



ACCELERATION OF THE BANYUMAS HALAL ECOSYSTEM: THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF UIN SAIZU HALAL CENTER IN SELF- DECLARATION HALAL

Miftaakhul Amri^{1*}, Tri Meliana Rahmatika Putri Dachirin²

^{1,2}UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

*Corresponding Author Email: miefaim@uinsaizu.ac.id



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the strategic role of Halal Product Process (PPH) companions at the UIN SAIZU Halal Center in accelerating the halal ecosystem in Banyumas Regency through the self-declaration halal certification scheme. Employing a qualitative approach with a single-case study design, this field research examines the practical implementation and challenges of companion assistance. The findings reveal a performance paradox: while active companions strictly adhere to operational procedures and successfully accelerate certification for numerous Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), a significant portion of the registered cohort remains inactive due to structural role conflicts. Despite opening strategic opportunities for regional ecosystem growth, the implementation is still hindered by internal time-management constraints, low digital literacy among traditional entrepreneurs, and frequent technical server downtime. To address these vulnerabilities, the Halal Center deployed strategic countermeasures, including collaborative student volunteering, localized zoning systems, and intensive troubleshooting workshops. This study concludes that long-term ecosystem acceleration requires not merely increasing the volume of certified agents, but establishing sustainable monitoring and support frameworks.*

Keywords: *Self-Declare Halal Certification; PPH Companions; Halal Ecosystem; MSEs Banyumas.*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran strategis pendamping Proses Produk Halal (PPH) Halal Center UIN SAIZU dalam mempercepat ekosistem halal di Kabupaten Banyumas melalui skema sertifikasi halal deklarasi mandiri. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan desain studi kasus tunggal, penelitian lapangan ini mengkaji penerapan praktis dan tantangan dalam pendampingan di lapangan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya paradoks kinerja: meskipun kelompok pendamping yang aktif telah mematuhi prosedur operasional dan berhasil mempercepat sertifikasi bagi banyak Usaha Mikro dan Kecil (UMK), sebagian besar anggota jaringan pendamping lainnya justru tidak aktif akibat konflik peran struktural. Walaupun skema ini membuka peluang strategis bagi pertumbuhan ekosistem regional, pelaksanaannya masih terhambat oleh keterbatasan manajemen waktu internal, rendahnya literasi digital di kalangan pengusaha tradisional, dan gangguan teknis pada server aplikasi. Untuk*

mengatasi kerentanan tersebut, Halal Center menerapkan langkah taktis termasuk pelibatan mahasiswa sebagai sukarelawan, sistem zonasi wilayah, dan lokakarya penyelesaian masalah secara intensif. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa akselerasi ekosistem jangka panjang tidak hanya membutuhkan peningkatan jumlah agen bersertifikat, tetapi juga pembentukan sistem pemantauan dan dukungan yang berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: *Sertifikasi Halal Self-Declare; Pendamping PPH; Ekosistem Halal; UMK Banyumas*

BACKGROUND

According to a report by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre (RISSC, 2023), Indonesia holds the position as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, with approximately 240.62 million people, accounting for 86.7% of its total population. This demographic landscape makes Indonesia a massive potential market in the global halal industry sector, particularly in halal food. The *State of the Global Islamic Economy Report* notes that Indonesia is among the top consumer markets for halal food globally, with a consumption value reaching 146.7 billion US dollars, while also ranking third globally in the overall Islamic economy landscape (DinarStandard, 2022). To realize the vision of becoming a global hub of the halal industry, concerted efforts and synergy from all components are required to build a comprehensive halal ecosystem (LPPOM MUI, 2022).

As a legal foundation, the government implemented Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance (UU JPH), which is overseen by the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH). To effectively implement halal product assurance, BPJPH requires active participation and collaboration from Halal Product Process Assistance Institutions (LP3H), PPH Companions, and business actors across various production scales (Rokhayatun, 2023).

As a form of halal certification acceleration, BPJPH launched the Free Halal Certificate (SEHATI) program through the Self-Declaration scheme specifically designated for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs). This program achieved significant success, with BPJPH official data showing the issuance of 1.15 million halal certificates nationally throughout 2023. This achievement successfully exceeded the initial government-targeted quota of 1 million certificates for the year (BPJPH, 2023). This milestone serves as a foundation for BPJPH to target a significantly larger leap in subsequent years, particularly toward the mandatory halal certification era. In realizing these massive targets, Halal Product Process (PPH) Companions play a crucial role as the spearhead directly interacting with MSE actors.

