

**ANALYSIS OF HALAL AWARENESS AND FREE HALAL CERTIFICATION SERVICES ON THE INTEREST OF MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMES) IN OBTAINING HALAL CERTIFICATES (A STUDY AT THE MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, YOGYAKARTA CITY)**

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**Abstract**

This study purposes to analyze the influence of Halal Awareness and free halal certification services (SEHATI) on the interest of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in obtaining halal certification in Yogyakarta City. The examination utilized a quantitative approach with 100 MSME respondents. Data were gathered through questionnaires and interpreted using multiple linear regression with SPSS software. The outcome demonstrates that Halal Awareness has a positive and significant partial effect on MSME interest, suggesting that understanding the importance of halal products enhances their willingness to pursue halal certification. Additionally, SEHATI services also have a positive and significant partial impact, demonstrating that this program successfully addresses cost and technical barriers previously faced by business actors. Simultaneously, these two variables significantly contribute to increasing MSME interest in obtaining halal certification, with SEHATI services having a more dominant influence. This study concludes that a combination of internal halal awareness and external support, such as SEHATI services, can enhance MSME participation in halal certification. It is recommended that related institutions expand socialization efforts and simplify access to the program, while future research could broaden the scope of regions and variables to provide more in-depth insights.

**Keywords:** Halal Awareness, Free Halal Certification Services (SEHATI), Interested MSMEs

## INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in Indonesia's economy. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, MSMEs contribute up to 60.51% of Indonesia's gross domestic product (GDP) and are capable of absorbing more than 97% of the national workforce. MSMEs also serve as the backbone of the economy, particularly in creating jobs, reducing poverty, and supporting equitable economic distribution across various regions. However, amid increasing global and domestic market competition, MSME actors face numerous challenges, especially in enhancing competitiveness and meeting the ever-evolving market demands. The Muslim-majority population in Indonesia presents a significant opportunity for the country to become a leading global producer of halal products and services (Larasati & Yasin, 2024).

One of the crucial elements currently receiving primary attention from MSME actors is the assurance of product halalness. A halal certificate is not merely a symbol; it also serves as a quality standard that provides consumers, especially in Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, with a sense of safety and trust. By obtaining a halal certificate, MSMEs can expand their market reach, enhance customer trust, and access greater trade opportunities both domestically and globally. On the other hand, public awareness of the importance of halal products continues to grow, driven by increasingly intensive halal promotions through various media channels. As stated by Rido & Sukmana (2021), since the enactment of the Halal Product Assurance Law (UU JPH), MSMEs have faced a new challenge in the form of the obligation to obtain halal certification for every product sold. However, halal certification is fundamentally a requirement that supports the development and progress of their businesses.

The halal label provides beneficial impacts for business actors, as it can strengthen customer confidence in products that carry the label (Chanifan Ibad Fajar Herlambang & Siti Azizah, 2024). Moreover, as stated by Khairunnisa et al. (2020), having the label can also increase profits.

**Table 1.**  
**Total MSMEs Registered with Halal Certificates**  
**by Subdistrict in Yogyakarta City for the 2021–2024 Period**

No	Subdistrict	Number Registered with Halal Certificate
1.	Umbulharjo	1.248

2.	Kotagede	893
3.	Tegalrejo	820
4.	Gondokusuman	635
5.	Mantrijeron	643
6.	Mergangsan	589
7.	Jetis	488
8.	Kraton	470
9.	Wirobrajan	466
10.	Danurejan	446
11.	Ngampilan	424
12.	Pakualaman	269
13.	Gondomanan	254
14.	Gedongtengen	254
Total	7.919	

Source: <https://bpjph.halal.go.id/>

Referring to the table above, it can be seen that many MSMEs are still not halal certified based on their domicile, indicating a disparity in awareness or capacity among MSMEs in different subdistricts to manage halal certification. Therefore, a more comprehensive study is needed to understand MSME actors' perceptions or views regarding the implementation of halal certification (Qomariyah, 2023).

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), whether in the form of individuals or small business entities, face fairly complex problems in obtaining halal certification. One of the crucial obstacles is the high costs required for laboratory testing, which ultimately burdens their financial condition. Similarly, according to the BPJH performance report (Dr. Taufik Hidayat, 2023), the main challenges in registering for halal certification include the uneven number of applicants across provinces, the lack of halal facilitators in various regions, and the limited human resources at BPJPH for document verification, outreach, and education. This has resulted in the suboptimal implementation of the program across Indonesia. In response to these issues, the government has provided support through the Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) program, as regulated by Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance.

