



## Street Vendors and Halal-Thayyib Business Practices: An Ethnographic Study in the Context of Religious Moderation

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### Abstract

*This study explores the understanding of street vendors in Kudus Regency regarding the halal-thayyib paradigm and the challenges they face in its implementation. The research was conducted with 11 informants from various areas: City Walk, Alun-Alun Simpang 7, Pasar Kliwon, Museum Kretek, and Balai Jagong. The data analysis technique used ethnographic analysis to describe the societal situation based on the meanings and values embraced. Observations reveal that street vendors encounter various obstacles, including limited sanitation facilities, supplementary ingredients with uncertain halal status, and a lack of in-depth understanding of the halal concept. Most street vendors prioritize economic profit over adherence to halal principles. Nevertheless, street vendors have demonstrated increased awareness of halal through socialization and education programs. Although halal certification appears to be an appealing prospect, many consider the costs to be high and the procedures to be intricate. The aspect of religious moderation is reflected in the tolerance among individuals of different faiths, where non-Muslims are aware of halal requirements but still require further education. This study suggests empowering street vendors through religious moderation as a solution to enhance their understanding of halal while also meeting market demands and improving their economic welfare. Future research should explore broader scopes, consumer insights, policy impacts, and religious moderation's role.*

**Keywords:** Halal; Thayyib; Street Vendors; Religious Moderation.

### INTRODUCTION

Halal has become a modern and inclusive lifestyle trend across various generations, capturing the attention of the global business landscape. The concept of halal extends beyond food and beverages, encompassing diverse

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aspects of life, including cosmetics, fashion, pharmaceuticals, tourism, banking, and lifestyle in general. This halal trend is considered a significant contributor to the economy, particularly in Muslim-majority countries (Jailani & Adinugraha, 2022). According to the *State of the Global Islamic Economy* report, the global Muslim population's consumption of halal products reached USD 2.2 trillion in 2018 and is projected to grow annually alongside the expansion of the global halal market (Adamsah & Subakti, 2022). Countries such as Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Turkey have emerged as pioneers in the halal industry by developing systematic regulations, certifications, and marketing strategies to meet the increasing market demand.

The concept of halal culture is currently not only a necessity for Muslims but has also been increasingly embraced by non-Muslim consumers, with halal-certified products being widely available in the market (Baran, 2021). Non-Muslim majority countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan have begun promoting halal tourism brands (Said et al., 2022). These countries recognize the needs of Muslim travelers, particularly in facilitating religious practices such as prayer and access to halal food. The experiences of Muslim travelers in non-Muslim majority countries generally align with their expectations, although deeper social interactions with local residents are necessary to enhance overall satisfaction with these destinations. Izudin et al. (2024) highlight that social practices related to accepting and expressing halal products and certification among non-Muslim communities have become integrated into daily life, as observed in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the halal tourism ecosystem will be significantly influenced by the government's role as a policymaker (Rachmiatie et al., 2024).

The global halal industry faces new challenges and opportunities due to increased international collaboration and technological advancements. It includes improving supply chain transparency, implementing harmonized certification across countries, and meeting increasingly stringent quality standards. As a result, the halal culture worldwide continues to evolve, not merely as a religious symbol but also as a means to foster an inclusive, sustainable, and consumer-oriented global economy (Hanifasari et al., 2024). In the context of globalization, halal trends have created promising business opportunities in numerous countries, including those with non-Muslim majority populations. This underscores that



halal principles, which emphasize cleanliness, safety, and compliance, can be accepted as a universal quality standard relevant to all stakeholders.

The micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) sector holds significant potential for growth through the adoption of halal principles in their products and services. In his study, Amer (2024) revealed that halal certification positively impacts MSME business performance, even in volatile environments such as Palestine. Consequently, food manufacturing companies in Palestine are advised to implement food safety standards, including halal certification, to not only enhance their public image but also achieve optimal financial performance. According to Xiong and Chia (2024), Muslim tourists increasingly demand halal food options when visiting various destinations, while non-Muslim tourists are also becoming interested in halal food due to its healthy and high-quality image. Food safety and halal labeling have emerged as factors that drive consumers' purchase intentions (Khan et al., 2020). Furthermore, halal certification and ingredient transparency serve as key attractions for Muslim travelers (Takeshita, 2020). However, Indonesian halal business practitioners face challenges in developing halal branding as a distinctive feature, primarily due to the growing number of halal certifications and consumer perceptions that all products in the market are already halal (Fachrurazi et al., 2023).

