



THE ROLE OF HALAL CERTIFICATION IN ENHANCING THE ADDED VALUE OF LOCAL FOOD: A CASE STUDY OF CABUK WIJEN FROM WONOGIRI, INDONESIA

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Abstract: *This study examines the role of halal certification in enhancing the added value of local food products, with a particular focus on cabuk wijen, a traditional dish from Wonogiri, Central Java. As global demand for halal food continues to grow, cabuk wijen—a fermented product made from sesame oil cake using traditional processing methods—represents a promising candidate for entry into international halal markets. Halal certification not only ensures compliance with Islamic dietary law but also strengthens consumer confidence, among both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, by underscoring food safety and ethical production practices. The study employs a narrative literature review that analyzes journal articles, books, and policy documents relevant to halal certification, local food, and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These sources were purposively selected based on their thematic relevance and contribution to understanding value enhancement. The analysis indicates that halal certification increases the added value of cabuk wijen through several key mechanisms: reinforcing perceptions of safety and quality, expanding market access, shaping a halal-oriented brand image, and improving competitiveness relative to similar products. The findings also identify challenges such as certification costs, procedural complexity, and variations in halal standards across countries, which pose substantial barriers for SMEs. Addressing these challenges has the potential to strengthen global competitiveness, advance theoretical insights into the relationship between halal certification and the added value of local food products, and support the preservation of traditional culinary heritage such as cabuk wijen.*

Keywords: *halal certification; local food; cabuk wijen; traditional food*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran sertifikasi halal dalam meningkatkan nilai produk pangan lokal, dengan fokus pada cabuk wijen, sebuah hidangan tradisional dari Wonogiri, Jawa Tengah. Seiring meningkatnya permintaan global terhadap makanan halal, cabuk wijen—produk fermentasi yang dibuat dari ampas minyak wijen dan metode pengolahan tradisional—memiliki potensi besar untuk memasuki pasar halal internasional. Sertifikasi halal tidak hanya memastikan kepatuhan terhadap hukum diet Islam tetapi juga meningkatkan kepercayaan konsumen, baik dari kalangan Muslim maupun non-Muslim, dengan menekankan pada aspek keamanan pangan dan praktik produksi yang etis. Penelitian ini merupakan tinjauan literatur naratif yang menganalisis berbagai*

artikel jurnal, buku, dan dokumen kebijakan yang relevan dengan sertifikasi halal, pangan lokal, dan pengembangan usaha kecil dan menengah (UKM), yang dipilih secara purposif berdasarkan kesesuaian topik dan kontribusi terhadap penguatan nilai tambah. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa sertifikasi halal meningkatkan nilai tambah cabuk wijen melalui beberapa mekanisme utama: penguatan persepsi keamanan dan kualitas, perluasan akses pasar, pembentukan citra merek halal, serta peningkatan daya saing terhadap produk sejenis. Temuan juga mengidentifikasi tantangan berupa biaya sertifikasi, kompleksitas prosedur, dan perbedaan standar halal antar negara yang menjadi hambatan bagi UKM. Mengatasi hambatan ini berpotensi memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap penguatan daya saing global, pengembangan teori mengenai hubungan antara sertifikasi halal dan nilai tambah pangan lokal, serta pelestarian budaya kuliner tradisional seperti cabuk wijen.

Kata Kunci: *sertifikasi halal; makanan lokal; cabuk wijen; makanan tradisional*

BACKGROUND

Local food plays a crucial role in maintaining the cultural identity and socio-economic resilience of a region. One notable example is cabuk wijen from Wonogiri, Central Java, a traditional dish made from sesame oil cake that is processed using artisanal techniques and fermentation (Asmediana et al., 2017; Makinde et al., 2013). Beyond its symbolic function as an expression of local cultural richness, cabuk wijen reflects the community's reliance on natural ingredients and traditional knowledge, while also holding potential economic value as a distinctive local food product that can contribute to household income and the creative economy (Faridah & Sari, 2019).