Based on the regulatory framework governing the *self-declare* halal certification scheme specifically established under Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance (as amended by Law No. 6 of 2023) and Government Regulation No. 39 of 2021 Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) are granted facilitation through accelerated certification. Under the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation (PMA) No. 20 of 2021 and further operationalized by the Decree of the Head of BPJPH No. 122 of 2022, Halal Product Process (PPH) Companions are mandated to conduct direct verification and validation. This includes meticulous examination of material documents, product composition, and production processes, alongside field verifications to ensure absolute compliance with halal standards. Within this regulatory framework, the UIN SAIZU Purwokerto Halal Center occupies a strategic position as an LP3H (Halal Product Process Companion Institution) overseeing 651 registered PPH Companions since March 2022. These companions are expected not only to perform rigorous statutory verification tasks but also to act as driving agents for the development of the regional halal ecosystem.

At the local level, Banyumas Regency possesses tremendous economic potential. According to data from the Department of Labor, Cooperatives, and SMEs (DinakerkopUKM) of Banyumas Regency (2023), there are more than 13,000 MSEs categorized as eligible to participate in the self-declare halal certification program. Under the BPJPH regulations, these MSEs meet the eligibility criteria for self-declaration because their products are low-risk, utilize positive-list halal materials, employ simple production methods, and hold a Business Identification Number (NIB). If all products from these MSEs are successfully certified, the acceleration of the halal ecosystem in Banyumas will be realized rapidly.

However, this vast potential is not yet directly proportional to the reality of implementation in the field. Based on an interview with the Head of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center, Ms. Dani Kusumastuti (2025), it was revealed that the PPH Companions under the auspices of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center have not entirely been active in carrying out their mentoring duties to their full potential. This presents a unique paradox; while the abundance of MSEs in Banyumas should theoretically make it easier for companions to find clients, many companions remain inactive.

Previous studies have extensively discussed the macro-implementation of the SEHATI program or the general constraints faced by MSEs in obtaining halal certificates. However, there is a noticeable research gap regarding how Halal Centers at the higher education level acting as Halal Product Process Companion Institutions (LP3H) strategically manage, stimulate, and optimize their registered companions to overcome this field inactivity. The

novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on the strategic optimization model of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center within a localized ecosystem approach in Banyumas.

Therefore, this study addresses two primary research questions: How does the UIN SAIZU Halal Center strategically optimize the role of PPH Companions in accelerating the halal ecosystem in Banyumas? and What are the structural and technical obstacles faced by these companions in the self-declare scheme? this research aims to map out the optimization strategies of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center and identify the best solutions to overcome companion constraints, thereby accelerating the establishment of a regional halal ecosystem.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Within institutional and ecosystem frameworks, acceleration is conceptualized as a structured, deliberate effort to expedite target achievement and enhance operational efficiency, enabling collective goals to be attained more rapidly (Sukoso et al., 2020). Rather than functioning merely as a generic speed-up mechanism or a superficial increase in bureaucratic velocity, system acceleration in this study is operationalized through a multi-dimensional transformation that alters how administrative and field processes are executed. Grounded in contemporary network governance, this systemic acceleration is broken down into four core measurable indicators. The first is quantitative growth in halal certificate issuance, which shifts the focus from traditional incremental progress to exponential output, serving as a primary metric to capture how fast the massive backlog of uncertified Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) is integrated into the formal halal economy (Rafianti et al., 2022). This scale of growth must be balanced by the second indicator, procedural efficiency regarding processing times, which focuses on optimizing workflows, digitizing verification pathways, and reducing lead times from initial submission to final issuance to minimize transaction costs. Furthermore, true acceleration requires the third indicator, outreach expansion to previously underserved MSEs, which measures the geographical and socioeconomic penetration of the program into marginalized, rural, or informal sectors that traditionally lack access to regulatory support (Shaikhut et al., 2023). Lastly, because halal certification is a collaborative output rather than a siloed task, the fourth indicator involves ecosystem network strengthening among regional stakeholders, evaluating the quality of synergy and resource-sharing between academic halal centers (LP3H), local government agencies, and grassroots communities. Consequently, this systemic acceleration relies heavily on the systematic elimination of operational bottlenecks and the strategic optimization of institutional actors, re-engineering the environment so that

resources are deployed with maximum strategic leverage to achieve a permanent evolutionary leap in the regional halal industry.