The Kudus Regency Government strongly supports the development of the micro-business sector, such as street vendors, whose numbers have steadily increased year by year, with their distribution spread across various strategic locations through the issued Regent Regulation of Kudus Number 8 of 2021. The regulation is to implement the Regional Regulation of Kudus Regency Number 11 of 2017 concerning the Management and Empowerment of Street Vendors. However, street vendors' understanding of product safety and halal compliance remains low, compounded by weak regulatory oversight (Purwaningsih et al., 2024). The growing trend of halal tourism has driven demand for halal products among Muslim tourists, underscoring the importance of strengthening halal literacy among street vendors. Nonetheless, the rise of Islamophobia in various countries poses a challenge to international halal business (Ruiz-Bejarano, 2017). Islamophobia hinders halal market expansion, reduces demand, complicates certification, and discourages global investment. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the responses and characteristics of street vendors concerning the halal



paradigm. A religious moderation approach is utilized to address the pluralism and multiculturalism of Kudus society. This research is expected to serve as a tool for mapping the halal literacy levels of business actors.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Halal Paradigm in Indonesia

The halal paradigm represents a comprehensive framework that integrates religious, economic, and social dimensions, reflecting the significant influence of Islam as the majority religion. From the perspective of religion, halal is based upon the norms that are applied in a religion. The adherents here need to align their needs and desires to prevent the loss of identity as a representation of the norm. Halal has implications for obedience, commitment, and the portrait of Muslim civilization. It becomes an obligation for every Muslim to be concerned with what is produced, consumed, and distributed. For marketers, halal is a part of the trademark attached to the product to meet the expectations of certain groups that economically can give financial value. Although people in the West do not recognize the term halal, the interests of economic and business growth seemingly have encouraged them to attach the attribute of halal to their products. Halal continues to be attractive in the international trade system, which, in the global landscape, presents transnational, multicultural, and pluralistic nuances.

Islam instructs its followers to consume food that is both halal and thayyib (good). This command is outlined in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 168, "O people, eat of what is lawful and clean in the earth and do not follow the ways of Satan, for he is your avowed enemy" (The Qur'an, trans. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, 2:168).

This verse reveals Allah's command to all of humankind to choose halal and good food (thayyib). The practice of selecting halal and thayyib food is guaranteed to bring benefits to health, both physical and mental, at the individual and societal levels. The term thayyib, when attributed to food, is often accompanied by the word halal.

The term "halal" originates from Arabic and is closely associated with a belief system (Wilson & Liu, 2010). In the Qur'an, halal means "permissible," and its opposite is "haram." Over time, the term halal has been used to authenticate products and practices, eventually becoming a product label. Halal labeling



is commonly implemented in countries with Muslim-majority populations to ensure that the community consumes food that is permissible according to Allah's commands. The terms halal and haram are strongly associated with food products, meat, cosmetics, personal care products, food and beverage ingredients, and materials that come into contact with such food and beverages (Lada et al., 2009).

In their scientific findings, Khattak et al. (2011) list several things considered haram, which are then classified as part of an Islamic diet. These include (1) carrion, which is considered unfit for human consumption due to the decay process; (2) blood, which, when pumped out of the body, contains toxins, pathogens, and metabolic products that result in certain harmful substances; (3) pork, which serves as a vector for disease transmission to humans; and (4) intoxicants, which are harmful because they affect the nervous system and cause loss of consciousness. Riaz and Ghayyas (2023) highlight several benefits of halal food: (1) physical health, as halal food is ensured to be free from harmful substances, toxins, or impurities, thus promoting optimal physical and mental health; (2) purity and cleanliness, as halal food originates from clean ingredients and is processed in ways that avoid contamination or impurity; (3) safety and compliance with quality standards, as it is free from mixing with non-halal or harmful ingredients; and (4) religious adherence, as consuming halal food follows the commands of Allah the Almighty and keeps individuals away from haram, thereby fostering spirituality and piety in a Muslim.