In parallel, the global halal food sector has expanded rapidly in line with the growth of the Muslim population and rising awareness of halal standards among consumers worldwide. Recent editions of the State of the Global Islamic Economy report highlight a steady increase in the market value of halal food and beverages, positioning halal certification as an important prerequisite for participation in international value chains (Nazaruddin, Gyenge, Fekete-Farkas, & Lakner, 2023). Halal food is not only understood as compliant with religious dietary requirements but is also associated with food safety, hygiene, traceability, and ethical production practices. Within this context, traditional Indonesian foods such as cabuk wijen could be strategically positioned as halal-certified local specialties capable of appealing to both domestic and international markets.

However, the realization of this potential is far from straightforward. The existing literature on halal certification and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) indicates that many traditional food producers face substantial barriers, including limited knowledge of certification procedures, financial constraints, and the administrative complexity of compliance

with halal standards. Studies focusing specifically on the halal certification of traditional or artisanal foods remain relatively scarce, and there is a notable lack of research examining how halal certification might enhance the added value and competitiveness of products such as cabuk wijen in regional or global halal markets. Moreover, empirical and conceptual work that explicitly integrates cultural heritage preservation, halal assurance, and value-added strategies for local food is still limited.

Against this backdrop, cabuk wijen represents an underexplored case within the broader discussion on halal-certified local food products. While it has been recognized for its cultural significance, traditional processing methods, and potential contribution to community livelihoods, there has been no systematic academic assessment of its prospects within the halal market, nor of the specific challenges that SMEs involved in its production may encounter in pursuing halal certification. This study therefore seeks to address these gaps by examining the role of halal certification in enhancing the added value of cabuk wijen, drawing on a narrative review of the literature on halal certification, local food, and SME development to articulate both the opportunities and constraints associated with positioning traditional foods in the evolving global halal landscape.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theories of food sustainability, food safety, and halal assurance provide the conceptual foundation for developing cabuk wijen as a halal value-added product. Within the sustainable development discourse, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 2 on zero hunger, emphasize the role of diversified local foods in strengthening food security, improving nutrition, and supporting community livelihoods (Bux, Varese, & Lombardi, 2022). Local traditional foods such as cabuk wijen can thus be understood not only as cultural assets, but also as components of resilient and sustainable food systems that contribute to both availability and accessibility of nutritious food at the community level.

From a halal perspective, the Halal Food Assurance System (HFAS) and halal value chain concepts highlight the importance of transparency, traceability, and compliance with Sharia requirements along the entire production and distribution process. HFAS frameworks stress that halal assurance must cover raw materials, processing, handling, storage, and logistics, supported by credible certification and monitoring mechanisms (Akbar et al., 2023; Nazaruddin et al., 2023). When applied to local foods, these frameworks provide a lens to identify halal critical points in traditional production processes—such as fermentation, drying, or mixing—and to formulate appropriate control measures. In addition, theories of value chain

and added value suggest that certification, branding, and quality assurance can elevate a product's position within the chain, enabling producers to capture greater economic returns.

Research on consumer behaviour in the halal context further demonstrates that halal labels function as quality and trust signals, shaping purchase intention, loyalty, and willingness to pay a premium. Factors such as perceived safety, religiosity, ethical considerations, and brand image consistently emerge as key determinants of consumer attitudes towards halal products in both Muslim-majority and minority settings. When combined with the socio-cultural value of traditional foods, these insights suggest that halal certification can simultaneously operate on multiple levels: as religious assurance, as a marker of safety and quality, and as a cultural branding tool for local specialties.

In this study, these theoretical perspectives—sustainability and SDGs, HFAS and halal value chain, consumer behaviour in halal adoption, and value-added/value chain theory—serve as analytical lenses for interpreting the literature on halal certification and local food. They guide the organization of the review into four thematic dimensions that will be elaborated in the results and discussion section: (1) the importance of halal certification for local foods, (2) consumer perceptions of halal-certified local products, (3) challenges faced by SMEs in obtaining halal certification, and (4) implications of halal certification for the added value of cabuk wijen as a culturally embedded traditional food.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented in this section are derived from a narrative literature review focusing on halal certification, local food, and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Relevant peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and policy documents were identified through structured searches in academic databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus, as well as official reports on the global Islamic economy. Sources were purposively selected based on their relevance to key themes halal assurance systems, consumer behaviour in halal markets, challenges of halal certification for SMEs, and the added value of local or traditional food products. The literature was then analyzed thematically, with particular attention to how existing findings can be interpreted through the lenses of halal value chain, HFAS, consumer trust, and SDG-related sustainability, and how they inform the case of cabuk wijen from Wonogiri.



