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Halal Discourse in Indonesia: Politicization of Al-Qur'an-Hadith Interpretation and Business Strategy

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Abstract

This article shows how business people and consumers understand and practice the halal concept. The concept of halal, understood only based on the narrative of the Qur'an and hadith, turns out to be more complex at the practical level because it involves market behavior and contains elements of religious politicization. Using a living tradition approach, this qualitative research reveals the reciprocal relationship between religious texts and community practices, social context, and performative actions by halal business actors in the districts of Semarang and Salatiga City, Indonesia. The results show that 1) halal business behavior is a form of embodiment of Muslim business people's interpretation of the essence of the teachings of the Qur'an and hadith, which are understood textually on business platforms. 2) This halal business movement emerged as a response to (a) global market trends which are starting to target consumers who are experiencing increased religiosity and spirituality, (b) modern capitalism, which is starting to touch religious areas, starting from production, business systems, to marketing, and 3) political developments global economy that makes halal a business commodity. Thus, the theoretical contribution of this paper is that the concept of halal cannot be defined only based on the interpretation of the Qur'an or the interpretation of hadith but is closely related to traditional practices in the field, which involve market behavior and trade politics.

Keywords: Halal Business; Living Tradition; the Qur'an-hadith.

Abstrak

Tulisan ini menunjukkan bagaimana konsep halal itu dipahami dan dipraktikkan oleh para pelaku bisnis dan konsumen. Konsep halal yang selama ini dipahami hanya berdasarkan narasi al-Qur'an dan hadis, ternyata konsep tersebut lebih kompleks dalam tataran praktiknya, karena melibatkan perilaku pasar serta mengandung unsur politisasi agama.

Dengan pendekatan *living tradition*, penelitian kualitatif ini mengungkap hubungan resiprokal antara teks agama dengan praktik Masyarakat, konteks sosial serta tindakan performatif yang dilakukan oleh para pelaku bisnis halal di Kab. Semarang dan Kota Salatiga Indonesia. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa perilaku bisnis halal adalah bentuk pengejawantahan dari penafsiran para pebisnis Muslim atas intisari ajaran al-Qur'an dan hadis yang dipahami secara tekstual dalam platform bisnis. Gerakan bisnis halal ini bangkit sebagai respon atas: a) trend pasar global yang mulai membidik konsumen yang mengalami peningkatan religiusitas dan spiritualitasnya, b) kapitalisme modern yang mulai menyentuh wilayah religious, mulai dari produksi, sistem bisnis, hingga pemasarannya, dan 3) perkembangan politik ekonomi global yang menjadikan halal sebagai komoditas bisnis. Dengan demikian, kontribusi teoretik tulisan ini adalah bahwa konsep halal tidak bisa didefinisikan hanya berdasarkan penafsiran al-Qur'an maupun interpretasi hadis, namun erat kaitannya dengan praktik tradisi di lapangan yang melibatkan perilaku pasar dan politik dagang.

Kata kunci: Bisnis Halal; Living Tradition; al-Qur'an-hadis.

Introduction

Exclusively, halal is a term used by Islam to mean 'permitted' based on the signs of the Qur'an and hadith (Mahmud, 2017, p. 126; Rustam, 2017). Each party must comply with the standards of the sacred scriptures in order to claim the halalness of a product or service. However, the concept of halal has entered all spectrums of life in the Muslim community and is not limited to things that are consumer in nature, such as food and drinks (Najmaei et al., 2017). The halal concept enters non-consumptive products such as judicial services, health services, safety services, the world of entertainment, and philanthropic activities (Baharun & Niswa, 2019, p. 90). Halal is no longer a religious conceptual framework that only talks about what is permissible or not but has shifted into the realm of practice. It is in this area of practice that halal is vulnerable to being politicized for the sake of market interests labeled as religious, such as halal tourism, halal lodging, and others (Adinugraha et al., 2018, pp. 29–30; Baharun & Niswa, 2019, p. 92).

In practice, halal is politicized to become a business symbol based on religious labels (Bergeaud-Blackler et al., 2016, p. 98). The rise of middle and upper-class Muslims has also fostered the labeling of halal in the market (Zaidah et al., 2022, p. 656). Products and services that use the halal label become a trading space that carries religious legitimacy. Religion, which should be a sacred entity, has instead been shifted to become a tool to promote product branding (Ali, 2012; Husna, 2019, p. 237). In social and cultural studies, religion can become a legitimate and effective ideological frame in human activities (Wattimena, 2007, p. xi) by highlighting sacred religious texts, both the Qur'an and Hadith or by presenting the charismatic religious figures (Weber, 1968, p. 245).