The theoretical framework of acceleration becomes highly relevant when applied to efforts aimed at accelerating the halal ecosystem in Banyumas Regency, which relies on strengthening the capacity of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs). However, a clear regulatory distinction must be established between the general definition of MSEs and their specific eligibility for the *self-declaration* scheme. According to Government Regulation (PP) Number 7 of 2021, MSEs are legally defined based on financial thresholds, where micro-enterprises possess a maximum capital of 1 billion IDR or annual sales up to 2 billion IDR, while small enterprises possess capital between 1 to 5 billion IDR or annual sales between 2 to 15 billion IDR. While this regulation defines the economic scale of the businesses, it does not automatically qualify an MSE for the accelerated halal certification pathway. To bridge this gap, the system relies on the Decree of the Head of BPJPH Number 150 of 2022 (which updates the previous Decree No. 122 of 2022) regarding the Guidelines for the Self-Declare Scheme. This specific regulation mandates that eligible MSEs must not only fit the financial criteria of PP No. 7 of 2021 but must also meet strict product-specific criteria: their products must be low-risk, utilize positive-list halal materials that do not require complex laboratory testing, employ simple production methods, and hold a Business Identification Number (NIB). At the local level, this quality screening through halal certification is positioned as an official assurance of a product's halal status based on the fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) or the Halal Product Assurance Committee, as well as a protector of consumer rights in the modern era (Faridah, 2019; Putra, 2017). The obligation mandated by Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance is subsequently accelerated through the Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) program, which operationalizes these overlapping criteria to allow eligible MSE actors in Banyumas to independently declare the halal status of their products under the strict verification of PPH Companions (Sa'diyah & Erawati, 2024; Rahmawati, 2017). This *self-declare* pathway has now become the primary instrument in driving the massive growth of the halal industry in Banyumas.

This is where the UIN SAIKU Purwokerto Halal Center assumes its strategic role as a Halal Product Process Assistance Institution (LP3H), which functions as the core operational hub that orchestrates a multi-stakeholder network to accelerate the regional halal ecosystem. Within this conceptual framework, the acceleration process operates through a continuous institutional pipeline involving five distinct yet interdependent actors. First, UIN SAIKU as the LP3H acts as the institutional anchor responsible for recruiting, training, and legally deploying



the PPH Companions under the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 20 of 2021. Second, these certified companions serve as the critical frontline interface that directly engages with MSEs (Micro and Small Enterprises) in the field. Based on the Decree of the Head of BPJPH Number 150 of 2022 (which updates the previous Decree No. 122 of 2022), the companions execute the vital task of direct field validation, meticulously curating initial legality data (such as NIB and PIRT), verifying ingredient documents, and helping MSEs compile the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) to maintain the integrity of the *self-declaration* scheme. Third, once the field validation is complete, the companion submits the digital data to BPJPH (Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency) via the SiHalal system, transitioning the process from localized assistance to formal state regulation. Fourth, BPJPH processes this data and forwards it to the Fatwa Committee (Komite Fatwa), the sole religious authority responsible for conducting a legal-theological assessment to officially issue the halal decree. Finally, once the decree is approved, BPJPH issues the formal halal certificate back to the MSE.

By mapping this operational flow, the strategic intervention of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center is not merely an isolated training program; rather, it is a structural mechanism that bridges the gap between grassroots business production (MSEs) and state-religious authorities (BPJPH and the Fatwa Committee). It is the efficiency, speed, and accuracy of this interconnected pipeline driven by active PPH Companions that directly generates the targeted regional halal ecosystem acceleration in Banyumas.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilizes a qualitative approach with a field research type under a single-case study design (Yin, 2018). This qualitative paradigm is selected to understand social phenomena deeply from the perspectives of the participants involved in their natural setting (Moleong, 2024). The unit of analysis or case unit in this research is the institutional optimization model of the UIN SAIZU Purwokerto Halal Center as an LP3H, specifically focusing on the performance paradox of its 651 registered PPH Companions. The temporal boundary of this study is set from February to June 2025, while the spatial boundary is strictly localized within the MSE ecosystem of Banyumas Regency. This specific case is uniquely worthy of investigation because UIN SAIZU holds a strategic position as a prominent religious higher education institution with an extensive companion network, yet it faces an empirical paradox where high regional MSE potential coexists with significant companion field inactivity (Sugiyono, 2023).

Primary data were collected via purposive sampling to ensure all informants possessed direct experience with the phenomenon, which aligns with the strategy of gathering first-hand information from specific, competent sources (Suliyanto, 2018). The informants include the Head of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center as the key institutional manager, 15 active PPH companions defined as those who successfully assisted more than 10 MSEs within the last semester, 10 inactive PPH companions defined as those who assisted 0 MSEs within the last semester, and 20 MSE actors who underwent the self-declaration process in Banyumas. Data collection instruments comprised semi-structured interview guides focusing on role expectations, institutional constraints, and operational bottlenecks, as well as observation sheets used during direct field assistances to capture interactions and material checking (Sugiyono, 2023). Secondary data were gathered through document analysis using a strict checklist to review the UIN SAIZU performance archives, registered companion databases, and statutory regulations including PP No. 7 of 2021 and BPJPH Decree No. 150 of 2022 (Moleong, 2024).

To guarantee data trustworthiness and validate the qualitative findings, the researcher executed source triangulation by comparing interview accounts given by the Halal Center management against the narratives of the field companions and MSE actors, verifying consistency across different data providers (Suliyanto, 2018). Additionally, method triangulation was conducted by cross-examining interview transcripts with direct field observation notes and official regulatory databases (Sugiyono, 2023). Informant validation was further solidified through member-checking procedures, where draft findings were reshared with informants to confirm accuracy (Moleong, 2024). Ethical considerations were strictly maintained; all informants provided signed written informed consent, and all identities were securely anonymized using alphanumeric coding such as Companion-01 or MSE-02 to maintain confidentiality.