The Importance of Halal Certification for Local Food

Halal certification plays a vital role in ensuring that local food products such as cabuk wijen comply with recognized halal and health standards, particularly for Muslim consumers. The significance of halal in ethical, cultural, and market contexts has been highlighted by Osman (2023), who emphasizes that halal encompasses not only religious compliance but also broader aspects of integrity and good governance in food production. Halal food certification contributes to transparency, trust, and compliance with Islamic dietary laws, which are increasingly important for both Muslim and non-Muslim communities worldwide (Akbar , et al., 2023) .

According to Talib, Bakar, and Too (2019), the halal industry is expanding rapidly due to the growing global Muslim population, rising demand for safe and high-quality products, and the role of halal certification standards in facilitating access to international markets. Halal products are now in demand in both Muslim-majority and non-Muslim countries, which has led to the development of diverse halal standards across nations (Abdallah, Rahem, & Pasqualone, 2021). In this context, halal certification can be viewed as a key institutional mechanism within the halal value chain that enables local products to meet global expectations of safety, quality, and religious compliance.

Table 1. Summarizes Findings From Various Sources on The Importance of Halal Certification.

Author	Reasons for the Importance of Halal Certification
Osman (2023)	Halal certification ensures food safety and compliance with Islamic law, enhancing consumer trust in the products they consume.
Talib et al., (2019)	Halal certification boosts consumer confidence in halal-labeled products and helps meet export requirements to Muslim-majority countries.
Rejeb, Rejeb, Zailani, Treiblmaier, & Hand (2021)	Halal certification overcomes adoption barriers and ensures products meet globally recognized halal standards.
Ab Talib (2017)	Halal certification guarantees food safety and improves product quality, helping producers expand market share.
Ab Talib et al., (2016)	Halal certification is key in industry competition and a prerequisite to meet growing market demand.
Faradina et al., (2018)	Halal certification helps maintain the integrity of the halal supply chain and ensures products are not contaminated with non-halal substances.
Bux et al., (2022)	Halal certification ensures the sustainability and integrity of halal products, increasing consumer trust through supply chain transparency.
Bashir et al (2019)	Halal certification boosts consumer purchasing intent and ensures halal products meet ethical and legal standards.
Othman et al (2009)	Halal certification responds to institutional and governmental pressures, encouraging producers to adhere to strict halal standards.
Regenstein et al (2003)	Halal certification prevents the use of forbidden ingredients, ensures products comply with Sharia, and maintains Muslim consumer trust.

(Primary Data Processing, 2025)

Taken together, the studies summarized in Table 1 suggest several converging themes. First, halal certification functions as a trust-building instrument, assuring consumers that products comply with both religious and safety requirements (Osman, 2023; Regenstein et al., 2003). Second, it acts as a gateway to markets, particularly for export to Muslim-majority countries where halal certification is often mandatory (Talib et al., 2019; Ab Talib et al., 2016). Third, halal certification helps safeguard the integrity of the halal supply chain, reducing the risk of contamination with non-halal substances and enhancing transparency (Faradina et al., 2018; Bux et al., 2022). Finally, it supports competitive positioning, enabling producers to differentiate their products in increasingly crowded markets (Bashir et al., 2019; Othman et al., 2009).

For local food SMEs, these themes are directly relevant to cabuk wijen. As a traditional product derived from sesame oil cake and fermented using artisanal methods, cabuk wijen could benefit from halal certification by formalizing its compliance with Islamic dietary law, strengthening consumer trust, and enhancing its perceived quality. In Indonesia, halal certification would not only add value in domestic markets, where halal assurance is increasingly expected, but also open opportunities for cabuk wijen to be positioned as a distinctive Javanese halal specialty in regional and international markets. When articulated within broader sustainability agendas, halal certification can further support ethical sourcing, fair trade practices, and environmentally responsible production, thereby aligning cabuk wijen with global consumption trends that prioritize both ethics and sustainability (Bux, Varese, & Lombardi, 2022).