Many authors say that halal business emerged as a reaction to dissatisfaction with the conventional economic system, which was considered far from religious values (Ali, 2012; Najmaei et al., 2017; Rustam, 2017). For many Muslim individuals, running a business in accordance with Islamic principles is a religious obligation (Abuznaid, 2012; Nasrullah, 2015; Vristiyana, 2019). These principles include avoiding usury (interest), gambling, and products containing alcohol or pork, as well as adhering to fair and transparent business ethics (Ilyas, 2018). So it is not uncommon for authors to say that the sharia economic movement often brings religious texts as legitimacy (Adinugraha et al., 2018; Najmaei et al., 2017; Rustam, 2017; Sulaiman, 2014, p. 87).

Halal businesses can also contribute to the development of Muslim identity in an economic context. This creates awareness of religious values in every aspect of life, including in the way they do business. The use of products labeled halal means that a person is seen as devout, Islamic and Sharia (Anwar et al., 2020, p. 33). Both consumers and Muslim business people from the middle class consciously make full efforts to imitate the activities of the Prophet Muhammad. The activities of the Prophet Saw. in trading when he was a teenager were used as an ideal business model, which was considered to be in accordance with Islamic teachings. Passion for imitating the Prophet Pbuh. In total, this is what motivates them to run a sharia business. To make this happen, the basics of the Qur'an and stories about the business activities of the Prophet Muhammad Pbuh., which are recorded in the hadiths of *buyu>'* (buying and selling), are studied, understood, and then used as a basis for conducting halal business.

This article explores the factors that expand the halal spectrum from its basic conception in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Pbuh. to the area of practice. Through a living tradition approach, the focus of the study is to analyze the relationship between religious texts, context and performance carried out by halal business actors and their customers in Indonesia. The research focus is halal business people in the districts of Semarang and Salatiga City. This article contributes that the halal discourse in business is not only based on actors' understanding of the narrative of religious texts - the Qur'an and hadith -but is closely related to experience in implementing the sharia business practices.

Theoretical Framework

Living Tradition: Integration of Religious Texts with Social Practices

Religion and tradition are a cultural package owned by Islamic society, so studying the two can only be separated with an integral investigation. Consequently, studies of 'living' models signal the importance of a paradigm shift and the need for new

methodologies that are relevant to the conditions of local communities (Hodgkin, 1980; Karam, 1998). In fact, the practice of religious teachings cannot be separated from its historicity. Religion has manifested itself in the cultural order of a society and, of course, will be different from the cultural order of other societies. Here, religion, especially Islam, in society is greatly influenced by their cultural perspective.

To meet the methodological needs in studying Islam - as a religious phenomenon in society - from the aspect of its historicity, the approach used exists in the social sciences and humanities, such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, history, philosophy, literature and art. Therefore, the focus of the study is no longer on religious texts as objects but on patterns of social behavior that are the object of study. However, it is not easy to separate the study of religious texts, which are considered sacred and the study of social behavior, which is considered profane (Abdullah, 1996, p. viii). There is nothing wrong with using a normativity approach in the study of religion in the area of doctrine because that is where religion functions, but that does not mean ignoring social humanities approaches in studying the area of practice (Abdullah, 1996).

In the context of living studies, what has been practiced by religious communities based on their understanding of religious texts will, in turn, become part of tradition and culture. Of course, religious and cultural traditions are sometimes different from those practiced in the early Islamic period. Differences in space and time cause interpretations and adjustments that encourage acculturation and assimilation. Living tradition studies must be able to contribute to the development of the Qur'an and Hadith studies. The study of religious texts will give a greater appreciation of society's response and behavior to the presence of revealed texts. Religious texts are no longer elitist but emancipatory, inviting community participation (Ahimsa-Putra, 2012).

The living method is not intended to search for positivistic truth that always looks at the context but merely to carry out objective readings of religious phenomena that are directly related to hadith. Because of this, living is more emancipatory, which will invite and involve many people with various related scientific disciplines. As a relatively new method, this method is fine. However, methodically-conceptually, this method is still looking for a form that can be used as a kind of reference (Ahimsa-Putra, 2012).