In the context of food safety, halal and thayyib are imperatives. Halal-labeled food must reflect both the halal and thayyib concepts, ensuring that all ingredients involved in the production process, halal status determination, toxicity assessment, and removal of undesirable, impure, and poisonous substances are properly identified. The primary objective of thayyib is to produce clean and pure food while also creating a sense of comfort for the consumers, which can be achieved when food is produced per Islamic law (Alzeer et al., 2018).

The Indonesian government has issued Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance, which regulates the guarantee of the halal status of products circulating in Indonesia. This law aims to protect consumers, particularly Muslim individuals, ensuring that the products they consume or use conform to the principles of Islamic Sharia. The products covered by this law include various types of goods, such as food, beverages, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics,



and other products intended for the Indonesian population. The Halal Product Assurance Law requires that every product entering and circulating in Indonesia must obtain halal certification. This certification is carried out by a designated institution, known as the Halal Inspection Institute, under the supervision of the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH, *Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal*), which operates under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Furthermore, every product that has obtained halal certification is obligated to include a halal label on its packaging, indicating that the product meets the Sharia standards in its production process.

The Halal Product Assurance Law also establishes penalties for business operators who fail to comply with these requirements to ensure effective implementation. Penalties may include administrative fines or criminal sanctions in the case of serious violations. Although this law mandates halal certification, its enforcement is being carried out in stages to provide time for business operators to adjust to the existing regulations. This approach aims to support the development of the halal industry in Indonesia, which holds significant economic potential both in domestic and international markets.

### **Street Vendors**

Street vendors are individuals who conduct their businesses in public spaces, typically with minimal capital and infrastructure (Cross, 2000). These vendors use movable equipment or establish semi-permanent stalls such as carts, tables, or umbrellas on sidewalks or areas commonly used by pedestrians in large cities. They offer a variety of goods and services, generally within the informal economy sector. Street vendors contribute significantly to urban economies (Recchi, 2021). Urban areas have higher monetary turnover and a more practical lifestyle, making street vendors more common in cities than rural areas. Therefore, street vendors serve as a livelihood source for urban middle-bottom consumers by creating employment opportunities and entrepreneurial prospects (Yesmin & Calzada Olvera, 2024).

There are three types of street vendors: stationary vendors, mobile vendors, and vendors in designated areas (Rukmana & Purbadi, 2012). Stationary vendors sell goods at fixed locations like sidewalks, roadways, informal markets, or other public spaces. Mobile vendors move from place to place using transportation tools





like bicycles, motorcycles, or pushcarts. Meanwhile, vendors in designated areas sell goods at strategic locations, such as city squares, schools, tourist attractions, bus terminals, or train stations. Local governments typically issue regulations that govern zoning systems, outlining areas where street vendors are allowed to trade, where trading is prohibited, and where trading is only permitted during certain hours.

Street vendors create urban street life and provide goods at affordable prices (Torky & Heath, 2021). There is significant debate surrounding street vendors; on one hand, some oppose them, citing issues related to urban planning and public order. On the other hand, some support street vendors, viewing them as a means of generating employment opportunities for local residents. Food handling and preparation hygiene are also major concerns many street vendors face (Subratty et al., 2004). Nevertheless, the informal sector remains a preferred choice for many people due to the more straightforward procedures and criteria for obtaining employment compared to the formal sector, and the overall presence of the informal sector should not be underestimated (Ginting & Anugrahini, 2023). Furthermore, Handoyo and Wijayanti (2021) demonstrate that street vendors' well-being is influenced by factors such as education, financial capital, geographic location, and social networks, with geographic factors contributing most significantly to their well-being.

Street vendors have a distinct advantage in terms of survival, as they cater to low-income consumers who are less likely to spend their income in supermarkets (Ray et al., 2020). They are aware that the market is highly complex and lacks a permanent establishment, which presents challenges in fulfilling market demands. As a result, they must adapt to changing public needs (Malefakis, 2019). At times, street vending becomes a collective enterprise, involving the entire family to achieve high sales volumes (Alva, 2014). Mobility and flexibility are key strategies for responding to customer dynamics (Flock & Breitung, 2016). To strengthen their business, street vendors – both individually and collectively – must adopt strategies for improving physical infrastructure, expanding networks and negotiation capabilities, and formalizing their operations (Schoenecker, 2018).