Consumer Perception of Halal-Certified Local Products

Consumer perception of halal-certified products is positive in various countries. Halal certification is not only a trust factor for Muslim consumers but is also increasingly sought after by non-Muslim consumers due to its quality and safety standards. Table 2 shows that consumer perceptions of locally produced halal-certified products are highly positive across various countries. Trust, quality, safety, and religiosity are the main reasons consumers choose halal-certified products.

Table 2. Consumer Perception of Locally Produced Halal-Certified Products

Author	Consumer Perception of Locally Produced Halal-Certified Products
Anas (2023)	Consumers in Indonesia recognize the importance of halal certification and acknowledge that the halal label increases trust and purchase intention.
Husna & Aryani (2023)	Consumers aware of the halal label are more likely to choose those products due to the safety and halal guarantees provided by the certification.
Imtihanah (2022)	A study on non-Muslim consumers found that perceptions of halal food are positive, with the halal label increasing purchase intention as it is considered safer.
Nugroho (2022)	Consumers perceive halal-certified products as a standard of quality and safety, making the halal label an important tool for increasing consumer trust.
Ahmed et al. (2019)	In Pakistan, consumers are more inclined to buy halal products due to religiosity and the perceived significant benefits of halal, even in a Muslim-majority country.

(Primary Data Processing, 2025)

The literature summarized in Table 2 reveals several consistent patterns. First, trust and perceived safety emerge as central reasons for choosing halal-certified products: consumers regard the halal label as an assurance that the product is safer, cleaner, and more carefully monitored (Anas, 2023; Nugroho, 2022). Second, religiosity functions as a strong motivational factor among Muslim consumers, who see halal consumption as a religious obligation and thus prefer certified products (Ahmed et al., 2019; Husna & Aryani, 2023). Third, even among non-Muslim consumers, halal certification can enhance perceived quality and credibility, leading to higher purchase intention because the label is associated with stricter controls and higher standards (Imtihanah, 2022).

For cabuk wijen, these insights imply that halal certification could substantially reinforce its market positioning. As a local product that may be less familiar to consumers outside its immediate region, cabuk wijen faces the typical challenges of traditional foods: limited brand recognition and potential concerns about safety or hygiene in traditional processing. By obtaining halal certification, producers of cabuk wijen could leverage the halal logo as a credible signal for new consumers, indicating that the product has undergone formal assessment and meets recognized standards. This would be particularly valuable if cabuk wijen is marketed beyond Wonogiri, including to urban markets, tourist destinations, or international consumers seeking authentic halal traditional foods. In this way, consumer behaviour theories on trust, signaling, and halal label adoption directly inform strategies for enhancing the attractiveness and added value of cabuk wijen.



Challenges in Halal Certification for Local Products

Despite its potential benefits, obtaining halal certification poses significant challenges for local products such as cabuk wijen. Table 3 outlines key obstacles identified in previous studies.

Table 3. Challenges of Halal Certification for Local Products According to Various Sources

Author	Tantangan Sertifikasi Halal untuk Produk Lokal
Al-Mahmood & Fraser (2023)	Transparency in the supply chain, risks of cross-contamination, and differing international halal standards make certification of local products more complicated.
Akbar et al. (2023)	Different halal standards in each country complicate the entry of local products into international markets, adding complexity to the certification process.
Bux et al. (2022)	Traceability through blockchain can address transparency challenges and ensure that products remain halal throughout the supply chain.
Rafiki (2019)	Differences in certification requirements across countries increase costs and complexity for local products seeking halal certification.
Mabkhot (2023)	Challenges in marketing halal products and improving the quality of production processes to meet international halal standards.
HFC (2024)	High costs, limited resources, and the risk of cross-contamination are major barriers for local SMEs in obtaining halal certification.
Tubastuvi & Wiliantoro (2023)	Lack of access to information on the certification process and high costs are significant obstacles for SMEs in developing countries to obtain halal certification.