Data were analyzed using the qualitative interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (Miles et al., 2020), operationalized through systematic coding and thematic categorization (Sugiyono, 2023). In the data reduction phase, raw interview transcripts and field notes were broken down into initial open codes such as slow system response, lack of transport incentives, and unclear material origin to summarize the non-numerical field sentences (Suliyanto, 2018). These codes were then clustered into axial codes representing core sub-themes, such as Technical Inefficiencies and Socioeconomic Demotivators (Moleong, 2024). During the data display phase, these sub-themes were mapped narratively into three main thematic findings, namely Finding A regarding Institutional Capacity and Management

Strategies of LP3H, Finding B regarding Structural Bottlenecks in the SiHalal Application and Material Validation, and Finding C regarding Economic Incentives versus Voluntary Strain. Finally, in the conclusion drawing phase, these emergent themes were verified against the research questions to build a comprehensive optimization model for the regional halal ecosystem (Sugiyono, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of PPH Companions in Accelerating the Halal Assurance System

1. Dynamic Role of PPH Companions in Fulfilling Community Expectations

Empirical evidence from the field shows that the statutory role of PPH Companions as frontline agents is often disconnected from their actual productivity. Data archives from the UIN SAIZU Halal Center reveal a significant performance gap where only 120 out of 651 registered companions are consistently active in submitting certification files through the SiHalal system. This structural passivity was explicitly highlighted by the Head of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center, Dani Kusumastuti, during an interview in February 2025, noting that many companions only complete the initial training to obtain the official certificate but never step into the field to recruit or assist local MSEs. This institutional report matches the accounts given by several field companions who confessed that they face massive field demotivators. For instance, an interview with Companion-04 in March 2025 revealed that without direct operational transport allowances, traveling to remote villages in Banyumas to verify positive-list ingredients becomes an economic burden that forces them to prioritize their main jobs over voluntary mentoring. Based on the sociological review of Role Theory, this reality proves that a role should not be viewed passively merely as a formal status listed in institutional documents (Ali, 2023). A true role is a dynamic process when an individual or group exercises their rights, fulfills their obligations, and successfully responds to the social expectations or demands imposed by the surrounding community (Ali, 2023). In this case, the lack of operational rights execution directly triggers a failure in fulfilling statutory obligations, causing a wide gap between institutional expectations and real-world companion performance.

In this context, the Halal Product Process (PPH) companions under the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU Purwokerto have put this dynamic role into practice in the field. Community expectations, particularly from Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) actors in Banyumas Regency, towards the presence of these companions are very high.

Business actors need a guiding figure who can direct them amidst their ignorance regarding the mandatory halal certification regulations set by the government.

When the PPH companions of UIN SAIZU implement a proactive outreach strategy across various sub-districts, they align their professional obligations with the community high expectations. Field data from the UIN SAIZU Halal Center report archives show that during the intensification period from March to May 2025, a dedicated team of 25 active companions successfully conducted mobile assistance across 12 villages in the Banyumas region, including prominent micro-enterprise hubs in Karangrau, Kedungwringin, and Sumbang. This coordinated effort resulted in the direct assistance and administrative onboarding of 145 food sector MSEs that previously lacked access to the digital SiHalal platform. This dynamic action has a direct impact in the form of significant acceleration or quickening of the halal ecosystem development at the regional level (Sukoso et al., 2020). By shifting from a passive administrative stance to a localized mobile service, the institutional pipeline effectively reduces geographical barriers for rural business actors, thereby expanding the formal halal market coverage in Banyumas.

This acceleration process occurs because the active presence of companions in the field is able to trigger collective awareness among business actors who were initially passive. Thus, the government's target to expand the distribution of halal-certified products in Banyumas Regency can run much more responsively and massively compared to the independent registration system that runs without direct assistance from mentoring institutions.

2. Simplifying Administrative Processes for MSEs

In the study of the Concept of System Acceleration, the acceleration of a work program can only occur if the institution is able to identify, unravel, and eliminate various bureaucratic bottlenecks and procedural obstacles in the field (Rafianti et al., 2022). Research results show that 16 out of 20 MSE informants interviewed in Banyumas Regency initially considered the process of managing halal certification as a very complicated procedure, wasting a lot of time, and requiring significant costs. This widespread negative perception was explicitly voiced by an anonymous snack food producer from Sokaraja during an interview in April 2025, who stated that small home business owners are often terrified of dealing with government administration because they assume it involves hidden fees and endless paperwork that will force them to close their shops for days. This empirical finding explains why grassroots business

actors remain hesitant to apply independently, highlighting that the primary obstacle to system acceleration is not a lack of interest, but a deep-rooted institutional distrust and a cognitive barrier regarding bureaucratic complexity. Therefore, the strategic presence of PPH companions is structurally required to dismantle these negative perceptions through direct assistance.

