

**GLOBAL HALAL LABEL LITERACY:
EFFORTS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING AND HALAL AWARENESS IN THE
GLOBAL ERA**

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ABSTRACT This community engagement activity aims to enhance global halal label literacy among students at ThammiIslam Foundation School through educational outreach programs. Global halal literacy has become increasingly important in the era of globalization due to the rapid development of the cross-border halal industry, which introduces diverse halal standards and certification systems across countries. This activity employed an interactive educational approach through presentations, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and visual learning media to explain global halal concepts, differences in halal certification among countries, and the importance of halal labels in international trade. The evaluation was conducted through participatory observation and reflective assessment of students' understanding during the program. The results showed an improvement in students' comprehension of global halal concepts, particularly regarding the significance of halal certification, variations in halal labels across countries, and awareness in selecting halal products in the context of international trade. The use of visual media and interactive discussions also proved effective in increasing students' participation and enthusiasm throughout the activity. In addition, the findings indicated that global halal literacy among students still requires continuous strengthening through sustainable educational programs. In conclusion, educational outreach on global halal labels is effective in improving students' understanding and awareness of halal as an important aspect of social, economic, and global trade life. Therefore, continuous halal literacy programs are recommended to support the development of a globally halal-aware younger generation within educational environments.

KEYWORDS: *Education; Globalizataion; Halal Literacy; Students; Youth Awareness.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the global halal industry over the last two decades has demonstrated significant growth in economic, social, and regulatory aspects, not only in Muslim-majority countries but also in Muslim-minority countries such as Thailand, Japan, and South Korea. The halal industry has expanded beyond the food and beverage sector into tourism, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and Islamic finance. Recent studies indicate that the global halal industry has become one of the major contributors to global economic growth and is projected to exceed USD 2 trillion in market value (Noviyanti & Hakim, 2025). This development reflects the transformation of halal from a purely religious obligation into a global lifestyle associated with quality assurance, safety, hygiene, and ethical production standards.

In several non-Muslim-majority countries, halal has also become part of national economic strategies to attract Muslim tourists and global consumers. Thailand, for example, has shown rapid development in halal food production, halal tourism, and halal product exports. Through institutions such as the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT) and the Halal Science Center, Thailand has developed internationally recognized halal certification systems. This phenomenon demonstrates that halal literacy is not only relevant to Muslim communities but also important within the broader context of global trade and international economic competition.

Despite the rapid growth of the halal industry, the harmonization of global halal certification standards remains a major challenge. Different countries apply different certification systems, procedures, institutions, and halal criteria (Faridah, 2019). These differences have created fragmentation in global halal standards and inconsistencies in halal certification recognition among countries, potentially causing consumer confusion and barriers in international trade (Fataron, 2024). Furthermore, previous studies have highlighted that the lack of harmonized halal standards affects the efficiency and credibility of global halal certification systems (Othman & Ibrahim, 2025). In this context, halal label literacy has become increasingly important to help consumers understand the diversity of halal certification systems and identify credible halal products in the global market (Trisista et al., 2024).

Halal literacy refers not only to understanding the concepts of halal and haram but also to the ability to recognize halal certification mechanisms, differentiate halal labels among countries, and understand the legal, social, and economic implications of halal products in international trade. However, several empirical studies show that public understanding of halal literacy remains relatively low. Research by Anwar et al. (2022) revealed that the Islamic economic literacy index related to the

halal industry in Indonesia is still below the expected level. This condition indicates a gap between the rapid growth of the halal industry and society's understanding of global halal systems.

Among younger generations, particularly students, understanding of global halal certification systems is still limited. Many students tend to understand halal only in a normative and religious sense without comprehending procedural aspects, differences in international halal standards, and challenges in global halal certification harmonization. Previous studies also demonstrate that halal literacy significantly influences consumer behaviour, including purchasing decisions and awareness of halal-certified products (Surbakti et al., 2025). Therefore, strengthening halal literacy among students is important to support the development of a sustainable halal ecosystem from both consumer and producer perspectives.

The target population of this community engagement activity was students at Thammiislam Foundation School in Thailand. The students were selected because they represent younger generations living within an increasingly globalized environment where cross-border halal products and international halal labels are widely encountered. However, based on preliminary observations and interactive discussions conducted before the activity, many students still had limited understanding regarding differences in halal labels among countries, international halal certification institutions, and the importance of halal literacy in global trade. Existing educational activities related to halal knowledge within the school environment mainly focused on religious perspectives and had not yet comprehensively addressed global halal systems and international halal standards.