Yogyakarta, known as a city of culture and tourism, is also one of the centers for MSME development in Indonesia. A wide variety of local products, ranging from culinary, crafts to beauty products, serve as a significant strength for MSMEs in this city. With this potential, the free halal certification program is expected to help MSME actors in Yogyakarta

improve the quality of their products while meeting the growing market demand for halal products. However, despite the launch of this program, the level of participation among MSME actors in Yogyakarta is still relatively low. This indicates a gap between the existence of the program and the interest or concern of MSME actors in utilizing it.

Halal certification is a crucial step for MSME actors to ensure that the products they sell comply with applicable halal regulations. A halal certificate not only provides certainty and trust to consumers but also opens up significant potential in both domestic and global markets. The presence of halal certification allows Muslims to better understand and recognize the halal status of the food they consume (Risyalidi, 2021). With the implementation of regulations requiring food and beverage products to bear halal certification, MSME actors are faced with the challenge of complying with these provisions. However, to obtain halal certification, MSME actors must undergo a process that involves comprehensive knowledge of what constitutes a halal product and how to meet these criteria.

Halal awareness plays a key role in encouraging MSME actors to apply for halal certification. Halal awareness is the understanding of a Muslim regarding halal principles, including the process, as well as the belief that consuming halal food holds significant value in their life (Sri Ernawati & Iwan Koerniawan, 2023). Halal awareness refers to the extent to which business actors understand the importance of the halal status of their products, from the raw materials, production process, to compliance with Sharia. The higher the level of halal awareness possessed by MSME actors, the greater the likelihood they will apply for halal certification. This also includes knowledge of the benefits that can be gained by having a halal certificate, such as increased consumer trust and product competitiveness in the market. In other words, public understanding of the halal concept plays an important role in building halal awareness among them (Maryam & Sumar'in, 2022)

The interest of MSME actors in obtaining halal certification is strongly influenced by the level of halal awareness they possess. Business actors who are already aware of the importance of halal certification tend to be more interested in applying for the certificate. A person's actions are highly influenced by their interest, and the interest to act is shaped by attitudes and subjective norms related to the action. The more positive the attitude toward an action and the stronger the supporting social norms, the greater the person's interest in performing it (Adiyanto & Amaniyah, 2023). Similarly, as stated by Noerhartati &

Jatiningrum (2021), when individuals have a high level of interest, they tend to engage in certain behaviors.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Halal Awareness**

The term "halal" is derived from the Arabic phrase "*halla yahillu hallan wa halalan*," which means something that is permitted, allowed, or made lawful. This term is broad and encompasses everything, from actions, words to other aspects (Mairinda, 2021). Meanwhile, halal awareness is the level of understanding possessed by business actors regarding the production and sale of halal products following Islamic teachings. Halal awareness can also be defined as the degree of consumer understanding of food that meets halal standards (Prastiwi & Auliya, 2016). The factors influencing halal awareness, according to Widyaningrum (2019), include: religion or belief, halal certification, openness/transparency, health reasons, and education. Meanwhile, the indicators of halal awareness according to Triana (2021) and Sari (2024) are: knowledge about halal, awareness of halal, priority in purchasing halal products, and product safety assurance.

### **Halal Certification Services**

According to the KBBI (Indonesian Dictionary), the word "*layanan*" is derived from the root "*layan*," which refers to the act or system of serving or providing assistance. The term "service" is derived from the word "*layan*," meaning to help or provide everything needed by others to perform a service action (Sari, 2024). Service is a process of meeting needs through activities carried out by another party (Wijaya & Prasetyo, 2023).

Tjiptono (2016) reveals that perceived service and expected service are two key elements that influence service quality. According to Tjiptono (2016), the five characteristics of service quality—tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy have an impact on both the expected and perceived services.

### **Free Halal Certification**

According to Sari (2024), halal certification ensures that Muslim customers can select food that aligns with religious law and is safe. The inclusion of a halal label serves to protect domestic products from competition with foreign products due to free trade (Nurwandri et al., 2023).

The government's support through Law Number 33 of 2014 introduced the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI), which started in 2023 with a quota of 1 million for MSMEs, and in 2024, it will expand to 1 million quotas across Indonesia. The SEHATI program is managed by BPJPH, which recruits PPPH (Halal Product Process Assistants) to support MSMEs in obtaining SEHATI. MSMEs are spread across Indonesia, from cities and regencies to remote villages, amounting to millions.