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with the Living Tradition method, which is applied to halal business actors in Indonesia. The research subjects consisted of 8 halal business people in Salatiga City and Semarang Regency, Indonesia. Data was collected through a) direct observation in marketplace of businessmen of Salatiga and Semarang,

such as Arnas, Arruwais, Barokah Catering, etc.), b) interviews with some owners of halal business such as Arna Anisa, Galuh, Amin Miftakhus Sholeh, Rosana Eri Puspita, Ari Setiawan, and Rini Verary, and c) documentation with the primary sources and secondary sources. Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques by grouping themes that emerged from the data that had been collected. The author also uses triangulation techniques to verify the accuracy of the data that has been obtained. The results of this research will be presented in the form of a short description that describes how halal discourse is for halal business people in Indonesia, as well as how they use religious texts in their business activities.

Result and Discussion

Halal Discourse in the Qur'an and Hadith

The concept of halal is one of the important concepts in Islam, as is the narrative of the Qur'an and hadith. The Qur'an emphasizes that Allah almighty, created everything good in the world for humans. Humans are given the freedom to choose what is halal or what is haram in making their life choices. The Qur'an has stated that humans must choose what is halal, thayib, and beneficial in all aspects of their lives.

"O you who believe, eat of the good provisions We have given you and give thanks to Allah, if it is truly Him you worship." (Verse Al-Baqarah: 172).

Al-Alusi explains that there are two possible meanings of this verse: First, the verse is a command for believers to do what is appropriate for them by looking for halal food and not to overdo it by consuming halal sustenance. This was not obtained from the previous command. Second, this verse is Allah's command for them in accordance with the previous explanation. However, the purpose of calling them believers specifically after being mentioned in general is to glorify them by being called Allah and as a basis for the command to be grateful (al-Alusi, n.d., p. 41).

"They ask you what is lawful for them. Say: 'It is lawful for you (to eat) all animals slaughtered in the name of God, as long as you do not overstep the bounds and you do not commit sin.' Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (Verse Al-Maidah: 88).

In that verse, Muslims are basically welcome to consume whatever is halal and good according to their taste. That is the sustenance given and made easy by Allah Almighty, for His servants (al-Alusi, n.d.). As the following sentence:

"Eat from the sustenance that God has given you that is halal and good and be grateful for God's favor if you truly worship Him." (Verse An-Nahl: 114).

Al-Qur'an has given important principles in Islam about food that is halal and haram as well as about the prohibition of going beyond the limit as Verse Al-Maidah: 87:

"O you who believe, do not forbid the good things that God has made lawful for you, and do not transgress. Truly, God does not like those who transgress."

The verse insists that Muslims not forbid food or items that have actually been made lawful by Allah. This, at the same time, gives a warning against the actions of people who are innovative in religion, where they or groups try to change the definite legal rulings (*qat'i*) determined by Allah Almighty. Further in Verse Al-Maidah: 88 God wants humankind to eat halal and good food and avoid haram or questionable food. This is a demand from Allah Almighty, as a form of obedience and gratitude to Him.

"And eat from food that is lawful and good from what God has provided for you, and fear God in whom you believe."

Apart from the Qur'an, the basis of halal is also mentioned in several hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. One of them is the history of Imam Muslim (Muslim, n.d.) and Ahmad bin Hanbal (Ibnu Hanbal, 2001):

"Indeed, Allah is good, and He only accepts what is good. (from Muslim).

"Allah is Thoyyib, and He only accepts Thoyyib." (from Muslim).

"Whoever eats halal food, his body will become strong to worship, and whoever eats haram food, his body will become weak, and it will be difficult for him to worship." (Ahmad).

In these hadiths, it can be seen that the concept of halal in Islam is understood broadly and covers various aspects of life. Apart from being a requirement of the Shari'a in fulfilling food needs, the halal concept is also related to morals, cleanliness and health. Through these hadiths, we are reminded to always choose halal and good food so that we are always in prime physical and spiritual condition to worship and carry out our duties in the world.

Halal Business in the Narrative of the Qur'an and Hadith

The concept of the hadith of the Prophet Saw. about business is very comprehensive. Hadith has given signs that a truly successful (good) business is a business that brings profits to the perpetrators in this world and the hereafter (Febriyani, 2016, p. 142). Business is one of the efforts to improve the welfare of human life. For this reason, Islam provides comprehensive business instructions, starting from how to produce goods to how to manage the exchange of goods well, which is known as the business paradigm.

