


The effect of halal certification, product quality and word of mouth on consumer loyalty

Putri Amalia *, Taufiqur Rahman

Trunojoyo Madura University, Bangkalan, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the influence of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth on consumer loyalty at V-Fie Bakery. This research aims to discover the factors that affect consumer loyalty and provide an overview of business actors when facing increasingly fierce market competition. The research method used is quantitative research. One hundred respondents determined the sample. The sampling technique in this study uses probability sampling. Data was collected through a questionnaire and analysis using regression. The results of this study state that halal certification does not have a significant effect on consumer loyalty. On the other hand, product quality and word of mouth significantly affect consumer loyalty at V-Fie Bakery. Simultaneously, halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth affect consumer loyalty.

Public interest statements

This research is helpful for business people, especially in the current era of globalization, by increasing awareness and trust in halal products, carrying out more effective marketing strategies, increasing product competitiveness, and providing important insights for consumers in knowing the factors that affect loyalty or trust. In addition, this research plays an important role in encouraging economic growth and strengthening the food industry to be more developed and meet consumer expectations.

Keywords: Halal certification; product quality; word of mouth; consumer loyalty

Paper type: Case study

✉ Corresponding: Putri Amalia
Email: 210721100194@student.trunojoyo.ac.id

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi pengaruh sertifikasi halal, kualitas produk, dan word of mouth terhadap loyalitas konsumen pada V-Fie Bakery. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi loyalitas konsumen dan memberikan gambaran pelaku usaha dalam menghadapi persaingan pasar yang semakin ketat. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah penelitian kuantitatif. Sampel yang digunakan sebanyak seratus responden. Teknik pengambilan sampel pada penelitian ini menggunakan probability sampling. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kuesioner dan analisis menggunakan regresi. Hasil penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa sertifikasi halal tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap loyalitas konsumen. Sebaliknya, kualitas produk dan word of mouth berpengaruh signifikan terhadap loyalitas konsumen pada V-Fie Bakery. Secara simultan, sertifikasi halal, kualitas produk, dan word of mouth berpengaruh terhadap loyalitas konsumen.

Pernyataan kepentingan publik

Penelitian ini bermanfaat bagi para pelaku bisnis khususnya di era globalisasi saat ini dengan melalui peningkatan kesadaran serta kepercayaan terhadap produk halal, untuk menjalankan strategi pemasaran yang lebih efektif, meningkatkan daya saing produk serta memberikan wawasan yang penting bagi konsumen dalam mengetahui faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi loyalitas atau kepercayaan. Selain itu, penelitian ini berperan penting dalam mendorong pertumbuhan ekonomi dan memperkuat industri makanan agar lebih berkembang dan memnuhi harapan konsumen

Kata kunci: Halal certification; product quality; word of mouth; consumer loyalty

Introduction

In the era of globalization and the current free trade system, part of the private sector is growing in several developing countries. The presence of the MSME sector is very valuable. Also, it significantly contributes to the development of the economic sector and job creation. MSMEs in Indonesia impact accelerating economic growth by increasing people's income and supporting the country's foreign exchange income. In addition, MSMEs also strengthen the national business structure through their ability to create jobs, reduce unemployment and poverty, overcome gaps between sectors or business actors, and become a medium to introduce domestic products to the international market (Alansori & Listyaningsih, 2020).

According to data obtained through the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the 2023 period, the number of MSMEs is almost 66 million, and the contribution of MSMEs is 61% of GDP, equivalent to Rp. 9,580 trillion. The food and beverage sector is one of the MSME sectors that has experienced significant growth. The growth of food and beverage MSMEs is inseparable from the increase in public interest in various types and types of processed foods. Investing in the food MSME sector is considered increasingly promising because this business can be done with both small and large capital (Primadhita et al., 2020). Food is included in some of the primary human needs that must be fulfilled to continue living a good life (Zuhira & Sulaiman, 2023).

