed and used by the public, He further added that obtaining halal certification would provide added economic value to products, enabling them to compete more effectively in both local and global markets.

According to Widjaja's statement, he expressed interest in the free halal certification facilitated by BPJPH specifically for UMK. He emphasized that through APPBI, the association would support the government's efforts by making it easier for UMK actors to obtain halal certification, demonstrating mall management's responsibility towards tenants in the UMK group. Widjaja's interest aligns with BPJPH's SEHATI Free Halal Certification program, which offers free certification to UMK, with a quota of 1 million certificates. This program provides convenience to UMK, allowing them to self-declare that their products are halal, especially for low-risk products in terms of material usage. After self-declaration, the products are then verified and validated by the Halal Product Process Companions (PPH) (Zainudin et al., 2024).

In 2024, the government, through BPJPH, will re-intensify its campaign for mandatory halal certification (Zainudin et al., 2024). Muhammad Aqil Irham, the Head of BPJPH, emphasized that halal certification would become a priority program, particularly for food products, beverages, slaughtering services, and other related industries. This initiative, as instructed by the Minister of Religion, Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, aims to position Indonesia as the global center for the halal industry.

This massive campaign also targets malls. with APPBI as an association responding positively by supporting this strategic program. Widjaja, through his two customers, namely tenants, retailers or tenants and consumers, committed to implementing policies to ensure that the first group can sell effectively while complying with existing regulations, and that consumers can shop in a safe and comfortable environment.

Support for the halal certification program also came from the Indonesian Shopping Center Tenants Association (HIPPINDO). Its chairman, Budihardjo Iduansjah, expressed optimism that the transition from voluntary to mandatory halal certification, especially for the food and beverage (F&B) sector would drive growth not only domestically but also internationally. According to Iduansjah, Indonesia is a large market for halal products. Together with Middle Eastern countries and Malaysia in ASEAN, HIPPINDO is ready to bring local halal brands to the global as mandated by the Ministry of Trade.

Aqil Irham explained the increasing trend of consumer awareness to consume halal products, making halal certification an added value for products to improve the quality and competitiveness of the global market. To align the objectives of halal products to the global region, BPJPH has collaborated with 44 countries in the world related to foreign halal products, these 44 countries are committed to recognizing the halal logo and accepting imported and exported products. This realizes that halal products are not for a particular religion, but have become a global quality standard.

According to Law Number 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance, and as

extended by Government Regulation (PP) Number 42 of 2024 concerning the Implementation of the Halal Product Assurance Sector, the obligation to obtain halal certification will come into effect on October 18, 2024, and extend until October 17, 2026. this obligation will be implemented for three product groups, including is food and beverages. Furthermore, BPJPH will carry out supervision of the Halal Product Assurance (JPH), to ensure that the three groups have halal certification. If business actors do not yet have halal certification, in the future they will be subject to sanctions according to applicable regulations (Disemadi & Putri, 2024). For this reason, the chairman of APPBI strongly supports this mandatory because the mall is one of the public facilities that has a strategic role in facilitating the interests of this mandatory policy through tenants, tenants and retailers. With support from APPBI, it raises hopes for all malls with UMK tenants or tenants to upgrade to become halal retailers.

The role of the mall can be an incubation, not only a business incubation but can also be a halal incubation in strengthening the implementation of halal policies and halal standard literacy and in the future can integrate the global halal hub. Some of the roles of the mall apart from being a provider of halal products can be as consumer education, cooperation with certification institutions, supervision, promotion of halal products (Sulistiawati et al., 2023). The role of the mall This will overcome various problems and obstacles to halal policies that have occurred so far, according to the results of Sri Widiarty's research (2024) who has identified several factors constraining halal policies in the form of relatively expensive halal certification, a halal certification process that is considered complicated and convoluted and lack of understanding of halal policies, and lack of assistance and socialization from the government. The concept of an incubator means that the mall is a mediator that connects producers, distributors, and consumers. Malls are basically shopping centers that are often visited by the general public, in this case Muslim consumers. Malls have a role and even a big responsibility in ensuring that the products sold in them meet halal standards, by encouraging producers to pay more attention to the halal aspects of their products (Kurniawan et al., 2022).

Further explanation, it can be seen the significance of the role of malls as a place of education for consumers. Malls can hold various educational promotional activities, such as workshops, exhibitions and even festivals to increase visitor literacy about the importance of halal certification and how to choose halal products. This is what is called a mall not only functioning as a place for business-economic transactions, but also as an information center that helps people understand the halal aspects of all products.

All in all, malls have the potential to establish dedicated zones for halal products, making it easier for Muslim consumers to find items that meet their needs. the zones would enhance consumer confidence and eliminate confusion

and doubts when selecting products. As a result, they will elevate the overall shopping consumer's experience

CONCLUSION

This research began with media reports, followed by interviews and field observations, which revealed the significant efforts of Plaza Balikpapan Mall in accelerating the implementation of halal certification policies. We found three main roles of Plaza Balikpapan Mall in implementing halal policies. First, the mall acts as a mediator for the implementation of halal certification policy regulations by issuing circulars letter through mall management. This is executed by the Marketing Communication Manager division, which employs a persuasive approach to engage tenants. Second, the mall serves as an educational mediator in promoting understanding of halal policies by facilitating collaboration among institutions, including universities, government bodies, and other Sharia organizations. Third, the mall functions as a mediator for promoting the halal value chain by acting as an incubator, bringing together halal producers in one centralized location.

This study did not include validation of survey data on mall tenant compliance with halal policies. However, field findings revealed that the mall's central position enables it to effectively act as a mediator between the government at the top and its tenants at the bottom, which include business actors, producers, and halal industries. Unlike the government, which faces limitations in direct supervision, the mall has greater flexibility in overseeing and engaging with tenants, making this role critical for advancing the halal ecosystem. For future research, it is suggested to explore the perspective of mall tenants using a quantitative approach.

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Daftar Informan Wawancara

- Interview with Mr. Aries Adriyanto in Balikpapan, on 14 June 2024.
- Interview with Mr. Adistya Pratama in Balikpapan, on 14 June 2024.
- Interview with Ms. Yesi Novia in Balikpapan, on 10 July 2024.