Several institutions and researchers have attempted to improve halal awareness through halal campaigns, seminars, and educational programs. However, most activities focus on halal consumption awareness rather than global halal literacy and international certification systems. Therefore, this community engagement activity was designed to strengthen students' understanding of global halal labels through interactive educational outreach involving presentations, visual learning media, group discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. The activity emphasized active participation and interaction between facilitators and students to encourage critical understanding and practical awareness regarding global halal systems.

Based on these conditions, this community engagement activity aimed to improve global halal label literacy among students at Thammiislam Foundation School. The activity specifically focused on increasing students' understanding of international halal certification systems, differences in halal labels among countries, and the importance of halal literacy in supporting informed consumer behaviour and global halal awareness. Through this activity, students are expected to become more

aware of the importance of halal literacy as part of social, economic, and global trade life and to contribute to the development of a globally halal-aware younger generation.

2. METHOD

This community engagement activity employed an educational and participatory approach through counseling, interactive discussions, and awareness programs to improve students' understanding of global halal label literacy. The approach was selected because it enables direct interaction between facilitators and participants, allowing students to actively engage in the learning process and develop practical understanding regarding global halal certification systems and halal product awareness.

The activity was conducted in April 2026 at Thammislam Foundation School, Thailand. The target beneficiaries of the program were students of Thammislam Foundation School who were considered to be in an important stage of developing conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and awareness regarding halal consumption and global halal issues. A total of [jumlah peserta] students participated in the activity.

Prior to the implementation of the program, preliminary observations and informal discussions with students indicated that their understanding of halal concepts was still primarily limited to normative religious perspectives. Most participants had limited knowledge regarding differences in halal certification systems among countries, the diversity of international halal labels, and the role of halal certification in global trade and consumer protection. In addition, educational activities related to halal issues within the school environment had mainly focused on religious teachings and had not yet addressed the global dimensions of halal literacy comprehensively.

Based on these conditions, the activity was designed to strengthen students' understanding of global halal literacy through several educational stages. The implementation procedures included:

- a. Delivering educational materials on global halal concepts and the development of the international halal industry;
- b. Explaining halal certification systems and institutions in various countries, including differences in certification procedures and halal standards;
- c. Comparing international halal labels and logos from several countries to improve students' ability to identify credible halal certifications; and
- d. Conducting interactive discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and simulations using halal logos found on biscuit packaging products to enhance students' practical understanding of halal labels in everyday life.

The activity was carried out using visual presentation media, product packaging examples, and participatory learning methods to encourage active interaction between facilitators and students. The program was conducted from February 2025 to June 2026, consisting of needs assessment, preparation, fundraising, implementation of community engagement activities, follow-up programs, publication, reporting, and evaluation stages. The main educational outreach activity at Thammislam Foundation School was conducted in April 2026 through material presentations, discussions, simulations, and reflection sessions.

The expected result of this community engagement activity was an improvement in students' understanding of global halal concepts, international halal certification systems, and awareness in identifying halal labels on products circulating in the global market. Furthermore, the activity was expected to strengthen students' awareness of the importance of halal literacy as part of social, economic, and global trade life.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Halal refers to everything permitted according to Islamic law, including the substance, process, and method of acquisition. In the modern context, halal is no longer limited to normative religious aspects but has evolved into a system encompassing production, distribution, and consumption on a global scale. From a legal perspective, halal has both normative (sharia-based) and administrative (certification-based) dimensions. The state acts as a regulator in ensuring legal certainty for halal products through official certification institutions. This reflects a shift from halal as a religious value to halal as a global regulatory regime.

Globalization has also expanded the meaning of halal into a standard of quality, safety, and ethical production. Consequently, halal products are consumed not only by Muslims but are also preferred by non-Muslim consumers because of their association with cleanliness and product safety. Halal certification is a legalization process confirming the halal status of products by authorized institutions. In regulatory theory, halal certification can be understood as a state instrument for ensuring legal certainty and consumer protection (Baldwin et al., 2011), while also increasing product competitiveness. However, in the global era, the absence of a single international halal standard creates regulatory fragmentation.