## Religious Moderation

Moderation in Arabic is called *wasathiyah*, meaning middle, fair, and moderate (Davids, 2017). It discusses pluralistic public relations and the need to respect differences (Smith & Holmwood, 2013). Moderation can also be interpreted as a choice to have a point of view, attitude, and behavior in the midst of the existing extreme choices (Helmy et al., 2021). The emergence of this paradigm is due to the stigma against Islam, which is seen as harsh and radical, and it has made Muslims worried as this is considered not in line with the Islamic teachings that are humanist and not coercive, as stated in the Holy Qur'an 2: 256. However, certain groups in the name of Islam have launched a number of attacks and terrors that have created Islamophobia. This condition is disturbing Muslims in general in that they basically do not want any chaos in the world.

Moderate Islam is seen as an intermediary between Islamic ideology and a fundamental value in life. However, its followers must still be flexible in responding to anything that does not have explicit norms in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). Therefore, Muslims must continue to respect university values such as humanity, tolerance, and respect for local cultural values, as well as uphold state sovereignty. Thus, Islam can spread peace in the world and become *rahmatan lil alamin* (a mercy to all creation). Culture, including local culture, is an important element of human life for describing the values, beliefs, ways of thinking, ways of life, and views held in the community (Eko & Putranto, 2019). Local culture and wisdom are often becoming tourist attractions. Tourism should be a comfortable place for visitors to have a pleasant atmosphere, learn about local culture, and become a place as a tourist destination that is always missed. Friendly people and courteous visitors can make tourism a tool to help the world from endless conflict or competition. Religious moderation aims to achieve balance in religion as it means "balanced" or "middle." This term certainly is relevant to the conditions of a pluralistic world and requires management to prioritize equality and justice. Solving problems through violence in the name of religion or no religion, in fact, only creates conflict and damage - not creating any better conditions.





## RESEARCH METHOD

This ethnographic study aims to analyze the concept of halal culture in the business practices of street vendors, highlighting the values of religious moderation. Ethnography, rooted in the discipline of anthropology, focuses on the study of daily life within the context of social life (Marvasti, 2009). Ethnography progresses from descriptive data to meaningful conclusions, moving from natural social settings to explore interrelated relationships (Cordery et al., 2023). This method enables an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and daily practices of street vendors in relation to the application of halal principles, both in food processing and social interactions. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions.

The research was conducted in phases, starting with field observation to understand the local social and cultural context. Then, analysis was carried out through data triangulation to ensure validity and achieve in-depth interpretation. In its implementation, this study upholds ethical standards, such as maintaining the confidentiality of respondents' personal information and ensuring transparency of research objectives. The findings are expected to offer new insights into the role of halal values and religious moderation in maintaining the integrity of small businesses, particularly in the street vendor environment, while also enriching the literature on the relationship between religion and the economy in society. A total of 11 street vendors from the City Walk, Alun-Alun Simpang 7, Pasar Kliwon, Kretek Museum, and Balai Jagong areas were interviewed. It includes the chairperson of the Kudus street vendor association, the chairperson of the local area association, and street vendor business operators.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The research began with observations in various street vendor work areas, from which several insights about the conditions of the vendors were obtained, including (1) limited cleanliness facilities for trading and sanitation, (2) the potential use of non-food coloring agents, such as in sauces and additives with striking colors; (3) some vendors do not fully cover their goods, making them susceptible to contamination from dust and motor vehicle emissions; and (4)



lack of clarity regarding the ingredients used in the different food and beverage items sold.

In the next phase, the informants were asked a series of questions to assess their understanding of halal hygiene. In general, the informants were aware that halal is an obligation for Muslims, particularly regarding food and beverages. All the informants understood halal as a requirement for every Muslim. However, their understanding of halal food was limited to halal objects or subjects, such as the type of animal, without considering aspects such as the slaughtering process, the animal's health condition, or the preparation method. The informants' understanding can be seen from their responses as follows, "This snack is made from chicken meat; if the chicken is halal, then pork is haram" (SL, March 26, 2024).

Based on this response, it can be assessed that the informant has a limited understanding of halal meat, not recognizing that halal meat is not only limited to being free of pork but also includes the requirement of being slaughtered while invoking the name of Allah and other stipulations. This is further evident from the following response provided by the informant, "This chicken meat was bought from the market, so I don't know. I hope they recite Bismillah when slaughtering it" (SR, March 26, 2024).