To accelerate the halal certification process for micro and small business actors (UMK), BPJPH conducts recruitment for Halal Product Process Assistants (P3H) through a Training of Trainers (TOT) activity. This program is implemented by providing training to institutions or organizations that have been appointed by BPJPH, involving 100 prospective P3H assistants from lecturers of public/private universities, as well as leaders of Islamic organizations and Islamic religious institutions (Supriyanto & Amany, 2022).

### **Interest**

Interest is a cognitive, emotional, and physical drive that focuses a person's attention on a particular item, ensuring that Muslim customers choose food that is safe and in accordance with religious regulations. An additional source of motivation to carry out the intended action is interest (Wardany, 2016). Interest is a drive that focuses an individual's attention on certain items, combining physical, emotional, and cognitive components. Furthermore, interest also serves as the main driver to carry out the desired action (Kotler, 2014).

The indicators used to measure interest, according to Denny Riyanto et al. (2024), are attraction to the object of interest, desire, belief, feelings of pleasure, and the tendency to use.

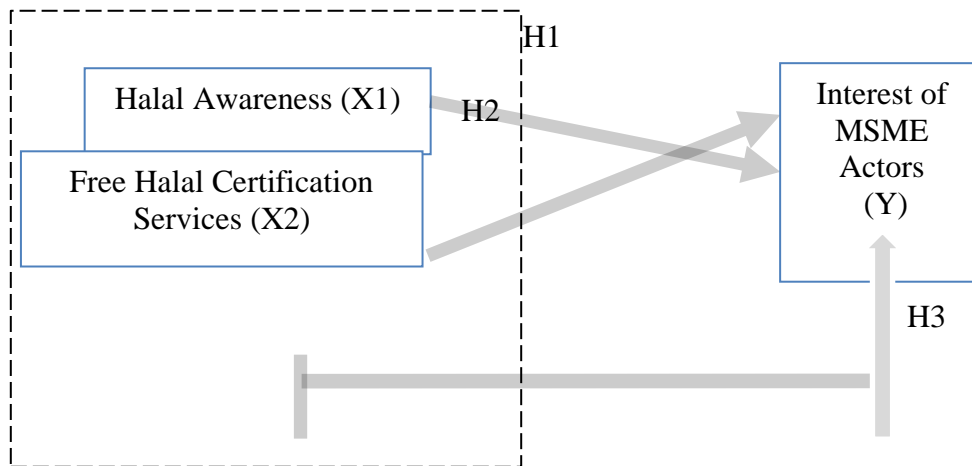
### **MSMEs**

Tambunan (2009) emphasizes that Law Number 20 of 2008 on MSMEs describes Micro Enterprises as productive businesses owned by individuals or organizations that meet legal requirements. Small Enterprises are independent, profitable businesses, not related to medium or large enterprises, and comply with legal provisions. Medium Enterprises, on the other hand, are independent, profitable businesses, not branches or subsidiaries of other businesses, with annual income or net worth as determined by regulations.

In general, according to Respatiningsih (2011), MSME businesses are classified into: a) trade businesses, b) agriculture businesses, c) industrial businesses, and d) service businesses.

### Conceptual Framework

**Figure 1.**  
**Conceptual Framework**



Source: EDU Consultant / <https://konsultanedu.id>

### RESEARCH METHOD

The quantitative research method will be applied in this study. (Sugiyono, 2017) states that this is a technique for collecting data on beliefs, psychology, opinions, characteristics, and relationships between variables from past or present events to test hypotheses based on sampled data.

Google Forms and documentation will be used to distribute surveys as a data collection strategy in this research. The population in this study consists of MSME actors in Yogyakarta City. According to data from the BAPPEDA of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, the number of MSMEs in Yogyakarta City as of November 29, 2024, is 4,118,000, with 460 MSMEs having registered for halal certification. Therefore, the population for this study is the number of MSME actors who have not registered for the Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) in Yogyakarta City.

According to (Arikunto, 2017), a sample functions as a representation of the size, value, and characteristics of a population. Meanwhile, this study involves 100 respondents who form the sample for the research, determined using the Slovin formula.