Fear of this complicated bureaucratic chain is the main obstacle that slows down the pace of certification in the regions. This is where UIN SAIZU PPH companions position themselves as an acceleration instrument tasked with simplifying complex workflows into practical steps that are easy for small business owners to follow.

Technically, the field assistance executed by the UIN SAIZU companions follows a structured operational workflow that directly mirrors the statutory mandates of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency. In the initial regulatory stage, which complies with the business legality requirements of Government Regulation Number 7 of 2021, companions assist business actors in navigating the Online Single Submission platform to issue a Business Identification Number as the primary legal requirement. Once legality is secured, the workflow shifts to the material verification stage under the guidelines of BPJPH Decree Number 150 of 2022, where companions conduct careful curation and verification of the halal status of each raw material by checking the expiration dates and formal certificate numbers of positive-list ingredients (Faridah, 2019). The final technical stage involves direct physical inspections of production kitchen facilities to ensure there are no operational gaps for cross-contamination with non-halal materials, which serves as the field operationalization of the Halal Product Assurance System framework. By executing this systematic step-by-step pipeline, the companions effectively translate complex legal regulations into simple, actionable procedures for grassroots entrepreneurs, thereby accelerating the verification speed without compromising the theological and administrative integrity of the *self-declaration* scheme.

Through this systematic standard of mentoring work, the administrative complexity that has been feared by business owners can be completely cut. This operational efficiency automatically accelerates the completion time of application files, so that legal certainty regarding the halal status of products can be issued by the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Body (BPJPH) in a much shorter time.

3. Implementing the Self-Declaration Halal for Certification Acceleration

The implementation of the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI) through the self-declaration scheme managed by the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU serves as a significant catalyst in accelerating the growth of the local halal industry. Performance data from the UIN SAIZU database show that through this collaborative model, the institution successfully facilitated the issuance of 842 halal certificates for Banyumas MSEs between January and June 2025, marking a substantial increase compared to the previous semester which only recorded 310 certified businesses. Furthermore, the active involvement of companions reduced the average processing time from 45 days down to 14 working days per application. This self-declaration scheme basically gives special rights to business actors with low-risk product criteria to declare the halal status of their products independently. However, for this independent declaration to have valid legal force, its validity must be tested and accounted for through the results of field verification conducted by PPH companions.

The empirical findings of this study demonstrate that the existence of a self-declaration pathway combined with the proactive stance of PPH companions successfully creates a fast track for the legal formalization of micro-enterprises. Intensive field mentoring is proven to minimize administrative data entry errors and accelerate the preparation of Halal Product Assurance System documents. For example, during document analysis of 50 initial draft submissions via the SiHalal application, researchers found that assistance from companions eliminated common technical errors such as mismatched raw material serial numbers and incorrect manufacturing process descriptions, which previously caused a 40 percent application rejection rate by BPJPH. A concrete example is the case of a traditional cassava chip producer in Purwokerto in April 2025, where the business owner successfully obtained an official halal certificate within two weeks after a companion helped re-map the supplier documentation for the positive-list frying oil. This empirical case confirms that direct companion intervention directly resolves the technical illiteracy of grassroots entrepreneurs, transforming raw field data into compliant regulatory documents.

This ease of processing in turn triggered a very positive psychological impact among Banyumas business actors. When several MSE actors in a village successfully obtained a halal certificate in a short time without being charged any fees at all, the success immediately spread by word of mouth. This success fostered interest and motivation for other business actors to participate in registering their products.

This phenomenon exemplifies what is conceptualized as regional ecosystem acceleration, where a policy innovation that is robustly supported by active field actors generates an exponential surge in the volume of halal-certified products within a relatively short timeframe. When applied to the context of Banyumas, the structural alignment between institutional support from the LP3H and the proactive execution of roles by the PPH companions transforms a dormant regulatory framework into a highly dynamic market force. This acceleration does not merely signify an increase in administrative output, but it fundamentally re-engineers the local economic landscape by building consumer trust and formalizing grassroots enterprises. Consequently, the strategic optimization of these frontline companions serves as the primary engine driving the sustainable development of the regional halal industry, proving that policy success is heavily dependent on the efficiency of its grassroots implementation network.

Field Analysis of Opportunities and Obstacles in Role Execution

1. Social Opportunities and Benefits for PPH Companions

When reviewed through Role Theory, when an individual successfully fulfills their duty obligations well in society, they will automatically obtain certain rights and opportunities to develop their self-capacity (Ali, 2023). Data in the field shows that being a PPH companion under the auspices of the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU opens up many broad opportunities for benefits, both from personal and social dimensions.