Regarding the use of food additives with striking colors, the informants lacked sufficient knowledge and entrusted the sourcing of these ingredients to the places where they purchased them. One of the respondents said, "I bought this dye from a food store; it should be food coloring and not any other type of dye. Therefore, it should not be harmful" (MN, March 26, 2024).

The informants did not pay attention to the presence of a halal label on the raw materials and ingredients used in their products. When asked whether they check for a halal label on the ingredients they purchase, their response was "I don't check; I just trust the store" (UH, March 26, 2024).

The informants were aware of the importance of cleanliness. For example, when asked about a sugarcane vendor, even though trash was piled up around the cart, the vendor stated, "This is clean, the sugarcane has been washed thoroughly, and I guarantee it's delicious, sweet, and healthy" (SK, March 26, 2024).

The informants understood that products should be produced and sold properly, such as ensuring cleanliness. However, due to their limited resources,



they believed they could only do as much as they were able to. The informants also recognized the importance of using clean water. For example, a fruit juice vendor said, “The water is gallon water” (MR, March 26, 2024) when this kind of issue was asked.

Different responses were given during the direct socialization process regarding the halal-thayyib paradigm and its importance as an act of obedience to Allah, health, and life blessings. Some were eager to listen to the socialization; some were indifferent; others avoided it, tried to argue, pretended not to know, or gave trivial responses. Regarding religious moderation, almost all street vendors do not understand the concept. However, they understood the importance of tolerance and respecting each other’s beliefs or religions. Meanwhile, non-Muslim street vendors acknowledged the concept of halal for Muslims but still required further education on the subject. They hoped the community would give them the opportunity, and they were enthusiastic about halal certification. Meanwhile, associations play a role in managing trading areas, consulting and coordinating with the government, and accommodating the aspirations of the street vendors.

From the data analysis, the characteristics of street vendors in responding to the halal-thayyib paradigm in Table 1 are as follows:

**Table 1** Awareness of Halal-Thayyib Paradigm Among Street Vendors

No	Aspect	Characteristics	Explanations
1	Halal Understanding	Diverse but limited	Limited knowledge of halal. This is indicated by a lack of understanding of basic halal concepts, materials, processes, their application in consumption, and awareness of non-food aspects of everyday life.
2	Halal Awareness	Not yet a priority	Most street vendors focus more on economic value and market response than adherence to halal principles. This is marked by low attention to halal certification, raw materials, production processes, and alignment with halal principles in an effort to increase competitiveness and profits.

3	Sanitation and Cleanliness	Limited	Many street vendors lack access to adequate sanitation, making cleanliness and product safety major challenges.
4	Use of Raw Materials	Uncontrollable	Most street vendors source their materials from local markets without verifying their halal status or contents. Supervision of halal products is still limited and relies on the individual commitments of the vendors themselves.
5	Motivation for Selling	Prioritizing economic profit	Economic factors are the primary drivers, while the halal paradigm is considered secondary.
6	Response to Halal Certification	Limited Access	Many street vendors do not understand halal certification procedures and view the process as too costly and difficult. However, they are interested in obtaining halal certification.
7	Openness to Halal Education	Increased Awareness	With empowerment programs based on religious moderation, street vendors have started to show interest in the importance of product halalness.

## Discussion

Street vendors in the Kudus Regency reflect the dynamic interplay between religious, social, and economic aspects in understanding the halal paradigm. From a religious perspective, understanding the halal concept among street vendors varies, particularly between Muslim and non-Muslim street vendors. Muslim street vendors view halal as integral to religious obedience; however, its implementation remains minimal due to limited resources and knowledge. Conversely, non-Muslim vendors perceive halal products as an economic opportunity, especially since Kudus is renowned as a religious tourism destination frequented by Muslim visitors. This indicates that the halal paradigm is not only associated with religious compliance but also holds strong market appeal amidst a diverse community. The concept of halal carries specific motivations, such as adherence to religious rules, preservation of noble Islamic values, and the promotion of good morals (Biancone et al., 2019). Halal serves as guidance in making choices about what to use or consume, including during travel. It



represents a standard by which a Muslim follows the provisions of their faith as an expression of obedience.