The Likert scale concept is used in the data measurement scale analysis of this study. According to (Sugiyono, 2019), "the Likert scale is used to measure the behavior, opinions, and perceptions of individuals or groups of people about social phenomena." Validity and reliability tests are used in the methodology for testing the research instruments. Descriptive analysis and traditional assumptions, including multiple linear regression analysis, normality tests, multicollinearity tests, heteroscedasticity tests, and hypothesis testing (coefficient of determination, t-test, and F-test), are used in the data analysis techniques.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the research conducted, 100 respondents were obtained. Based on the categorization of respondents, 100% own a business, 77% of respondents are female, and 23% are male. Additionally, based on the data gathered, the majority of respondents are between the ages of 40 and 59, indicating a productive age group, which means the respondents belong to Generation X with an average income of 2 million rupiahs. In general, this shows that technology in the form of Android devices is still used primarily for communication and has not been fully optimized to enhance businesses and digital startups. Therefore, the role of business actors is crucial, and guidance from relevant parties is needed. The human resources of business actors must be well-managed to enable business growth. This serves as an update in this study and has relevance to previous research (Sri Ernawati & Iwan Koerniawan, 2023), (Qomariyah, 2023), and (Prasojo et al., 2023).

The categories based on monthly income show that 66% of respondents earn above Rp 2,000,000, while the remaining respondents earn between Rp 3,000,000 and above Rp 6,000,000. Meanwhile, 77% of respondents have been running their businesses for over 3 years, and 99% of respondents are already registered for halal certification, while the remaining 1% are registered but have not yet received the free halal certification.

### **Instrument Test**

#### **Validity Test**

Validity refers to how well a questionnaire is able to accurately measure what it is intended to measure (Ovan & Saputra, 2020).

**Table 2.**  
**Validity Test**

Variable	Item	r-count	r-table	Information
Halal Awareness (X1)	X1.1	.631	.1966	Valid
	X1.2	.561		
	X1.3	.794		
	X1.4	.773		
	X1.5	.718		
Free Halal Certification Services (SEHATI)	X2.1	.711	.1966	Valid
	X2.2	.883		
	X2.3	.936		
	X2.4	.905		
	X2.5	.916		
Interest of MSME Actors	Y.1	.848	.1966	Valid
	Y.2	.880		
	Y.3	.842		
	Y.4	.756		
	Y.5	.794		

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

Based on Table 2, all the items of the questions from each variable in this study are considered valid because the calculated correlation value (r-count) exceeds the table value (r-table).

### Reliability Test

The reliability test is used to evaluate the extent to which a measurement tool can be relied upon and remain consistent when subjected to repeated testing (Ovan & Saputra, 2020).

**Table 3.**  
**Reliability Test**

No	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Minimum Cronbach's Value	Information
1	Halal Awareness (X1)	0.737	0.60	Reliable
2	Free Halal Certification Services (SEHATI)	0.923	0.60	Reliable
3	Interest of MSME Actors	0.879	0.60	Reliable

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

Based on the results in the table above, it can be stated that the variables Halal Awareness (X1), Free Halal Certification Service (SEHATI) (X2), and the interest of MSME

actors (Y) show Cronbach's Alpha values for each variable exceeding 0.60, which means they are reliable.

### Classical Assumption Test

#### Normality

The normality test is conducted to determine whether the data in this study follow a normal distribution or not (Wijaya & Prasetyo, 2023).

**Table 4**  
**Normality Test Result**

Unstandardized Residual	
N	100
Test Statistic	.076
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.170 <sup>c,d</sup>

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

The results above show that the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) The value is 0.170, which exceeds the research significance level of 0.05, meaning that it can be concluded that the data in this study follow a normal distribution.

#### Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity is a term used to illustrate a situation where independent variables have a strong correlation or close relationship (Wijaya & Prasetyo, 2023).

**Table 5**  
**Multicollinearity Test Results**

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Conclusion
Halal Awareness	.592	1.688	Avoid multicollinearity
Free Halal Certification Services	.592	1.688	Avoid multicollinearity

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

According to (Ghozali, 2016), the criteria for making decisions based on tolerance and VIF values are to avoid multicollinearity among independent variables if the tolerance value exceeds 0.10 or the VIF value is less than 10. In the results of this study, the tolerance value for the Halal Awareness (X1) variable is  $0.592 > 0.10$ , and the VIF value is 1.688, indicating that multicollinearity is avoided. Similarly, for the Free Halal Certification Service (SEHATI) (X2) variable, the tolerance value is  $0.592 > 0.10$ , and the VIF value is 1.688, meaning that multicollinearity is avoided.