Amid globalization, the demand for halal products has become a powerful wave that opens up great opportunities for Indonesia, especially for MSMEs. This phenomenon is driven

by the growing Muslim population (Saputri & Astutik, n.d.). Halal products extend not only from the point of view of Islamic law but also products branded as healthy, clean products that meet the quality of life standards accepted by consumers (Makhtum & Ersya Faraby, 2021). MSE actors benefit because they can increase added value through halal certification. MSE actors benefit because they can increase added value through halal certification. Halal certification is a significant advance towards the era of safe consumption; this regulation has many benefits for business actors, consumers, and the Indonesian state (Saputri & Astutik, n.d.). Some regulations regarding halal product assurance are in Law No. 33 of 2014 Article 4, which states that products that enter, circulate, and trade in Indonesia must be halal certified. In addition, in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 39 of 2021 concerning the Implementation of Halal Product Assurance. The regulation provides a framework for managing halal certification, including the self-declaration and regular schemes. The existence of government regulations related to halal product assurance shows that the government pays special attention to product quality. Halal certification has several important roles, namely as a responsibility as a Muslim, increasing consumer trust and satisfaction, improving image and competitiveness as a tool to expand marketing networks, and providing profits by increasing production and sales turnover (Ersya Faraby et al., 2023)

In addition, product quality is part of the cause that determines consumer satisfaction and trust and will influence consumer loyalty. Product quality is an assessment of the benefits of what consumers feel about the quality of a product or service, whether it is in line with consumer expectations (Setiawan & Cholid, 2021). Because customer satisfaction is paramount in both the service and goods sectors, but manufacturers cannot always meet customer desires. (Yulistria et al., 2023). The impact of customer satisfaction depends on the quality level of the product offered. If a product's quality meets consumers' desires, that satisfaction will be easier to achieve. Therefore, all companies must be committed to producing and distributing goods and services according to the wishes and interests of consumers. Then, they must also provide exclusive services that provide satisfaction and support facilities. Word of mouth is among the most effective and efficient marketing methods (Murtiningsih, 2023).

Word of mouth (WoM) is one very effective marketing tactic when determining consumer purchase decisions related to the use of products or services. Deep (Firdiansyah et al., 2022) It is explained that WoM is an offer spread through word-of-mouth advice about the superiority of a product. This WoM can spread quickly if the customer spreads it and has a vast connection. Thus increasing the attractiveness of the product in the market. One of the MSMEs in Bangkalan that still uses the WoM marketing strategy is the V-Fie Bakery MSME. Previous researchers have researched halal certification, product quality, and WoM in several studies. Abd researched halal certification. Hasib et al. (2020) state that the finding in this study reveals a significant influence of halal labeling on consumer loyalty.

Meanwhile, in the research of Qorirotul Uyun et al. (2024), the findings prove no significant influence of halal certification on consumer loyalty. Edi Wahyu Wibowo et al. (2022) researched product quality. The findings of this study prove that product quality has a positive and significant influence on consumer loyalty. Meanwhile, in the research of Yuyuk Liana et al. (2024), the findings of this study describe that product quality has no significant influence on consumer loyalty. Research on WoM was conducted by Mutiara Ramadhani et al. (2023). The findings of this study show that Word of mouth has a positive and significant

influence on consumer loyalty. Meanwhile, in the research of Ahmudin et al. (2023), this study explained that WoM did not significantly influence customer loyalty. One of the theories that strengthens this study is the trust theory of Swan and Nolan (1985), which states that long-term customer loyalty can be achieved if customers have high trust in a product or company.

This research focuses on the impact of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth on consumer loyalty at V-Fie Bakery, a micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) in the food sector. The study examines how these variables influence consumer loyalty, identifying which factors significantly impact and which do not. The researchers are interested in reanalyzing the effects of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth on consumer loyalty in the context of V-Fie Bakery, given its potential to attract consumers through high-quality, halal-certified products. This study aims to assess both these variables' partial and simultaneous influences on consumer loyalty in V-Fie Bakery.

Case description

V-Fie Bakery MSMEs

V-Fie Bakery is a micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) specializing in food, particularly pastries and wet cakes. It is located in Bargan Village, Socah District, Bangkalan Regency. This bakery is well-known in the Socah sub-district. Due to its diverse range of products, it attracts many customers daily. The business has also created job opportunities for residents. According to the business owner, word of mouth has been a major factor in their success, mainly since social media was not heavily prioritized when the business was established (Wawancara, 2024). As a result, consumers have learned about V-Fie Bakery mainly through recommendations from others.