In the context of religious moderation, street vendors in Kudus exemplify strong tolerance and diversity. Although the majority of vendors come from Muslim backgrounds, the multicultural street vendors community, comprising individuals from different religions and ethnicities, demonstrates a successful coexistence. Religious moderation is evident in the interactions among street vendors, where the effort to create halal products is understood as a form of respect for the needs of Muslim consumers without undermining the identity of non-Muslim vendors. This approach aligns with the principles of religious moderation, which prioritize social harmony, cooperation, and tolerance within the local economy. The world has become a global community, turning previously unthinkable places into fascinating destinations to visit. The tourism industry capitalizes on these profitable opportunities and increasingly overlooks specific ideological considerations. Global tourism is characterized by the holistic integration of regional development in terms of services, facilities, and other related aspects, combining local resources and surrounding industries while adapting to local conditions (Sun & Li, 2020). As a result, locality, including the traditions and values held by the local community, has thus become increasingly appealing to tourists.

In halal education based on religious moderation, the government, through halal regulatory bodies, emphasizes that the state's presence is aimed at protecting its citizens. For Muslim citizens, Islam mandates the consumption of halal food, and the state plays a crucial role in safeguarding their rights to practice their religion. According to Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance, every product distributed in Indonesia – whether food, cosmetics, or pharmaceuticals – must be halal-certified, including street food sold by small vendors such as street vendors. Halal products require halal certification, whereas non-halal products must be labeled as non-halal products. If Muslims choose to consume non-halal food, it becomes a matter of individual responsibility. The government has established the BPJPH, which reports to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In carrying out its duties, this agency may collaborate with the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*) and halal inspection agencies to ensure the proper implementation of halal standards.



The social aspect also plays a significant role in shaping the characteristics of street vendors regarding the halal paradigm. The presence of street vendor associations serves as an informal platform for managing relationships among members, although its function in promoting halal literacy remains suboptimal. Community involvement in these associations provides an avenue for socialization and positive intervention to increase awareness of halal principles. However, traditional work cultures and daily economic priorities often hinder the full adoption of the halal concept. This social dimension illustrates that shifting toward halal practices requires broader collective education and transformation. Street food vendors represent ultra-micro-scale businesses with numerous limitations, necessitating education and assistance. They sell their products along roadsides, sidewalks, or in designated areas provided by the government. Since street vendors operate within the informal business sector, they typically employ independent management practices, making formalization essential to facilitate monitoring and control (Falla & Valencia, 2019).

From an economic perspective, street vendors face structural challenges such as limited capital, inadequate sanitation facilities, and difficulties in accessing halal certification, which are often perceived as costly. Most street vendors prioritize short-term economic gains, making the aspects of halal and *thayyib* not yet a main priority. However, the halal economic potential in Kudus Regency is considerable and driven by the global trend of halal tourism. If street vendors can establish halal branding for their products, they will not only increase their income but also compete in broader markets.

From the food industry's perspective, food ingredients are processed through various techniques and new processing methods by utilizing the development of science and technology and then distributed in the world trade system (Charity, 2017). The processing, storage, use of preservatives, and other elements are very likely to use materials that do not meet the food standards of Muslims because the world's food industry does not apply halal certification. Moreover, the standard of food processing carried out by street vendors is still elementary; even the Department of Industry of Kudus often finds the use of preservatives, non-food coloring, and animal food ingredients that are not permitted without clear information.





This ethnographic analysis emphasizes that integrating religious values, religious moderation, and socioeconomic aspects in the practices of street vendors is key to understanding their responses to the halal-thayyib paradigm. Continuous support from the government, halal institutions, and academic institutions serves as a potential solution to bridge the gap in understanding and practicing halal principles. By creating synergy between economic and religious values, the halal paradigm can not only improve the welfare of street vendors but also strengthen social harmony within multicultural communities such as those in Kudus.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country rich in natural resources and characterized by diversity in ethnicities, cultures, religions, and individual characteristics. This diversity can serve as a national strength if properly maintained, but it also poses a risk of conflict if communities exclusively glorify their own customs. In addition, multiculturalism requires harmonious social interactions and cooperation to create a unified strength for national progress. This effort must be supported by attitudes of mutual care, assistance, and empathy. In a multicultural society, upholding inclusivity in recognizing truth and salvation is essential to prevent friction between groups, especially religious groups (Akhmadi, 2019). Conflicts in Indonesia often stem from religious groups' desire to dominate, fanaticism, and claims of absolute truth in their doctrines. As a result, conflicts have emerged across various regions, involving both physical and verbal confrontations, exacerbated through mass media and social media platforms. In this context, religious moderation is viewed as a means to foster character development and an understanding of religious values that go beyond textual interpretations, incorporating contextual considerations as well (Adawiyah et al., 2021).