#### Heteroscedasticity

Heteroscedasticity testing is conducted to determine whether the residuals in the regression model show any inconsistency in variance between one observation and another

(Wijaya & Prasetyo, 2023). In this case, the researcher uses the Glejser test. Based on the Glejser heteroscedasticity test, if the significance value (Sig) for all explanatory variables is greater than 0.05 in the statistical analysis, it is considered that heteroscedasticity is avoided.

**Table 6.**  
**Heteroscedasticity Test Results**

Variable	Sig.	Conclusion
Halal Awareness	.592	Avoid heteroscedasticity
Free Halal Certification Services	.592	Avoid heteroscedasticity

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

In this study, the Sig value for the Halal Awareness (X1) variable is  $0.701 > 0.05$ , meaning that heteroscedasticity is avoided. Similarly, for the Free Halal Certification Service (SEHATI) (X2) variable, the Sig value is  $0.590 > 0.05$ , indicating that heteroscedasticity is avoided.

**Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

(Ghozali, 2021) explains that multiple linear regression analysis is a method used to measure how much influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable using the following formula:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + e \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

**Table 7.**  
**Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	Constanta	3.313	1.505		2.202	0.030
	Halal Awareness	.349	0.089	0.314	3.909	0.000
	Free Halal Certification Services	.488	0.070	0.556	6.926	0.000

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

In this research, the multiple linear regression equation obtained is:

$$Y = 3.313 + 0.349 \text{ Halal Awareness} + 0.488 \text{ SEHATI Services} + e$$

**Coefficient of Determination (R2)**

The coefficient of determination is used to assess the extent of the correlation between several variables (Ghozali, 2021).

**Table 8**  
**Results of the Determination Coefficient (R2)**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>				
Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R2 Adjusted	Std. Estimation Error
1	0.794 <sup>a</sup>	0.630	0.622	1.68957

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

According to the results obtained, it was found that R Square was 0.630 and all independent variables in this research jointly contributed 63% to the dependent variable, while 37% was influenced by other factors.

**Partial Test (t-Test)**

**Table 9**  
**Partial Test Results (t-Test)**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig
1	(Constant)		2.202	.030
	Halal Awareness	.314	3.909	.000
	Free Halal Certification Services	.556	6.926	.000

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

If the sig. value < 0.05 or t-count > ttable, then the independent variable (X) affects the dependent variable (Y) (Ghozali, 2021), the t-table in this study obtained a value of 1.984.

Based on the results above, the t-value of 3.909 > 1.984 means that halal awareness (X1) significantly influences the interest of MSME actors (Y). The t-value of Free Halal Certificate Service (SEHATI) (X2), where 6.926 > t-table value of 1.984, means that the free halal certificate service (SEHATI) (X2) also significantly influences the interest of MSME actors (Y).

**Simultaneous Test (F Test)**

**Table 10**  
**Simultaneous Test Results (F Test)**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	471.289	2	235.644	82.547	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	276.901	97	2.855		
	Total	748.190	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Interest of MSME Actors

b. Predictors: (Constant), Healthy Service, Halal Awareness

Source: SPSS Output Results, 2025

If  $f\text{-count} > f\text{-table}$ , then there is a simultaneous influence between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2021). The  $f\text{-table}$  in this study obtained a value of 3.09. Based on the table above,  $f\text{count } 82,547 > f\text{-table } 3.09$ , and the significance value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ . This means that the independent variables simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on the interest of MSME actors

### **The Influence of Halal Awareness on the Interest of MSMEs**

Based on the results of the  $t\text{-test}$ , Halal Awareness has a positive and significant effect on the interest of MSME actors to obtain halal certification, with a  $t\text{-value}$  of 3.909 exceeding  $t\text{-table}$  or with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  so that the hypothesis of the halal awareness variable shows that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, which means that halal awareness has a partial effect on the interest of MSME actors. These results indicate that increasing awareness of MSME actors regarding the importance of halal products is directly proportional to their increasing interest in registering products according to halal standards. MSME actors who have an understanding of the benefits of halal certification, such as increasing consumer trust and product competitiveness, are more motivated to comply with halal regulations.

This is in line with research (Sari, 2024) and (Larasati & Yasin, 2024), which in their research also explained that halal awareness has a significant influence on the interest of MSME actors. However, this is different from research (Sri Ernawati & Iwan Koerniawan, 2023), which explains that halal awareness does not have a significant effect on the interest in purchasing MSME products in Bima City.