Maintaining high product quality is essential for fostering consumer loyalty and trust; without it, the business would struggle to survive. V-Fie Bakery obtained halal certification in June 2023, ahead of the government's requirement for MSMEs to possess halal certification, which was initially set for October 2024 but postponed to October 2026. This requirement regarding halal product guarantees is outlined in Government Regulation (PP) No. 39 of 2021. Products with halal certification include dessert boxes, fudgy brownies, nastar, coffee bread, sagon, cheese sticks, and pineapple jam. Conversely, certain items such as pastels, lempur, risol, shredded bread, sausage bread, sus cakes, and donuts do not yet have halal certification. The business owner noted that obtaining halal certification has led to increased sales, as some consumers specifically inquire about the halal status of the products. Therefore, halal certification, word of mouth, product quality, and consumer loyalty are crucial for V-Fie Bakery to remain competitive in a market with numerous bakery options in the Socah area of Bangkalan Regency.

Halal Certification

Halal certification is an official certificate issued by BPJPH that confirms the halal status of a product based on a written fatwa from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) (Kenji Maulana et al., 2024). This certification plays a crucial role in enhancing the market value of products for entrepreneurs. Consumers are increasingly interested in products labeled as halal. The

presence of halal-certified products provides comfort and assurance to consumers regarding the safety of these items (Setiawan Djodi & Rahman, 2023). With halal certification, consumers can shop confidently, knowing that the products align with Islamic principles.

The primary aim of halal certification is to determine whether a product meets halal standards, alleviating consumers' doubts or anxieties about their choices. This certification process is essential for maintaining the trust of Muslim consumers by the regulations established in Indonesia. The halal guidelines for the Muslim community concerning food consumption encompass various aspects, including raw materials, production processes, serving procedures, and consumption practices (Hoiriyatul Muawwanah & Makhtum, 2022).

Currently, halal products have become an integral part of a highly profitable global market that benefits both Muslim and non-Muslim communities. According to data from BPJPH, the global halal market is projected to reach approximately Rp. 20,670 trillion by 2025, with an average annual growth rate of 5.2% expected from 2018 to 2028. This presents a significant opportunity; therefore, the Indonesian government must take appropriate and serious steps to strengthen the halal industry ecosystem and capitalize on this substantial market potential.

Business owners seeking halal certification for their products must involve three key parties: BPJPH, MUI, and LPPOM, which serve as halal inspection institutions (LPH). BPJPH is responsible for organizing halal product assurance. LPPOM conducts document examinations, schedules audits, implements audits, holds auditor meetings, issues modern audits, and submits audit minutes to the MUI Fatwa Commission. Meanwhile, MUI plays a crucial role in determining the halal status of products based on audit results and issuing halal regulations (Fuadi et al., 2022). Once a product is verified as halal and receives certification, the halal certificate is valid for four years from the date of issuance. For business owners whose halal certification grace period has expired, extending the certificate at least three months before the expiration date is essential (Muhammad Lucky P., 2024).

Product Quality

According to Tjiptono (2008), as cited in Aditya & Yasa (2024), product quality refers to the overall characteristics of a product that provide value to consumers, whether the product is a good or a service. It encompasses meeting or exceeding customer expectations regarding the product, service, personnel, procedures, and environment (Pahmi, 2024). A product can be considered high quality if it satisfies customer desires. Generally, consumers seek products that offer good quality at reasonable prices. However, some believe that higher-priced products inherently possess better quality. Therefore, consumers often assess a product's quality based on its price and their perceptions, favoring products that are both of good quality and competitively priced (Chinna et al., 2022).

Word of Mouth and consumer Loyalty

According to Kotler and Keller (Kurniasih, 2021), word of mouth refers to a marketing activity involving communication between individuals, whether orally, in writing, or through other media, regarding their purchase experiences or using products and services. Additionally, Saputra and Ardani (2020) describe word of mouth as occurring when a person shares

information, particularly positive insights, that can influence the decisions of other consumers. Loyalty, as defined by Oliver and cited by Kotler and Keller (2012:138) in Maimunah (2020), refers to a strong commitment to repurchasing a product. According to Jumarodin et al. (2019), consumer loyalty involves a robust commitment to consistently buy a brand's products or services in the future. When consumers repurchase products, their loyalty to that product increases. Conversely, loyalty tends to diminish if a product fails to meet consumer expectations, leading consumers to switch to other brands.