(Primary Data Processing, 2025)

The studies in Table 3 highlight several recurring themes. First, differences in halal standards and certification requirements across countries create complexity and uncertainty for local producers attempting to access international markets (Al-Mahmood & Fraser, 2023; Akbar et al., 2023; Rafiki, 2019). Second, high certification costs and limited resources are major barriers for SMEs, particularly in developing countries, where producers may lack the financial capacity to upgrade facilities or maintain documentation required for certification (HFC, 2024; Tubastuvi & Wiliantoro, 2023). Third, supply chain transparency and traceability remain challenging, especially when raw materials are sourced from multiple actors or when traditional practices are informal and undocumented (Bux, Varese, & Lombardi, 2022).

In the specific case of cabuk wijen, these challenges manifest in concrete ways. Producers—often small-scale household enterprises—may have limited access to accurate and up-to-date information on halal certification procedures, required documentation, and associated costs. Adjusting traditional production processes to meet formal HFAS

requirements may demand investments in infrastructure (e.g., dedicated drying racks, hygienic work surfaces, or closed storage) and in record-keeping practices that are not common in informal settings. Moreover, cabuk wijen relies on processes such as sun-drying and the use of rice straw ash, which introduce potential halal critical points related to contamination from animals or impurities in the environment. Ensuring compliance with halal and safety standards therefore requires not only financial resources but also technical guidance to redesign these processes without eroding the product's traditional character.

These challenges underscore the importance of supportive policies, capacity-building programs, and tailored certification schemes for traditional food SMEs. They also highlight a research gap: few studies have examined in depth how specific traditional products like cabuk wijen navigate the tension between preserving artisanal practices and meeting formal halal and quality requirements.

Implications of Added Value in Halal-Certified Cabuk Wijen

Halal certification has significant implications for enhancing the added value of local products such as cabuk wijen, operating through interrelated religious, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions.

Ensuring Compliance with Islamic Law and Strengthening Consumer Trust

Halal certification formally confirms that a product is produced in accordance with Islamic law, thereby increasing trust among Muslim consumers who prioritize the halal status of the foods they consume. Beyond fulfilling a religious obligation, certification signals a commitment to cleanliness, safety, and ethical conduct, attributes that are also appreciated by non-Muslim consumers. Evidence from Palembang shows that culinary product sales increased by 19.1% after obtaining halal certification, while business competitiveness improved by 8.2%, illustrating how the halal label can function as a recognized quality assurance that directly enhances market performance (Julvirta, Permatasari, Ningrum, Rusmiana, & Gaol, 2022). For cabuk wijen, obtaining halal certification could similarly reinforce consumer confidence, reduce perceived risk associated with traditional processing, and encourage trial and repeat purchases.

Expanding Access to Domestic and Global Markets

Products with halal certification have greater potential to access both domestic and international markets. In Muslim-majority countries, certification is frequently a prerequisite for market entry, whereas in non-Muslim countries it can serve as a differentiating attribute in segments that value ethical, safe, and high-quality products. For cabuk wijen, halal certification

would be an essential condition for exporting to markets in the Middle East or Southeast Asia, while also enhancing its appeal in non-Muslim settings where halal is associated with strict quality controls. This dual positioning broadens export opportunities and strengthens the product's competitiveness. At the same time, halal certification supports the modernization of traditional products: it allows cabuk wijen to comply with international standards without losing its cultural identity, thus aligning heritage preservation with market integration.

Enhancing Halal Transparency and Managing Halal Critical Points

Halal certification also reinforces transparency across the value chain, helping to ensure that local products remain free from contamination by non-halal substances and that production processes meet HFAS requirements. In the production of cabuk wijen, critical halal points include the sun-drying of sesame seeds, with potential contamination from animals, and the mixing with rice straw ash, which may be exposed to impurities in the surrounding environment. Mapping these critical points and establishing appropriate control measures—such as protected drying equipment, improved cleaning protocols, and verified sources of auxiliary materials—can simultaneously improve halal assurance and food safety. Registration in a halal assurance system compels producers to maintain documentation and continuous monitoring, thereby upgrading the overall quality management of cabuk wijen.