The implementation of halal practices without causing conflict with other religions can be achieved through an inclusive approach that emphasizes universal values such as cleanliness, food safety, and health. Halal should be introduced not merely as a religious obligation for Muslims but also as a quality standard that benefits everyone. Outreach efforts involving communities from various religions can help foster the understanding that halal is not exclusive or coercive of specific beliefs. Instead, it aims to meet Muslim consumers' needs while respecting others' rights and beliefs.



The implementation of halal principles in street vendor businesses based on religious moderation can be carried out through a series of steps involving inclusive education and empowerment of street vendors. For example, initial education focuses on understanding the concepts of halal and thayyib, covering aspects such as processing, storage, and product cleanliness. Then, religious moderation is employed to facilitate interfaith dialogue, fostering a universal understanding of halal values as a quality standard that respects religious differences, particularly for non-Muslims. Additionally, accessible and affordable halal certification promotes the participation of street vendors in enhancing their competitiveness.

Furthermore, practical guidance on halal production methods, as well as the implementation of adequate hygiene and sanitation practices, strengthens halal production practices in accordance with thayyib principles. In the context of religious moderation, this approach prioritizes respect for different religious beliefs, fostering collaboration among street vendors from diverse backgrounds. Also, economic incentives and support through vendor associations accelerate the dissemination of halal practices, leading to responsible, sustainable, and profitable businesses.

Moreover, it is important to implement halal policies voluntarily, particularly for non-Muslim business operators. Transparent, flexible procedures and incentive-based systems, such as broader market opportunities, will encourage greater participation. The promotion of religious moderation also plays a crucial role by instilling values of tolerance and respect among different beliefs. In addition, collaboration among the government, religious leaders, and cross-cultural communities can strengthen social harmony, ensuring the seamless implementation of halal practices without triggering division in a multicultural society.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of halal principles in street food businesses in the Kudus Regency integrates various religious, social, and economic aspects with an approach of religious moderation. Understanding of halal-thayyib paradigm among street vendors, both Muslim and non-Muslim, highlights the importance of comprehensive education. Muslim vendors view the halal concept as a



religious obligation but encounter limitations in its implementation due to a lack of knowledge and resources. Meanwhile, non-Muslim vendors perceive halal as an economic opportunity, considering the growing halal tourism market in Kudus. In this context, the value of halal is not only associated with religious compliance but also with the market appeal that can benefit all parties.

Furthermore, religious moderation is a key element in fostering social harmony among street food vendors. Although the majority of vendors come from a Muslim background, open and inclusive interactions across different religious communities have enabled cooperation in meeting the needs of Muslim consumers without imposing any particular beliefs. Interfaith education, along with more accessible halal certification, can strengthen understanding and the sustainable adoption of halal principles. This approach, which values cultural and religious diversity, promotes the implementation of halal in a way that is not only economically beneficial but also strengthens social relationships in a multicultural society.

In the economic aspect, the main challenges faced by street food vendors include limited capital, inadequate sanitary facilities, and the difficulty of obtaining halal certification due to the street vendors' perception of its expensive cost. Therefore, greater support from the government, halal institutions, and universities is needed to provide practical guidance and offer incentives to vendors to adopt halal standards. An inter-community collaboration involving the government, religious leaders, and the public can establish transparent and incentive-driven policies, thereby increasing the participation of non-Muslim entrepreneurs in halal implementation without causing religious conflict. The application of halal based on religious moderation not only improves the welfare of vendors but also strengthens social and economic integration in a multicultural society.

This research explores halal implementation in street food businesses in Kudus through the lens of religious moderation, highlighting the integration of religious, social, and economic aspects. This study highlights the economic opportunities of halal, especially in the context of non-Muslims recognizing its growing market, in contrast to traditional views that focus solely on religious compliance. Furthermore, it introduces the idea of interfaith cooperation and inclusive education, showing that halal can be adopted in a multicultural society



without imposing certain religious beliefs. This approach offers a sustainable model that promotes economic development, social harmony, and mutual understanding among diverse religious communities.

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