Methods

This study presents the data collected during the research using a quantitative approach and descriptive research methods. According to Sugiyono, as cited in Haryono et al. (2024), quantitative research is a method used to analyze a population or a specified sample. Data is gathered through instrumental tests, and statistical analysis is performed to test the specified hypothesis. The sample was determined using purposive and quota sampling techniques in coordination with the research objectives. Participants included consumers who are at least 18 years old and have made at least two purchases from V-Fie Bakery MSME. Probability sampling ensures that each population element has an equal chance of being selected as a sample (Zulfikar et al., 2024). This study utilizes secondary data derived from interviews and literature reviews, as well as reading books, scientific journals, online resources, and previous research. Additionally, primary data was collected by administering questionnaires, which served as a key method for gathering information.

Measurement

The variables in this study are based on measurements adapted from previous research. According to Deep (Ainiyah et al., 2023), variables related to halal certification include several indicators: the importance of using halal labels in product selection, making choices based on halal labels, exercising caution when choosing products with halal labels, and recognizing the difference between authentic and non-authentic halal labels. Kotler, as referenced by Anggara Putra and Damayanti (2023), identifies several product quality indicators, including shape, reliability, suitability, product characteristics, durability, and performance. Additionally, Deep (Sudarmin, 2023) notes that Word of Mouth has several indicators, such as communicating positive experiences, recommending products to friends, and encouraging them to purchase. Furthermore, Tjiptono (2002), as cited in Dwi Wahyuni (2017), describes six indicators for measuring consumer loyalty: repeat purchases, brand consumption habits, strong preference for the brand, continued selection of the product, confidence in the brand being the best, and the tendency to recommend the brand to others. This study employs 12 items in total. All items were measured using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where one indicates "strongly disagree" and five indicates "strongly agree."

The validity test in this study was conducted using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Factor analysis is deemed appropriate if the KMO value is more significant than 0.50 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity has a value less than 0.05. Subsequently, the loading factor values

are examined. If the loading factor for an item exceeds 0.5, that item is accepted. Additionally, as shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, the initial eigenvalues of the 12 items explain 30.5% of the variance in the construct and form four dimensions. Meanwhile, the reliability of the variables can be assessed through the statistical results of Cronbach's Alpha; a value greater than 0.70 indicates that the variable is considered reliable.

Table 1.

Validity test, reliability test

No	Items	Loading Factor	KMO	α	AVE
1	Halal Certification.1	0,813			
2	Halal Certification.2	0,826	0,656	0,793	0,708
3	Halal Certification.3	0,823			
4	Product Quality.1	0,863			
5	Product Quality.2	0,904	0,644	0,773	0,725
6	Product Quality.3	0,648			
7	Word of Mouth.1	0,820	0,500	0,745	0,767
8	Word of Mouth.2	0,873			
9	Consumer Loyalty.1	0,842			
10	Consumer Loyalty.2	0,609	0,779	0,788	0,692
11	Consumer Loyalty.3	0,772			
12	Consumer Loyalty.4	0,718			

Table 2.

Eigenvalue

Component	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative%
1	3,672	30,559	30,599
2	2,195	18,295	48,894
3	1,697	14,140	63,035
4	1,029	8,576	71,611

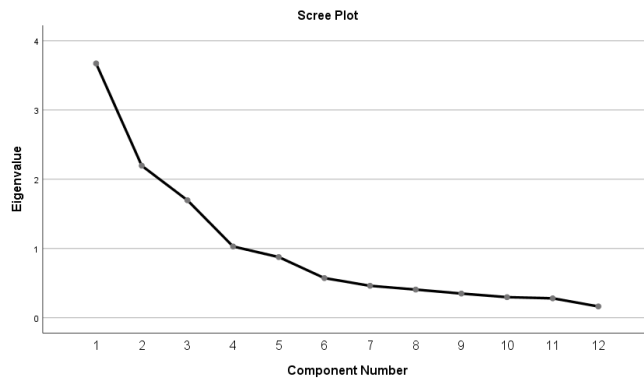


Figure.1

Scree Plot

Results and discussion

The regression analysis examines the influence of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth on consumer loyalty. The results of the regression analysis are presented in the following Table:

Table. 3

Regression result

	Coefficient	Std.Error	t	Sig
(Constant)	6,446	1,847	3,491	0,001
Halal Certification	0,162	0,114	1,425	0,157
Product quality	0,408	0,106	3,853	0,000
Word Of mouth	0,381	0,140	2,714	0,008
Adj. R ²	0,254			
F-Statistic	12,213			

Based on Table 3, the coefficient values for the variables are as follows: halal certification is 0.162, product quality is 0.408, and word of mouth is 0.381. The coefficient value of 0.162 for halal certification indicates that if the halal certification variable increases by one unit, consumer loyalty will increase by 0.162. Similarly, the coefficient value of 0.408 for product quality means that if the product quality variable increases by one unit, consumer loyalty will increase by 0.408. The coefficient value of 0.381 for word-of-mouth suggests that if the word-of-mouth variable increases by one unit, consumer loyalty will increase by 0.381.