Linking Halal Certification, Sustainability, and SDGs

Finally, the development of halal-certified cabuk wijen intersects with broader sustainability and SDG agendas. By supporting local SMEs, creating value-added opportunities, and promoting diversified local foods, halal certification can contribute to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) through improved food security and nutrition, and to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) via enhanced livelihoods in rural communities. When implemented alongside environmentally responsible practices—such as efficient use of agricultural by-products and reduced waste—this approach can also support more sustainable production patterns. In this sense, cabuk wijen has the potential to serve as a case example of how traditional foods can be integrated into a halal and sustainable value chain that simultaneously advances religious compliance, economic competitiveness, and cultural preservation.

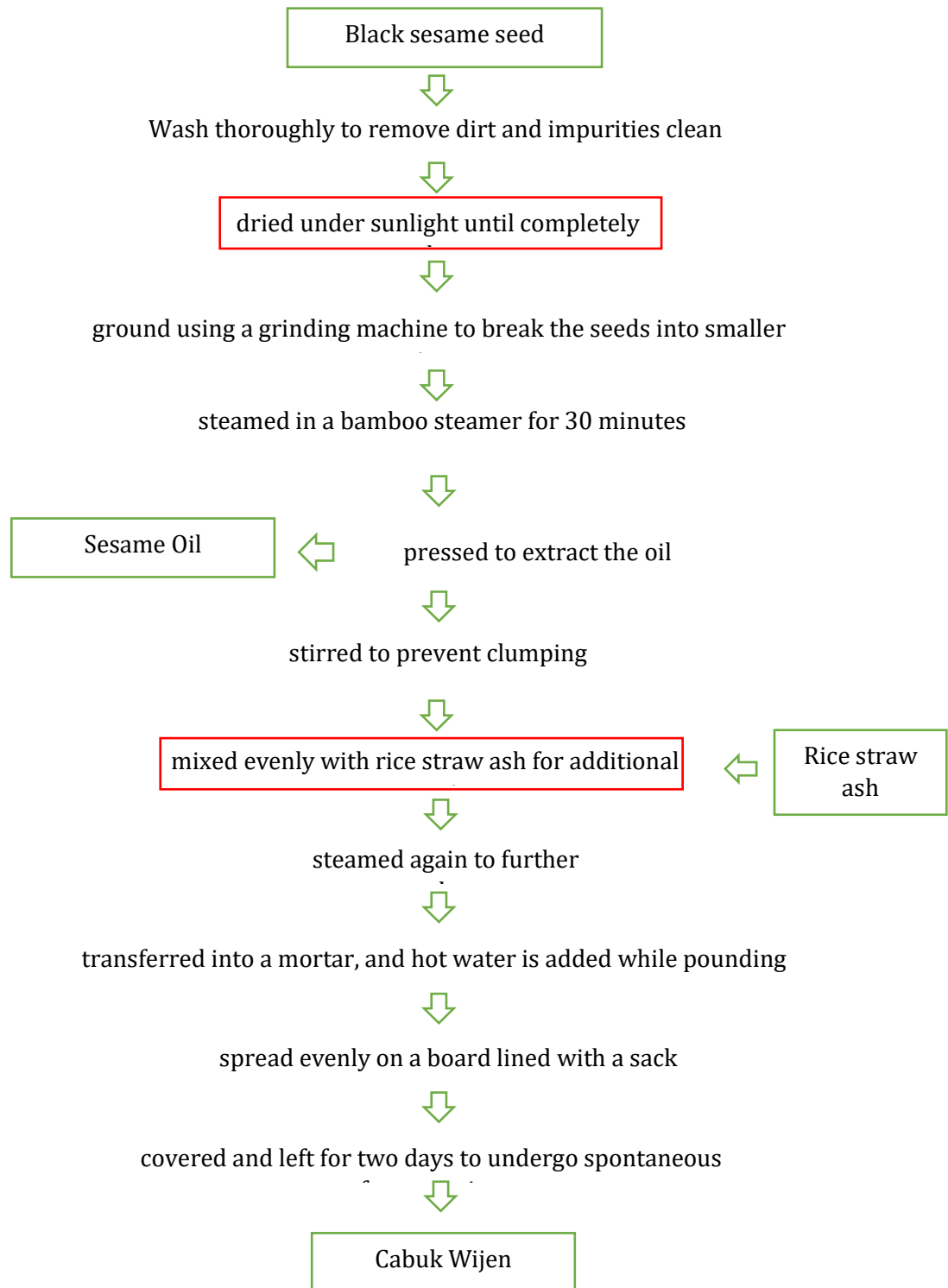


Figure 1. Flowchart of the Cabuk Wijen Production Process
(Research Data, 2024).

Securing halal certification for cabuk wijen therefore represents more than a technical or administrative exercise; it is a strategic step towards repositioning a local traditional food within evolving halal and sustainability-oriented markets, while maintaining its role as an element of Javanese culinary heritage. The production flowchart presented in Figure 1 is based on the authors' direct observation of a home-based SME producing cabuk wijen in Wonogiri, where each processing step—from seed preparation and oil extraction to mixing with rice straw ash and spontaneous fermentation—was carefully documented. This empirical mapping of the artisanal process not only clarifies the traditional know-how embedded in cabuk wijen, but also allows the identification of concrete halal-critical points that need to be managed within a formal Halal Food Assurance System.

From a halal assurance perspective, the flowchart highlights at least two critical halal points that require special control measures. The first is the sun-drying of sesame seeds, which is traditionally conducted in open outdoor spaces. This practice exposes the product to possible contamination from animals, insects, and environmental impurities, raising concerns related to both ritual impurity (*najāsah*) and food safety. To comply with Halal Food Assurance System (HFAS) requirements, producers need to implement mitigation strategies such as using elevated drying racks, protective covers, and designated clean drying areas that minimise contact with potential contaminants. The second critical point is the addition of rice straw ash. Although rice straw is intrinsically halal, its collection, burning, and storage can introduce physical and ritual impurities if not properly managed. Halal control measures therefore