This fragmentation is a consequence of the absence of a single global authority in the halal certification system. This condition reflects an imbalance between global market integration and regulatory harmonization (Giddens, 1990). While products move globally, halal standards remain national and fragmented. Each country has different certification institutions, audit procedures, and

halal criteria. This finding is consistent with Fataron (2024), who stated that differences in halal standards among countries remain a major challenge in the international recognition of halal certification. This phenomenon creates challenges related to mutual recognition among halal certification bodies. In practice, certification recognition has become a key factor in international halal trade. Therefore, halal certification functions not only as religious legitimacy but also as an instrument of global trade and economic diplomacy.

From a literacy perspective, literacy is not merely the ability to read and understand information but also includes the critical ability to evaluate information and make decisions (UNESCO, 2017). Thus, halal literacy can be interpreted as an individual's ability to understand, assess, and utilize information related to halal products in a global context. Research shows that halal literacy significantly influences consumer behavior, including increasing trust in halal products and purchasing decisions (Surbakti et al., 2025). Therefore, halal literacy affects not only religious aspects but also economic and consumer behavior aspects.

Before the implementation of the counseling activity, most students at Thammislam Foundation School had limited understanding regarding international halal certification systems and differences in halal labels among countries. Students generally understood halal only from a normative religious perspective without understanding administrative procedures, international certification institutions, and the role of halal certification in global trade. In addition, students had limited access to educational materials discussing global halal literacy and international halal standards.

After participating in the community engagement activity, students demonstrated improved understanding regarding differences in halal certificates and halal logos from various countries. This counseling activity increased students' awareness that products circulating in the global market originate from different countries with diverse certification systems and halal standards. Students also became more aware of the importance of understanding halal labels when selecting products in the globalization era.



Figure 1. Comparison of Halal Logos in Several Countries

Students showed high enthusiasm, particularly during explanations comparing halal products from Thailand and Indonesia using visual approaches, such as halal logos found on biscuit packaging from both countries. The activity documentation and comparison images demonstrated the use of visual media and interactive community engagement sessions. Students actively participated in discussions, asked questions regarding international halal labels, and engaged in simulations identifying halal logos on product packaging. This indicates that participatory and contextual learning approaches encouraged students to become more actively involved in the educational process.

This finding indicates that visual and contextual approaches are highly effective in improving halal literacy. This aligns with experiential learning theory proposed by Kolb (1984), which emphasizes that effective learning occurs through direct experience and concrete visualization, making concepts easier to understand than abstract learning. Therefore, visual media such as comparisons of halal logos on product packaging helped students concretely understand differences in halal standards among countries.



Figure 2. Implementation of the Global Halal Label Literacy Outreach Program

Several obstacles were identified during the activity, including students' limited prior knowledge, limited access to global halal information, and the absence of integration of international halal literacy into formal education curricula. Nevertheless, the activity demonstrated positive impacts on students' understanding and awareness regarding global halal systems. Students showed improved critical awareness in evaluating halal labels and understanding the importance of halal certification credibility in international trade.

This activity also demonstrated the adoption of new knowledge by the students regarding global halal literacy. Before the activity, students generally assumed that halal labels across countries represented identical certification systems and standards. After the educational sessions, students became more aware that halal certification involves legal, administrative, and regulatory processes that differ among countries. This indicates that the program successfully broadened students' perspectives regarding halal literacy beyond normative religious understanding.

In the globalization era, halal literacy has become an important competency for younger generations. Therefore, integrating halal literacy into formal education is necessary. This activity also implies that halal literacy should be introduced from an early age because young people have a strategic role in the global halal ecosystem. Accordingly, halal education should incorporate global perspectives and not be limited only to local or normative aspects.

4. CONCLUSION

The community engagement activity on global halal label literacy at Thammislam Foundation School successfully improved students' understanding of global halal concepts, international halal certification systems, and differences in halal labels among countries. Before the activity, students generally understood halal only from a normative religious perspective. After participating in the

counseling and interactive educational sessions, students demonstrated better awareness regarding the importance of halal certification, the diversity of halal standards across countries, and the role of halal labels in global trade and consumer protection. The participatory methods used in this activity, including visual learning media, discussions, and simulations using halal logos on product packaging, proved effective in addressing students' limited understanding and encouraging active participation throughout the program.

This activity also provided positive impacts by strengthening students' critical awareness in identifying halal-certified products and understanding the credibility of international halal labels. Therefore, global halal literacy should continue to be strengthened through sustainable community engagement activities and the integration of halal literacy into formal and non-formal educational programs. Such efforts are important to support the development of a globally halal-aware younger generation capable of responding to the challenges of globalization and the international halal industry.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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