The calculated F value is 12.213, which is greater than 2.14. This indicates that the variables of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth have a simultaneous influence on consumer loyalty. The Adjusted R-squared (R²) value is 0.254, demonstrating that 25.4% of the variation in consumer loyalty is explained by halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth. The remaining 74.6% is attributed to other variables not examined in this study.

The regression analysis results indicate that the significance value for halal certification regarding consumer loyalty is 0.157 (greater than 0.05), indicating no significant impact. However, product quality has a significance value of 0.000 (less than 0.05), proving a significant relationship with consumer loyalty. Additionally, word of mouth shows a significance value of 0.008 (less than 0.05), indicating a significant relationship with consumer loyalty.

Discussion

This study analyzes the influence of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth on consumer loyalty at V-Fie Bakery. The findings provide important implications for developing business strategies and significantly enhance customer loyalty. The results indicate that halal certification does not significantly affect consumer loyalty at V-Fie Bakery. This finding aligns

with previous research (Uyun et al., 2024), which suggests that halal certification does not directly strengthen consumer loyalty. However, this outcome contrasts with the study by Anwar and Hasib (2020), which found that halal labeling significantly influences customer loyalty. In the context of V-Fie Bakery, the lack of significant influence may stem from consumers not perceiving halal certification as a primary factor in their purchasing decisions. Nonetheless, businesses should prioritize halal certification as part of their corporate social responsibility and product standardization efforts. The minimal impact of halal certification indicates that consumers do not fully trust the authenticity of halal labels on bakery products.

The study confirms that product quality positively and significantly affects consumer loyalty. This finding is supported by Wahyu Wibowo et al. (2022), who emphasized the crucial role of product quality in fostering customer loyalty. However, this result contradicts research by Liana et al. (2024), which found that product quality does not always significantly affect consumer loyalty. At V-Fie Bakery, product quality—such as taste, appearance, and consistency—plays a key role in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty. Consumers tend to remain loyal when the products meet their expectations. Therefore, continuous improvement in product quality can enhance consumer trust and brand loyalty.

Additionally, this study demonstrates that word of mouth positively and significantly impacts consumer loyalty. This result aligns with Ramadhani et al. (2023), who argued that word-of-mouth recommendations enhance consumer trust and loyalty. However, it diverges from the findings of Ahmudin and Ranto (2023), who concluded that word of mouth does not always significantly influence loyalty. For V-Fie Bakery, word of mouth is a credible reference for consumers. Personal recommendations are perceived as more convincing than conventional advertising because they are based on real customer experiences. Therefore, marketing strategies that encourage word of mouth can effectively reinforce consumer loyalty. This study confirms that product quality and word of mouth are key factors in building consumer loyalty at V-Fie Bakery. Meanwhile, halal certification is not yet a primary driver of loyalty, although it remains important from a sustainable business perspective. These findings offer practical implications for businesses to focus on improving product quality and leveraging word of mouth as effective marketing strategies.

Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussions regarding the influence of halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth on consumer loyalty, it was concluded that Halal certification does not significantly affect consumer loyalty. In contrast, product quality and word of mouth significantly impact consumer loyalty. This indicates that consumer loyalty is primarily influenced by product quality and word of mouth, as customers place greater trust in these factors than in halal certification alone. To maintain consumer loyalty, it is recommended that V-Fie Bakery continue to build trust in the quality of its products. For future research, it would be beneficial to explore further the variables related to halal certification, product quality, and word of mouth. Expanding the research to include other factors influencing consumer loyalty, such as pricing and product innovation, could provide valuable insights.

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Additional information

Author details

Trunojoyo Madura University, Bangkalan, Indonesia

Putri Amalia & Taufiqur Rahman

Contributions

All authors contribute equally in the research and publication process

Corresponding author

Correspondence to Putri Amalia

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