Because the goal of business in Islam is more directed towards goodness in this world and the afterlife, marketing strategies in business are also an activity that must be paid attention to. Alom and Haque, in Rustam (Rustam, 2017, p. 210), explain the objectives of sharia marketing as a process as well as a strategy (*hikmah*) in order to meet the need for halal goods and services (*halal*) in the principle of mutual willingness (*al-taradhin*) in order to achieve prosperity (*fallah*) for both parties, namely the buyer and the seller, both material and spiritual prosperity, in this world and the hereafter.

Directing towards goodness in this world and the hereafter in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, Abuznaid revealed several important things related to halal marketing (Abuznaid, 2012, pp. 1477–1478), including first, prioritizing wisdom (wisdom/*hikmah*). The meaning of wisdom here is understanding the guidelines of the Qur'an by knowing the truth and practicing it, putting things in their place, and always being simple. Wisdom is the main pillar of business, as in Verse Al-Baqarah: 269.

Allah grants al-hikmah (understanding) to whom He wills. Whoever is blessed with wisdom has truly been blessed with many gifts. Only those who are wise can learn lessons.

Second, needs. Sharia marketing or halal marketing must be based on two basic needs, as mentioned in the Qur'an, namely physical needs (eating, drinking, shelter and clothing) and security needs. These two needs are emphasized in Verse Thaha: 118-119 and Verse Al-Isra': 29.

Indeed, you will not starve therein, nor will you be naked. In fact, you will not feel thirsty, and the heat of the sun will not affect you.

Moreover, do not make your hands shackled to your neck and do not stretch them out too much because then you will become disgraceful and regretful.

Third, Muslim consumers. They are more defined as consumption patterns, lifestyles and financial rules that are believed to be in accordance with Islamic law. Fourth, the market. Market mechanisms in Islam must, in principle, comply with Islamic laws in all sectors. Products that are not halal or do not comply with Sharia principles are not permitted for sale.

Fifth, good behavior/ethical behavior (good conduct). More than just fulfilling physical needs, the entire goal of Muslims in this life is to worship Allah almighty. One of the main steps is through *amar ma'ruf* (inviting virtue) in various aspects of life. This concept in business is embodied in an honest and fair attitude.

In the riwayat of al-Tirmizi, Rasulullah P.b.u.h. stated that honest and trustworthy Muslim people in business could one day join the Prophets, the righteous and the martyrs (al-Tirmizi, 1975, p. Vol. 2, 1209). Awareness of being honest is a reflection of faith for

Muslim business people, which is manifested in action. This awareness will be a supervisor in his efforts to obtain what is halal and good and keep him away from what is haram and bad. He is not willing to swear falsely, let alone mention the name of Allah, because he only aims to sell his merchandise. Imam Muslim narrated that the Messenger of Allah states that any flesh that grows from haram items, hell will be the place of return (Muslim, n.d., p. 102).

Meanwhile, a fair attitude in business is to carry out buying and selling transactions in an accountable and transparent manner. Islam forbids every business that contains injustice and requires justice to be applied in every business transaction carried out. Therefore, Rasulullah P.b.u.h. prohibits *gharar* transactions (Muslim, n.d., p. 1153) on the grounds that there is an element of ambiguity that could harm one of the parties in a transaction. Gharar can be in the form of unclear transaction objects, quantity and quality of goods being traded, or unclear delivery times of goods being transacted.

Sixth, *halala* and *t}ayyibat*, namely containing virtue, holy, safe, halal, and the product is profitable. The concept of *h}ala* and *t}ayyib* is the essence of Verse Al-Baqarah: 172 and 168.

O you who believe, eat of the good provisions We have provided for you, and give thanks to Allah, if it is Him you truly worship.

O people, eat what is lawful and good from what is on earth, and do not follow the steps of Satan because, indeed, he is a real enemy for you.

Of the two terms above, the concept of *t}ayyibat* is so important in Islam that it is mentioned in the Qur'an eighteen times. In the history of Ahmad bin Hanbal, it is stated that the Messenger of Allah. I was once asked what the best job was. He answered that buying and selling is *mabrur* (halal) and one's work with one's own hands (Ibnu H}anbal, 2001, vols. 3, 466).

Seventh, mutual agreement (mutual consent) or fair and free from intervention by buyers and sellers without coercion. In Islamic terms, it is called 'an tara>d}in (mutual willingness). This is the essence of Verse Al-Nisa': 29.

O you who believe, do not devour each other's wealth by false means, except by means of commerce based on like-mindedness between you. Furthermore, do not kill yourselves. Indeed, Allah is Most Merciful towards you.