Halal awareness plays an important role as an internal factor that drives the actions of MSME actors. Knowledge of raw materials, production processes, and product distribution according to Islamic law creates a sense of responsibility to provide halal products. In addition, the increasing market demand for halal products also strengthens this awareness, so that MSMEs feel the need to immediately take care of halal certification to maintain their competitiveness

### **The Influence of Free Halal Certificate Services (SEHATI) on the Interest of MSMEs**

The t-test results show that SEHATI Services have a positive and significant effect on the interest of MSME actors, with a t-value of 6.926 exceeding t-table or with a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.0$  so that the hypothesis of the halal awareness variable shows that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that the free halal certificate service (SEHATI) has a partial effect on the interest of MSME actors. This means that this program is very effective in encouraging business actors to obtain halal certificates. SEHATI Services offers a practical solution in the form of a free certification process equipped with assistance, so that MSME actors who previously faced cost constraints or a lack of knowledge are more motivated to participate in this program.

This research is in line with research (Sari, 2024), which explains in its research that the Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) service has a significant effect on the interest of MSME actors. This result is also consistent with the theory proposed by Tjiptono (2016), where the perceived service quality is considered good if it meets expectations. The perceived service quality is considered optimal if it exceeds customer expectations. Conversely, if the level of service received does not meet expectations, the perceived service quality is low.

The effectiveness of the SEHATI program is also supported by easy access and transparency of the process, which provides a sense of trust to business actors. In addition, support from the government through socialization and assistance strengthens the trust of MSME actors to utilize this service. By eliminating cost barriers and process complexity, SEHATI has succeeded in encouraging more MSMEs to comply with halal regulations while increasing their competitiveness in the market.

### **The Influence of Halal Awareness and Free Halal Certificate Services (SEHATI) on the Interest of MSMEs**

Together, Halal Awareness and SEHATI Services have a significant influence on the interest of MSME actors, as evidenced by the f-count value, which is greater than f-table in the simultaneous test, namely  $82.547 > f\text{-table } 3.09$ , and the sig. value.  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so that the hypothesis of the halal awareness variable and free halal certificate services (SEHATI) shows that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted, meaning that both variables simultaneously influence the interest of MSME actors. These results indicate that both variables complement each other in encouraging MSMEs to obtain halal certificates. Halal Awareness creates

internal encouragement from business actors, while SEHATI provides external support that facilitates the certification process.

As research (Sari, 2024) explains that halal awareness and Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) services simultaneously or simultaneously have a significant effect on the interest of MSME actors. In addition, this research is also in line with the theory (Kartono, 1998), which states that interest is a temporary tendency that is very focused on things that are considered important. Interest involves affective or emotional, cognitive, and volitional components that are always present and are directly related to personality.

However, SEHATI Service has a more dominant influence than Halal Awareness. This shows that although halal awareness is important, practical factors such as the availability of easy and free services are more effective in encouraging MSMEs to act. Therefore, an integrated approach between halal education and technical support, such as SEHATI, can be an optimal strategy to increase MSME participation in the halal certification program.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the research results above, it can be concluded that Halal Awareness partially has a positive and significant effect on the interest of MSMEs to obtain halal certification. This shows that the higher the understanding of business actors regarding the importance of product halalness, the greater their desire to take care of halal certification. In addition, the free halal certification service (SEHATI) also partially has a positive and significant effect on the interest of MSMEs. This program has succeeded in overcoming cost barriers that were previously the main obstacle for business actors to obtain halal certificates. Simultaneously, Halal Awareness and SEHATI services have made a significant contribution to increasing the interest of MSMEs in taking care of halal certification. This free service program is an external factor that supports the internal awareness of business actors about the importance of having a halal certificate.

Based on the results of this research, several suggestions can be given to related agencies and further researchers. For BPJPH and Kemenag, it is recommended to increase socialization and education regarding the benefits of halal certification for MSMEs, recruit more halal product process assistants (PPH) to accelerate certification, and optimize the

SEHATI program flow by utilizing digital technology to make it more easily accessible to business actors. Meanwhile, further researchers are advised to expand the scope of research by examining the influence of halal certification programs in other areas to identify other factors that influence MSME participation. In addition, including other variables such as consumer trust in halal products or the impact of halal certification on increasing business turnover can provide more comprehensive insights. A qualitative approach can also be considered to dig deeper into the experiences and obstacles faced by MSMEs in the halal certification process, so that research results can provide more applicable recommendations for all related parties.

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