From the operational benefit perspective, companions are entitled to receive official financial incentives from the government for every MSE application file that is successfully assisted until the halal certificate is issued, as regulated under the financial guidelines of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency. However, field data reveal that this incentive structure operates as a complex sociomedical driver that directly influences companion retention and data integrity. On one hand, the financial incentive serves as a vital motivational factor that offsets the personal transportation and communication costs incurred by companions during field visits in rural Banyumas. On the other hand, this *fee-per-certificate* mechanism introduces a potential conflict of interest and an institutional vulnerability, where companions might prioritize the quantity of submissions over the quality of material validation to maximize their personal income.

This performance paradox was clearly highlighted during an interview with Companion-09 in May 2025, who noted that the pressure to accumulate successful certificate issuances sometimes tempts field agents to skip rigorous kitchen inspections

and rush the document uploading phase, which ultimately lowers the administrative compliance of the Halal Product Assurance System. To mitigate this structural risk, the UIN SAIZU Halal Center acts as an institutional gatekeeper by implementing an internal screening process before files are pushed to the SiHalal portal. In addition to material benefits, the field experiences significantly deepen the religious and technical competencies of the companions, particularly regarding the development of modern food technology and the critical points of raw material halalness. This dualism shows that while economic incentives are mandatory to sustain grassroots mobilization, they must be tightly coupled with strict institutional supervision from the LP3H to prevent the degradation of halal theological standards for the sake of financial gain.

Meanwhile, from the social dimension, this role provides a very large opportunity for companions to expand their communication networks and partnership relations in society. Companions can interact directly with various social layers, including village officials, religious figures, creative industry actors, and local government agencies.

Psychologically, the success of meeting the social expectations of the community by helping to upgrade small businesses provides very high inner satisfaction. This real value of benefit confirms that the role of companions is no longer just a formal work task, but as a form of realization of social responsibility and real worship in increasing the economic welfare of the community in Banyumas Regency.

2. Internal Obstacles: Time Constraints and Companion Activeness

Although the regulatory instruments and opportunities for benefit are wide open, the process of accelerating the halal ecosystem in Banyumas is still often hindered by internal organizational constraints, especially related to the imbalance in role implementation. Based on the institutional database and performance evaluation archives of the UIN SAIZU Halal Center as of June 2025, it was found that out of 651 registered PPH companions who hold official competence certificates, only 18 percent or approximately 120 individuals are categorized as active field mentors. The Halal Center establishes the baseline for an active companion as an agent who successfully submits and processes at least three MSE halal certificate applications per month. Consequently, the remaining 82 percent of the registered cohort falls into the inactive category, having submitted zero applications within the last semester.

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with the Head of the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU Purwokerto, this empirical phenomenon is deeply rooted in structural

bottlenecks rather than a mere lack of interest. When analyzed using Role Theory, this stark imbalance is categorized as a severe role conflict and a critical time management failure among the certified agents (Sa'diyah & Erawati, 2024). The majority of these inactive companions are university students or cross-sector professionals who face competing structural demands, where their primary academic schedules or formal employment responsibilities directly collide with the time-consuming requirements of conducting door-to-door field validations in remote Banyumas villages. This role conflict paralyzes the institutional pipeline, as the formal status granted by the state competence certificate fails to manifest into the actual, dynamic behavior required to drive the regional halal ecosystem acceleration.

This constraint is mostly experienced by the group of companions from the elements of lecturers and students. They often find it difficult to divide time allocations between carrying out academic obligations, such as lectures, final project processing, and Tridharma workloads, with operational obligations to assist MSEs in the field. In addition to time issues, there are psychological obstacles in the form of a lack of self-confidence (*self-efficacy*) in mastering the details of technical regulations that often change, causing hesitation to face business actors directly.

Consequently, there is an imbalance in the workload in the field, where the volume of mentoring activities is currently mostly accumulated and borne by companions with backgrounds as religious counselors. This happens because religious counselors culturally already have a mass base and a mature social interaction capacity in the lower-level community.

3. External Obstacles: SIHALAL System Constraints and MSE Digital Literacy

In addition to obstacles arising from within the organization, the pace of accelerating the halal ecosystem in Banyumas Regency is also often hit by external constraints stemming from technological infrastructure readiness. The halal certification system under the *Self-Declaration Halal* is currently fully integrated through a digital platform application called SIHALAL.

However, in its implementation, this digital application very often experiences technical operational disruptions that paralyze field mentoring activities. Log records and screenshots of system errors shared by companions during the peak certification period between March and April 2025 confirm a frequent decrease in server performance or server downtime when accessed en masse during working hours. This systemic bottleneck was explicitly detailed by Companion-12 during an interview in

May 2025, who noted that the system frequently frozen at the final data submission stage, forcing companions to restart the entire application entry from the beginning and causing verification queues to back up for days. Furthermore, field observations tracked repeated failures in the automatic email verification code delivery system and recurring error messages during document upload processes (Rafianti et al., 2022). This technical condition is compounded by the geographical characteristics of the large Banyumas Regency area, where several remote rural areas such as the mountainous sectors of Pekuncen and Cilongok have very unstable internet network access. Consequently, when a companion faces a combination of a lagging national server and poor local cellular reception, the digital-based acceleration program experiences severe structural deceleration, leaving rural MSE actors unable to complete their *self-declaration* process in a timely manner.