To achieve this mutual agreement, both sellers and buyers have the right to determine and choose in transactions. Rasulullah P.b.u.h. states that there is a right of *khiyar* (choice) between the seller and the buyer. Will both of them continue the transaction or cancel it as long as they have not separated? This *khiyar* right aims to avoid disputes or disputes between the seller and the buyer. *Khiyar* rights can also take the form of voting

rights from both parties entering into the contract if there is a defect in the object being traded and the defect is not known to the owner at the time the contract takes place (al-Bukhari, 1422, vols. 2, 732; Ibnu Hanbal, 2001, p. vol.3, 491).

Eighth, well-being (fallah) that leads to success, as Verse Al-Baqarah: 201.

Furthermore, among them, some pray: "O our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the hereafter and protect us from the torment of hell."

Ninth, using ethical advertising (ethical advertising), in the sense that there is no misleading action, fraud or cheating in the marketing advertisement. This is confirmed in Verse Ali Imron: 77.

Indeed, those who exchange God's promise and their oaths for a small price will not have a share in the Hereafter, and God will not speak to them and will not look at them on the Day of Resurrection and will not purify them. For them, a painful punishment.

Based on the verses of the Qur'an and hadith, halal marketing is understood as a policy to satisfy customer needs through good behavior in providing products and services that are Halal, healthy, pure and halal with the mutual agreement of the seller and buyer for the purpose of achieving material and spiritual well-being in this world. Furthermore, as well as making consumers aware of it through good behavior as a marketer and ethical marketing.

Therefore, to increase profits in halal marketing, a company needs to carry out good marketing strategies in accordance with Islamic marketing procedures. Marketing activities should be carried out honestly and fairly and not create complaints and disappointment for customers. Striving to keep promises by providing standard quality products in accordance with customer requests. Apart from that, eradicate transactions from all kinds of business practices that contain elements of fraud, usury, gambling, *gharar*, doubt, exploitation, excessive profit making, and the black market.

Marketing, which involves social and managerial communication activities and practices that convey sweet promises and grandiose stories but which have yet to be proven to be compatible between the product offered and the promises expressed, is not permitted in halal marketing. He also standardized weights and measures and prohibited people from using other scales and measures that could not be used as standard standards.

Arham in Ashmawy states that there are four concepts in halal marketing, namely: spiritualistic, ethical, realistic and humanistic (Ashmawy, 2015, p. 175). In the spiritualistic area, all business activities must be in accordance with the Qur'an and Hadith. Consequently, Muslim marketers must believe in Islamic law. Saying the shahada, as the first pillar of Islam, means that one declares oneself to obey and submit

to the laws set by Allah almighty. to live. By submitting to Allah almighty. every halal marketing activity carried out will be in accordance with Islamic rules, as well as ensuring that no actions are carried out that are not Islamic.

The main quality of halal marketing is applying ethical thinking related to ethics and sharia guidelines. Muslim marketers must ensure that all their business activities comply with applicable business ethics and are in accordance with Islamic standards. Business activities must avoid malpractices such as corruption and gratification (Ashmawy, 2015). That way, businesses can maintain consumer trust and build a good reputation in the halal market. Important steps to maintain consumer confidence are:

1. Consistently implementing correct business ethics and in accordance with Islamic standards.
2. Maintaining the quality of products and services offered so that they comply with halal standards and meet consumer expectations
3. Improving customer service so that consumers feel satisfied
4. Be transparent in every business activity and follow up on suggestions and complaints from consumers quickly and accurately.
5. Strengthening brand image and increasing corporate social responsibility

By implementing these steps in running a business, companies can build and maintain consumer trust.

In relation to a realistic attitude, Muslim marketers must not be rigid in practicing halal marketing, but they must be realistic and flexible. Muslim marketers must learn to be realistic and understand that in business, various challenges require struggle, where reality may not match expectations, meaning that the business activities carried out are not profitable. Even so, they are still not allowed to use 'un-Islamic' trading methods to pursue profits (Ashmawy, 2015).

Humanistic concepts require the practice of teaching human values to help them interact with each other. This concept is related to maintaining a balance between market demand and environmental preservation. This shows Muslim marketers that they need to pay attention to the environment throughout their business activities because paying attention to the environment is a social obligation (Ashmawy, 2015).

