



Halal Literacy Among College Students: A Quantitative Study of Understanding of Halal–Haram Consumption

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Abstract

The increasing global demand for halal products highlights the importance of halal literacy, particularly among young Muslim generations who play a strategic role as active consumers and agents of change. This study aims to analyze the level of halal literacy among university students in three dimensions: knowledge, awareness, and consumption behavior. A quantitative descriptive survey was conducted from May to June 2025 with 118 respondents from various study programs at UIN Raden Intan Lampung. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a Likert scale (1–5) and analyzed descriptively to identify patterns of understanding and practices. The findings reveal that students possess a high level of conceptual knowledge regarding halal-haram principles and show positive attitudes toward halal consumption, including the recognition of halal labels and awareness of non-food products such as cosmetics. Nevertheless, the use of digital tools, such as halal verification applications and direct inquiries to sellers, remains relatively low. Furthermore, the majority of respondents expressed the need for structured halal literacy education within the university environment. These results indicate that while cognitive aspects of halal literacy are well developed, affective and behavioral aspects require strengthening. The study suggests that universities should integrate digital-based learning strategies and promote halal lifestyle campaigns to cultivate a more comprehensive and practical understanding of halal literacy, thereby contributing to the development of an inclusive and sustainable halal ecosystem.

Keywords: Halal literacy, Consumption behavior, Digitalization, Halal lifestyle, University students

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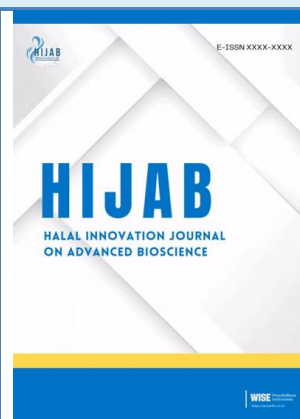
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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, Muslim consumers are increasingly exposed to a variety of products with unclear halal status. Halal literacy is crucial to ensure consumers are able to make consumption decisions in accordance with Islamic principles. In the past five years, the halal industry has shown significant growth, not only in Muslim-majority countries but also in the global market. The State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2023/2024 noted that global consumption of halal products and services has reached USD 2.29 trillion and is projected to continue growing until 2025 [1]. This fact confirms that the halal industry is not merely a religious necessity but has also become an integral part of the global lifestyle and economic system.

As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia plays a crucial role in the development of the halal industry. Demand for halal products and services continues to increase in line with government efforts to strengthen regulations and certification through the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH) [2]. However, the rapid development of products and services in the digital era presents new challenges. Younger generations, particularly students, are often confronted with products with unclear halal status, ranging from food and cosmetics to medicines and technology-based services. In this context, students occupy a strategic position as active consumers and agents of change with the potential to spread halal awareness to the wider community [3].

However, several studies have shown that there is still a gap in halal literacy among university students, particularly regarding the use of digital technology such as halal checking applications and understanding the complexities of halal certification [4]. Furthermore, the halal lifestyle phenomenon, which is increasingly popular among the younger generation, has not been fully accompanied by a comprehensive understanding of halal literacy [5]. Most students still view halal only as a food aspect, while other aspects such as cosmetics, Islamic finance, and digital consumption ethics receive less attention. Furthermore, halal literacy is often measured normatively without considering students' actual behavior in their daily lives.

Previous research has also focused more on the behavior of general consumers and business actors [6], while quantitative studies that specifically evaluate students' understanding of halal-haram consumption in the digital era are still very limited. This condition creates a research gap that is important to bridge, because there is no empirical evidence that describes students' knowledge, awareness, and behavior objectively. Therefore, this study aims to map students' halal literacy using a quantitative approach, so as to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent to which students understand, realize, and apply halal-haram principles in everyday consumption. Thus, this study is not only academically relevant, but also has practical implications for universities, policymakers, and stakeholders in supporting the realization of a more inclusive and sustainable halal ecosystem.

METHODS

This research was conducted in May-June 2025. This research used a quantitative approach with a descriptive survey method. This approach and method were chosen to evaluate the level of halal literacy of students, which includes aspects of knowledge, awareness, and behavior of halal-haram consumption in students' daily lives. Students who became the research population came from various study programs at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training and the Faculty of Science and Technology of UIN Raden Intan Lampung with a sample involving 118 respondents who met the participation criteria and completed the questionnaire completely [7]. Respondent criteria included active students aged 18-25 years and understanding the basics of halal-haram consumption. The instrument used in this study was an online questionnaire designed to measure three main aspects: knowledge of the concept of halal-haram, awareness of the importance of consuming halal products,

and actual behavior in choosing and using halal products. This questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms, and its distribution was carried out online through academic channels and social media to expand the reach of respondents [7]. The measurement scale used *Likert scale* 1–5, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, which included frequency and percentage calculations to describe the distribution of respondents and response patterns. A Likert scale of 1-5 was used to evaluate the level of understanding, awareness, and behavior of respondents regarding halal literacy in more detail. This method is in line with research showing that understanding and knowledge of the halal-haram concept have a significant influence on students' halal consumption behavior [7]. This study shows that students' halal product purchasing behavior is closely related to religiosity and knowledge of halal labels, which reflects a direct relationship with the results obtained from the questionnaire in this study. The use of the Likert scale has also been widely adopted in research on consumer perceptions and behavior, confirming that this technique is very effective in obtaining valid data [7].