This technological obstacle becomes more complex when faced with the reality of low digital literacy among several observed traditional MSE actors in Banyumas. Rather than representing the entire regional population, this digital gap was highly evident among the specific cohort of 20 micro-entrepreneurs interviewed in this study, where 12 of them are over 50 years old and primarily operate home-based traditional food businesses. These observed business actors experience significant digital barriers and do not possess supporting hardware devices such as computers or smartphones capable of running complex browser scripts (Putra, 2017). This specific demographic limitation means that the target participants are completely dependent on the companion physical presence to navigate the digital interface. Consequently, when technical literacy barriers intersect with the previously mentioned server issues, the responsibility of data entry shifts entirely onto the shoulders of the PPH companions. This dynamic transforms the companion role from a strategic field validator into a clerical data typist, which ultimately slows down the structural acceleration of the regional halal ecosystem.

Due to this sharp digital gap, the original concept of *self-declare* where business actors register independently cannot run ideally. PPH companions eventually have to bear an extra workload by completely shifting their roles into technical operators who type all business data from beginning to end, which of course drains operational time and slows down the rhythm of achieving regional certification quotas.

Role Acceleration Strategies of PPH Companions in Overcoming Obstacles

To solve internal organizational constraints regarding the high volume of passive companions and their psychological hesitation, the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU Purwokerto

executed a structured capacity building strategy (Shaikhut et al., 2023). This institutional strategy was factually implemented through an intensive troubleshooting workshop held on March 15, 2025, which involved 120 previously inactive companions. The evaluation metrics from this institutional event showed a significant capacity increase, where post-test scores regarding error handling in the SiHalal application rose by 45 percent compared to pre-test baselines. To maintain this momentum, the Halal Center deployed practical guide modules and short tutorial videos directly to mobile devices.

This training approach was intentionally designed to address the psychological aspects of the companions to foster institutional professionalism. Through the formation of a peer learning forum, passive companions were integrated into collaborative support groups. The implementation of this group approach proved highly effective in restoring self-efficacy among student and lecturer companions, enabling them to fulfill their statutory obligations in the community (Ali, 2023). The success of this intervention is demonstrated by a clear behavioral shift, where 45 previously passive companions immediately activated their accounts and successfully submitted a total of 135 new MSE applications within four weeks following the workshop.

To overcome external obstacles stemming from low digital literacy among traditional business groups, the companions modified their communication framework by adopting a highly accessible educational approach. Complex halal assurance rules were translated into visual guidance sheets and supported by direct face-to-face consultations at production sites (Faridah, 2019). Meanwhile, to address the shortage of active companions relative to the high MSE population in Banyumas Regency, the Halal Center established a collaborative governance breakthrough via the Thematic Student Community Service program. This program, executed from April to May 2025, deployed a dedicated cohort of 35 students who served as technology volunteers (Rahmawati, 2017). In this collaborative matrix, the division of labor was strictly optimized: the volunteers handled digital technicalities such as email synchronization and account registrations, which allowed the certified PPH companions to focus entirely on sharia substance, material tracing, and physical kitchen validation. This cross-disciplinary synergy effectively cleared document backlogs without causing operational fatigue within the institutional network.

Field challenges arising from the wide geographical expanse of Banyumas Regency and high transportation costs were resolved through a strategic work allocation system based on regional clustering (Rafianti et al., 2022). The Halal Center applied a strict zoning system where companions were exclusively assigned to assist MSEs located within their immediate

residential sub-districts, which successfully cut personal travel expenses by up to 60 percent. Before conducting physical on-site inspections, companions utilized mobile communication channels to perform preliminary digital curations of raw material invoices. Physical visits to production houses were only scheduled once the digital administrative files were declared fully valid.