Portrait of Halal Business in Indonesia

Discussions about halal business cannot be separated from the construction of the Qur'an and hadith in the understanding of Muslim business people. They can only carry

out a Sharia-based business with a basis that legitimizes their business. Many Muslim business people emphasize the importance of standardizing their marketing, as in Verse Al-A'raf: 157, on the concept of halal. Even though the word halal in this verse is interpreted by some *mufassir* (interpreters) as a good thing that human instincts can accept, and the word haram as things that can bring disaster and thus is rejected by human instincts, in practice, the meaning of halal is understood very differently by various people. Business people in Salatiga City and Semarang, Indonesia. Of the 6 respondents, 4 people understood halal more in terms of the method and system of trading, 1 person understood halal more in terms of the physical condition of the goods being sold, and 1 person understood that halal had to be in the physical condition of the goods and the system/way of trading.

Arna Asna Anisa, a businessman from Salatiga who carries the trademark "Arnas," interprets halal in the area of systems or ways of doing business. According to him, halal is more about business actions that are in accordance with his instincts. It is not so much about just profit as the capitalists. Arna emphasized, "be healthy in business competition, because each person's fortune has been determined by Allah" (A. A. Anisa, personal communication, September 3, 2020). Galuh, the owner of the Arruwais trademark, expressed the same thing. He said that halal depends on the suitability of the way of trading with the rules of buying and selling. Meanwhile, Amin Miftakhus Sholeh - the owner of Vemin Coffee - halal lies in the honesty of the traders. He explained that every trader should be honest in explaining the condition of the goods with the aim of avoiding customer disappointment when handing over the goods (Galuh, personal communication, September 5, 2020).

Different from the others, Rosana Eri P - a Barokah Catering entrepreneur - defines the halal concept as lying in one unit of buying and selling activities. Starting from the composition of goods, the production process, to the transaction system must be in accordance with Islamic law. According to him, the Qur'an not only introduces the concept of halal, Verse Al-Baqarah: 168 also introduces the concept of "*thayyiban*" (the good and worthy). He understands this concept as an effort to maintain quality, ensure goods function well, be ready to provide guarantees against defects and damage, transparency of superior raw materials, and transparency of the sales system (R. E. Puspita, personal communication, September 3, 2020).

The fact that halal has become a current trade trend shows that consumer awareness of halal is increasing. The development of the halal concept and halal awareness requires that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have halal product certificates. Therefore, MSMEs must improve their branding position, ground and spread halal awareness and the halal lifestyle, be careful at every stage of the

production process, ensure product safety and hygiene, and increase the competitiveness of products for export to countries that are very concerned about halal products.

There are a number of producers and business people in Salatiga City and Kab. Semarang has made halal an important element in its business activities. Amin Miftahus Sholeh, the owner of Vemin Coffee, really needs the halal status of his products to convince consumers. Amin added that halal certification is regulated in law number 33 of 2014 concerning halal product guarantees. This law provides guarantees for the implementation of trade that is based on protection, justice, legal certainty, accountability and transparency, effectiveness and efficiency, and professionalism (A. M. Sholeh, personal communication, September 3, 2020). Rosana Eri Puspita, owner of Barokah Catering, also really needs a halal label to expand her halal business network across provinces. He realizes that currently, the catering business being carried out is still limited to the district area. Semarang, Salatiga City and surrounding areas. Nevertheless, Rosana is optimistic that the halal label will expand the market share of her catering business (R. E. Puspita, personal communication, September 3, 2020). The two business actors show that the "halal" label is really needed in consumerist businesses.

Even though the halal label is a safeguard in some business systems, this label in sharia business cannot be used to brand non-consumptive products. Arna Asna Anisa said that in my convection business, I do not need halal labels, even though several convection business actors use "halal" as branding in their marketing (A. A. Anisa, personal communication, September 3, 2020). Ari Setiawan also said that the halal label cannot be applied to electronic commerce (A. Setiawan, personal communication, September 3, 2020). What Arna and Ari said is in sharp contrast to national business actors who drag the halal label into non-consumptive businesses. For example, there is a well-known detergent company that markets its products using religious terms. Halal detergent and siwak toothpaste.

The arguments made by Muslim businesspeople in Salatiga and Semarang District are quite simple. Do business realistically and emphasize product quality. Business behavior that drags religion into the marketing process is unethical. The transaction method is not transparent. Meanwhile, Islamic law clearly states that the buying and selling system must be halal. In this case, there must be transparency between the trader, the quality of the goods being sold, and the customer.