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study present an overview of the level of halal literacy among university students, analyzed based on three main dimensions: knowledge, awareness, and consumption behavior. Analysis of data obtained from 118 respondents shows variations in halal literacy levels. Most students have a fairly good understanding of the halal-haram concept, but there are still differences in aspects of awareness and behavior in daily consumption practices. These findings provide an important foundation for understanding the extent to which halal literacy has been internalized among university students, as well as how knowledge, attitudes, and actions are interconnected in shaping consumption patterns in accordance with Islamic principles.

Descriptive analysis of the questionnaire using a Likert scale of 1-5 showed that the average score obtained was quite high. This reflects that students have a high level of knowledge and attitudes regarding halal consumption, which is in line with research results indicating that halal literacy is an essential component of consumer behavior [8].

Table 1. Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Presentation
Man	8	6,72%
Woman	110	92,44%
Total	118	100%

Based on Table 1, the distribution of research respondents shows that the majority of respondents were female students, namely 110 people or 92.44% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, the number of male respondents was only 8 people or 6.72%. This imbalance in distribution shows that most of the halal literacy data in the study mostly represents the perspectives of female students. The significantly higher participation of female students compared to males may indicate several factors, including a greater interest in halal topics and higher responsiveness to surveys, which have been reported in previous studies [9]. This could be caused by several factors, such as the dominance of female students in certain study programs, a greater interest in halal lifestyle topics, or a higher level of responsiveness to surveys among women. Previous research has shown that female students tend to be more involved in academic activities and surveys, which may be influenced by higher social support that encourages their participation [10]. In addition, an academic

environment that supports female participation in research activities may also explain this phenomenon [11].

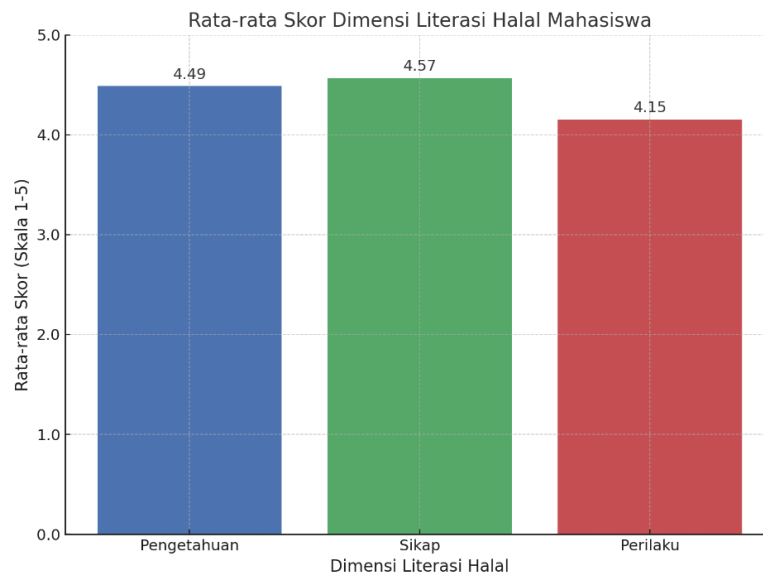


Figure 1. Average Score of Each Dimension of Students' Halal Literacy

Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents stated that they fully understand the meaning of the terms halal and haram according to Islamic teachings (mean = 4.90), and are able to distinguish between halal and non-halal foods (mean = 4.89). Understanding of halal labels issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) or the Indonesian Food and Drug Authority (BPJPH) was also relatively good (mean = 4.81). Furthermore, awareness of haram ingredients in cosmetics (mean = 4.70) and gelatin derived from pork or beef (mean = 4.74) indicates a relatively high level of non-food halal literacy. In terms of behavior, students demonstrated a positive attitude toward halal consumption. Most stated that they routinely check halal labels (mean = 4.58), feel disturbed when purchasing non-halal products (mean = 4.73), and try to avoid products containing alcohol or ingredients from haram animals (mean = 4.78). Furthermore, most respondents also stated that the campus should provide halal literacy education (mean = 4.76).