Finally, to reduce psychological resistance among hesitant business actors, companions utilized a persuasion strategy by presenting verified success stories of local entrepreneurs. A concrete example used during field campaigns was the case of a traditional cassava chip producer in Sokaraja who recorded a 25 percent increase in monthly sales turnover and secured a wider modern retail supply contract within three months after obtaining the official halal certificate. By presenting these verifiable economic advantages, companions successfully dismantled local skepticism. Through this combination of tactical, data-driven strategies, the institutional model of UIN SAIZU successfully drives the acceleration of the regional halal ecosystem in an inclusive and sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that although the PPH companions from the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU Purwokerto have worked hard to assist the community, their level of activity in the field is not yet evenly distributed. In relation to Role Theory, only a small segment of companions is genuinely active in going to the field to help MSE owners in Banyumas navigate the document submission process, which was initially considered complicated. Direct assistance in the free halal certification program (SEHATI) through the self-declaration scheme is proven to be the main driver in speeding up the administrative process so that halal certificates can be issued much faster. However, in reality, many certified companions remain inactive because they experience role conflicts and difficulties in managing their time between busy university or work schedules and their duties to assist business actors. This internal issue is further aggravated by external constraints, such as many small business actors being elderly and lacking digital literacy, poor internet connectivity in remote villages, and the SiHalal application frequently experiencing system errors.

To overcome these various problems, the Halal Center of UIN SAIZU has taken several concrete steps, ranging from holding specialized training on how to handle application errors, involving students as volunteers to assist with the data entry process, to dividing work areas based on the nearest sub-district to save travel time and costs. These steps have proven helpful in streamlining the document registration process and reducing data rejection rates in the



system. The practical implication of this research indicates that assisting institutions should not only focus on producing many new companions, but must also create an ongoing monitoring system and utilize student assistance so that movements in the field do not stagnate. The main limitation of this study is its scope, which only examines the Banyumas region, meaning the results are not necessarily the same for other regions with different challenges. Therefore, future research is advised to compare several other campuses to formulate a more mature and easily applicable cooperation model for the national halal product assurance system.

REFERENCES

- Ali, M. N. (2023). Optimalisasi Pendampingan Proses Sertifikasi Halal UMK di Cirebon. *INKLUSIF : Jurnal Pengkajian Penelitian Ekonomi dan Hukum Islam*, 1, 1–17.
- BPJBH. (2023). *BPJPH Lampau Target Sertifikasi Halal Gratis 2023*. Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. <https://bpjph.halal.go.id/detail/bpjph-lampau-target-sertifikasi-halal-gratis-2023>
- DinarStandard. (2022). *State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2022*.
- Faridah, H. D. (2019). Sertifikasi Halal di Indonesia: Sejarah, Perkembangan, dan Implementasi. *Journal of Halal Product and Research*, 68–78.
- Fatkhullah, M., & Habib, M. A. F. (2023). Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Konsep, Peluang, dan Tantangan dalam Perspektif Islam. *Jurnal Ekonomika dan Bisnis Islam*, 6(1), 137-153.
- LPPOM MUI. (2022). *Jurnal Halal: Halal Is My Life Menentramkan Umat*. <https://halalmui.org/halal-is-my-life-hidup-halal-secara-kaffah/>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2020). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. SAGE Publications. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=3CNrUbTu6CsC>
- Moleong, L. J. (2024). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif Edisi Revisi*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Putra, P. A. A. (2017). Kedudukan Sertifikasi Halal dalam Sistem Hukum Nasional Sebagai Upaya Perlindungan Konsumen dalam Hukum Islam. *Amwaluna: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Keuangan Syariah*, 1(1), 149–165.
- Rafianti, F., Krisna, R., & Radityo, M. E. (2022). Dinamika Pendampingan Manajemen Halal Bagi Usaha Mikro dan Kecil Melalui Program Self Declare. *Jurnal Sains Sosio Humaniora*, 6, 636–643. <https://doi.org/10.22437/jssh.v6i1.19732>
- Rahmawati, R. (2017). Kehalalan Produk Makanan dalam Upaya Perlindungan Konsumen Bagi Umat Muslim (Studi Kasus Pasar Purbolinggo Kabupaten Lampung Timur). *Repository IAIN Metro*.



- RISSC. (2023). *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims 2023*. Amman, Jordan: The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre.
- Rokhayatun, S. (2023). Pendamping Pph Melalui Motivasi Sebagai (Studi Kasus Pada Halal Center Uin Saizu Purwokerto). *Repository UIN Saizu*.
- Sa'diyah, S., & Erawati, E. (2024). Effectiveness of Halal Traceability and Self-Declared Certification on Indonesian MSMEs Performance. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Economic Law*, 1(2), 72–90.
- Shaikhut, N., Shokhikhah, T., Aprillia, R. P., & Sabila, A. R. (2023). Pendampingan Produk Usaha Mikro Kecil dan Menengah (UMKM) dalam Pengurusan Sertifikasi Halal Melalui Program SEHATI. *Welfare: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 1(3).
- Sugiyono, P. D. (2023). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D*. ALFABETA, Bandung.
- Sukoso, Wiryawan, A., Kusnadi, J., & Sucipto. (2020). *Ekosistem Industri Halal- Ekonomi dan Keuangan Syariah - Bank Indonesia*.
- Suliyanto. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Bisnis: Untuk Skripsi, Tesis, dan Disertasi*. Andi Offset.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods (6th ed.)*. SAGE Publications.