For this reason, the business world really needs a humanist system and behavior in seeking profits so that there can be a transfer of wealth based on *an tara>d}in minkum* (mutual willingness between you). In halal marketing, the spirit of a transaction is sincerity, which is interpreted as a 'quality process' in the transaction. This is a truly halal

process. Meanwhile, from an operational perspective, three principles must be considered: brotherhood, balance and universalism, where the ultimate goal is transactions that bring benefit between business actors.

In the end, according to the explanation of the data from the respondents above, the halal labeling process has implications: a) It is able to change consumer behavior towards a product. b) It can accommodate consumer preferences and increase consumer safety. c) It shows a guarantee that the State plays a role in safeguarding consumer interests. In addition, halal labeling helps consumers track the nature and essence of a product. With the "halal" label, consumers can choose various products that are competing to gain consumer trust. Information on halalness is what consumers need as a form of welfare and justice for consumers.

Politicization of Religion in Halal Business

In the industrial world involving Muslim consumers, the halal label is a determining indicator to see consumer actions. The presence of a halal label on the packaging of a product will be a consideration for consumers whether to buy or not. This is where the politicization of religious labels has occurred. The halal label becomes a space for initial contestation for consumers to make decisions about a product. Apart from that, the halal label has become a wider area of interest, starting from industrial groups or producers, consumers, to the government (Anwar et al., 2020, p. 28).

For Muslim communities, the concept of halal is very important. The halal label on a product, both consumptive and non-consumptive products, is one of the factors that motivates buyers, especially the younger generation of Muslim women, to buy a product. The halal label can make buyers more confident about the safety of a product. Although around 45% of respondents stated that halal labeling was not the main goal in the Sharia trading system because what was being sold was not a religion, they admitted that halal labeling had a significant influence in increasing consumer interest in buying a product (Ali, 2012; Ilyas, 2018).

The increase in consumer buying interest is influenced by spiritual values and consumers' understanding of religiosity towards halal products. The values of spirituality and religiosity are able to set consumer behavior standards directly so that, in the end, they are able to influence consumer purchasing choices (Vristiyana, 2019, p. 89). This is because purchasing decisions can be categorized according to how strongly consumers adhere to certain beliefs. The implication is that producers, as well as marketers, must consider religion, level of religiosity, and consumer religious affiliation as valid

segmentation variables for marketing their halal products and services (Essoo & Dibb, 2004, p. 689; Vristiyana, 2019, p. 89).

If market segmentation based on religiosity can be identified, marketing strategists can develop marketing programs based on increasing important consumer values in each market segment. In addition, consumers' religious value orientation provides an important basis for positioning products and developing future promotional strategies. At this point, religiosity can be a consumer construct that is correlated with lifestyle variables such as opinion mastery, risk avoidance, credit purchases and consumer life satisfaction. Extrinsic diversity patterns can encourage someone to utilize their religion (Anwar et al., 2020; Zulkifli, 2013). Religion is used in such a way as to gain status from it. This kind of model of religious behavior is an insincere way of religion and has the potential to give rise to egoism in social interactions. This kind of religious model can give rise to a separate, wild, exclusive, and dependent mentality seeking security and comfort.

Consumers who have extrinsic halal awareness will see something from what they see. He will pay attention to information that shows that the product is halal, for example, from the trademark name, halal logo, and composition. Trademarks with religious overtones are used by their owners to encourage consumption patronage and form a 'sacred' relationship between consumers and producers. Brands are not just symbols but can become a kind of addiction that binds consumers to always depend on the product. Especially for brands that have received halal certification from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the sole authority in providing legitimacy for the validity and halalness of a product (Mujaddidyn, 2015).

The halal label given by MUI is able to increase consumer confidence. The existence of the halal logo makes consumers confident that what they are consuming is correct. This behavior shows that consumers want to show commitment to the religion they adhere to. In essence, the level of consumer religiosity is one of the factors that broaden the spectrum of the halal concept into the realm of practice while also having a positive influence on consumers' intentions to purchase a halal product.

Halal Discourse in Indonesia: Politicization of Religion and Business Strategy

Halal is becoming important on a global scale. The author considers halal commodities as goods with a certain type of social potential. Therefore, below, the author presents how this social potential is translated into ambiguous halal conceptualizations and practices. The author describes the relationship between Islam and politics in various

backgrounds (Bergeaud-Blackler et al., 2016, p. 9). Citing the views of Soares and Osella (2010), halal business studies critically reflect the study of Islam as practiced in political areas involving various actors and organizations, everyday politics and micropolitics. Analysis of global halal lies at the intersection of different levels, where political activity takes the form of practice. Halal is an example of how Islam and modernity can go hand in hand. Politically, Islam in the public sphere is able to give birth to "dazzling modernity," which essentially places a double emphasis on material and spiritual progress.