include ensuring that the straw originates from clean, uncontaminated fields; using dedicated equipment and facilities for burning and storing the ash; and preventing cross-contamination with non-halal substances. By identifying and managing these halal critical points within the production process, producers of cabuk wijen can strengthen both halal assurance and food safety, thereby supporting the product's readiness for halal certification and enhancing its added value in domestic and international markets.

Taken together, the literature review and field observation provide a coherent picture of both the opportunities and challenges of positioning cabuk wijen as a halal-certified local food. The narrative review shows that halal certification functions as a trust signal, a gateway to domestic and international markets, and a mechanism for safeguarding supply chain integrity, while also aligning with broader sustainability and SDG agendas. At the same time, previous studies highlight structural barriers faced by SMEs, including limited access to information, high certification costs, and the complexity of meeting diverse halal standards.

The empirical mapping of the cabuk wijen production process (Figure 1), based on direct observation of a home-based SME, complements these insights by revealing concrete halal-critical points—particularly the open-air sun-drying of sesame seeds and the use of rice straw ash—that must be managed within a Halal Food Assurance System. This study therefore finds that halal certification for cabuk wijen is both technically feasible and strategically valuable: by introducing targeted control measures at critical points, producers can maintain the product's traditional character while enhancing halal assurance, food safety, and market credibility. In doing so, cabuk wijen can be repositioned as a distinctive Javanese halal speciality that contributes simultaneously to local livelihoods, cultural heritage preservation, and participation in the growing global halal and sustainability-oriented food market.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that halal certification enhances the added value of cabuk wijen, a traditional food from Wonogiri, by strengthening perceptions of safety and quality, signalling compliance with Islamic dietary law, supporting a distinctive halal-oriented brand image, and enabling wider market access. A narrative literature review and field observation of a cabuk wijen SME also show that halal labels act as powerful trust and quality signals for both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. Despite challenges, limited information, high costs, varying standards, and halal-critical points in production, targeted support can make certification feasible and position cabuk wijen competitively in the global halal market.

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