However, although students' conceptual understanding of halal appears encouraging, there are several areas that show limitations. The indicator for using applications or websites to check the halalness of products only received an average of 3.66, which indicates that students still need to increase their activeness in seeking information about the halalness of products more actively [13]. Questions to sellers about the halal status of products also remained low with an average of 3.62. This indicates that although knowledge exists, precautions and involvement in obtaining more in-depth information have not been embedded in students' daily behavior [10]. Furthermore, it indicates the need for socialization and training programs to improve students' understanding and skills in using these applications effectively [14].

Halal literacy education campaigns on campus should also be able to increase student interaction not only in theory, but also in practice. Survey results show that the majority of students support the need for halal literacy education on campus, with an average score reaching 4.76, which indicates a strong demand for halal literacy programs in academic environments [15]. This is in line with research results showing that students usually use digital media optimally to support learning activities, including information literacy [16][17].

The literacy context in higher education is becoming increasingly important, particularly in enhancing students' ability to access and apply relevant information in both their academic and professional practice. Literacy programs provided by libraries and higher education institutions that focus on teaching digital information resources and reference management are crucial to strengthening this interaction [17][18]. By implementing these programs, students will not only have a strong theoretical understanding of halal literacy, but also the practical competencies needed to apply it in their daily lives.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the level of halal literacy among students is in the high category, especially in basic knowledge and attitudes towards halal products. This finding is in line with previous research which shows that the younger generation of Muslims has a high awareness of halal consumption as part of their religious identity and modern lifestyle. This is supported by research that has discussed halal literacy among students, such as that expressed by Elkasysyaf and Hartati, who stated that halal product literacy has a significant influence on product purchasing decisions among students [19]. In a broader context, knowledge of halal-haram terms and certification institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH) reflects the effectiveness of delivering halal information in the campus environment, through various mechanisms such as the formal curriculum and daily social interactions [12]. Halal literacy and religiosity contribute significantly to students' decisions in purchasing halal products [20]. In addition, the importance of knowledge about halal products influences purchasing decisions, which is a tangible form of the great awareness of the younger generation of Muslims regarding halal consumption [21]. Factors influencing student literacy regarding halal product assurance laws reflect the need for a deeper understanding of halal regulations in the context of higher education [22].

However, there is a gap in students' informative behavior, as evidenced by the low utilization of technology such as halal applications and direct communication with sellers. This reflects the need for a more applicable and digital-based educational approach to improve halal literacy among students [7]. Furthermore, increasing the utilization of social media is also important, considering that low scores in halal community participation indicate the potential for literacy growth through platforms that are familiar to students [13]. The use of social media can also serve as an important tool to increase student participation and engagement in the halal community. The introduction and effective use of social media platforms can increase interaction and expand the reach of halal information. Social media plays a significant role in shaping brand image and increasing consumer satisfaction among the Muslim community [23][24]. The current low scores in halal community participation indicate that there is still much potential to improve the interactive features that can be used on these platforms.

Campuses as higher education institutions have a significant responsibility in facilitating halal literacy through organizing seminars, training, and collaboration with the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH) and the Halal Food and Processed Food Assessment Institute of the Indonesian Ulema Council (LPPOM MUI) [25]. Students have a good understanding of the halal concept, but the affective and psychomotor aspects of halal literacy need to be improved so that the integration of this concept in everyday life becomes stronger [26]. This is in line with the opinion in this study which emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach in halal education so that all aspects of teaching can be aligned with halal literacy [27].

Strategic recommendations for improving halal literacy include strengthening the use of technology in education. Innovations in interactive learning methods can optimize students' understanding of halal literacy, as demonstrated by Mesta et al., 2022, who demonstrated the positive

impact of using interactive methods in educational activities [28]. Furthermore, more effective campaigns on halal lifestyles are needed to raise awareness of the importance of halal information in people's daily decisions [29]. This is important considering that halal literacy not only contributes to religious understanding but also plays a role in the development of the broader halal industry in Indonesia [25].

Thus, although students' cognitive abilities are considered good, efforts to strengthen their affective and psychomotor skills are needed to ensure halal literacy is truly internalized in their daily lives. Increasing the use of technology, interactive education, and strengthening halal lifestyle campaigns are recommended strategies going forward.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, university students demonstrated a high level of halal literacy, particularly in terms of conceptual knowledge and attitudes toward consuming products that comply with Islamic law. However, active behavior in seeking halal information, such as using checking applications or asking sellers, remained relatively low. This indicates that understanding alone is not enough to encourage consistent, informative behavior. Therefore, efforts are needed to strengthen the affective and psychomotor aspects through more applied and technology-based learning approaches. Universities have a crucial role in developing comprehensive and integrated halal literacy education programs, including through collaboration with relevant institutions. Strategies to strengthen the use of digital technology and promote a halal lifestyle on campus are expected to foster a halal ecosystem that is inclusive, sustainable, and relevant to the needs of the younger generation.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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