Halal is focused on how everyday public piety is carried out in religious and political areas. Modern piety has become an ethos or way of showing existence in the world as well as a way of representing oneself. In essence, political halal marketing is nothing more than an effort to contextualize personal piety in the public sphere. Piety displayed in public spaces has basically entered the global market area. Mistakes here have become part of the market commodity itself.

The understanding of the global market for halal products and services is inspired by research that questions the global market orientation in the practice of neoliberalism. This departs from the argument that following the growth and circulation of commodities is a way of mapping the multidimensional field of global markets. In this understanding, markets are characterized by the calculative dynamics of business forces and consist of multiple fields that produce commodities and prices.

Meanwhile, the market can be understood as a field of power created and maintained by various human and non-human agents, such as materials, legal umbrellas, climate, environment and political stability, which confront each other on an asymmetrical platform. This requires researching market players to understand sustenance, production and market forces. For example, recent studies discuss the entanglement of capitalism, Islam and the state in Southeast Asia. This research explores how the moderate Islamic spiritual reform movement in Indonesia combines business management principles and techniques with Muslim lifestyle practices in Indonesia through popular religious life coaching seminars. Here, forms of 'Islamic markets' and 'spiritual economies' have combined Muslim religious practices, capitalist ethics and self-management effectively by seeking to make consumers feel better internally (Bergeaud-Blackler et al., 2016, p. 8). In a global market that is leading to halal capitalism, Muslim consumers and the involvement of the state as a guarantor of legality is a form of intersection between Islam, politics and the market.

Halal certificates are an important instrument for accessing the wider global market, as well as strengthening the competitiveness of Indonesian domestic products in

the international market. So, to meet global market demands, many countries in the world have established halal certification institutions. Most of the implementation of halal certification in countries is carried out by the government. However, there are several countries where private institutions and the government manage the process only acts as a regulator. To maintain world economic politics, Indonesia must follow the world economic trend, which makes halal a business commodity. The halal label is a guarantee of the quality of the goods being traded. Of course, it starts with the ability to convince the international halal market by providing quality halal products (Anwar et al., 2020).

Halal has occupied an important position in business in Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia. These countries have set certain standards and regulations to maintain the halalness of these products. In fact, several Muslim countries have special institutions that are responsible for carrying out halal verification and certification for their country's products. These halal certification institutions have developed greatly and have become important for the Muslim community, even in Saudi Arabia, implementing very strict regulations in monitoring halal food.

Halal certification standards in Indonesia are managed by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). MUI halal certification is based on Islamic sharia principles, which are in accordance with industrial world practices. In Malaysia, halal certification is managed by Jabatan Progress Islam Malaysia (JAKIM). The JAKIM halal certificate is internationally recognized and covers all types of goods and services, not just food and drinks. Apart from that, in Malaysia, there is also a certain body that is responsible for supervising the halal industry by considering important principles in Islamic sharia. In Saudi Arabia, halal certification is managed by the General Institute for Standardization and Quality, known as SASO.

Of the three countries mentioned above, the applicable halal standards are similar, namely based on Islamic sharia principles adapted to industrial world practices. However, the implementation of halal standards differs depending on the interpretation of each country because different institutions regulate them.

Conclusion

In discussing the halal discourse in business in Indonesia, the formulation of the problem proposed shows that 1) halal business behavior is a form of embodiment of Muslim business people's interpretation of the essence of the teachings of the Qur'an and hadith, which are understood textually in the business platform. 2) Halal business movement emerged as a response to (a) global market trends which are starting to target consumers who are experiencing increased religiosity and spirituality, (b) modern

capitalism, which is starting to touch religious areas, starting from production, business systems, to marketing, and 3) political developments global economy that makes halal a business commodity. Thus, theoretically, this paper shows that the concept of halal cannot be defined only based on the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an or the hadith sharia but is closely related to business traditions and practices in the field involving market behavior and trade politics.

The recommendation for continued writing is to discuss how the interpretation of religious texts is developed within the framework of the *Amali* (applied) paradigm, where the interpretation of religious texts is based on community practices in the field. Referring to Heddy Sri Ahimsa Putra's opinion, interpretation must also enter the science-for-society paradigm. Science is developed for society.

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