

Halal Certification and MSME Performance: A Bibliometric Perspective

ABSTRACT - This study examines the evolving scientific landscape of halal certification and its implications for the performance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) within the expanding global halal economy. The growing importance of halal certification has transformed it from a religious compliance mechanism into a strategic instrument associated with consumer trust, market access, supply chain integrity, and business competitiveness. This research aims to synthesize the intellectual development, thematic evolution, and research trends related to halal certification and MSME performance through a bibliometric approach. Using a quantitative design, the study analyzed 598 documents indexed in the Scopus database from 2005–2024. Data collection employed the query Title-Abs-Key (“halal certification” AND (“MSME” OR “SME” OR “performance”)), while Biblioshiny and VOSviewer were utilized to map citation patterns, annual growth, collaboration networks, thematic clusters, and intellectual structures. The findings reveal that halal certification research has grown significantly, reflected in an annual growth rate of 28.37%, with Malaysia and Indonesia emerging as the dominant research hubs. The thematic focus has shifted from normative and theological discussions toward practical business dimensions, including consumer behavior, halal supply chain management, food safety, digital traceability, marketing, and economic competitiveness. The study also highlights the increasing integration of technology, such as blockchain systems, within halal certification mechanisms. These findings indicate that halal certification contributes not only to regulatory compliance but also to strengthening MSME competitiveness, improving consumer confidence, and expanding market opportunities. The study offers strategic implications for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and MSME actors in developing sustainable halal ecosystems and strengthening the global competitiveness of halal-certified enterprises.

ABSTRAK - Sertifikasi Halal dan Kinerja UMKM: Perspektif Bibliometrik. Penelitian ini mengkaji perkembangan kajian ilmiah mengenai sertifikasi halal serta implikasinya terhadap kinerja Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM) dalam konteks ekonomi halal global yang terus berkembang. Sertifikasi halal tidak lagi dipahami semata sebagai bentuk kepatuhan religius, melainkan telah bertransformasi menjadi instrumen strategis yang berkontribusi pada peningkatan kepercayaan konsumen, perluasan akses pasar, penguatan integritas rantai pasok, dan peningkatan daya saing usaha. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mensintesis perkembangan intelektual, dinamika tema penelitian, serta arah kajian terkait sertifikasi halal dan kinerja UMKM melalui pendekatan bibliometrik. Metode yang digunakan bersifat kuantitatif dengan menganalisis 598 dokumen yang terindeks dalam basis data Scopus pada periode 2005–2024. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kueri Title-Abs-Key (“halal certification” AND (“MSME” OR “SME” OR “performance”)), sementara analisis dilakukan menggunakan Biblioshiny dan VOSviewer untuk memetakan pola sitasi, pertumbuhan publikasi, jaringan kolaborasi ilmiah, kluster tematik, serta struktur intelektual penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pertumbuhan kajian sertifikasi halal yang sangat pesat, dengan tingkat pertumbuhan tahunan sebesar 28,37%, serta menempatkan Malaysia dan Indonesia sebagai pusat utama penelitian global. Fokus kajian juga bergeser dari pendekatan normatif menuju isu-isu aplikatif, seperti perilaku konsumen, manajemen rantai pasok halal, keamanan pangan, ketertelusuran digital, pemasaran, dan integrasi teknologi, termasuk blockchain. Temuan ini menegaskan peran strategis sertifikasi halal dalam meningkatkan daya saing dan kinerja UMKM serta memperluas peluang pasar global.

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INTRODUCTION

The expansion of the global halal industry reflects broader shifts in consumer awareness, ethical governance, and market regulation. Growing demand for halal products has positioned halal certification as an important institutional mechanism that signals product integrity and builds consumer trust beyond its religious foundations (Komite Nasional Keuangan Syariah, 2018). Within this evolving landscape, halal assurance increasingly influences market competitiveness and cross-border trade. In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, halal certification has moved from a voluntary practice to a regulatory requirement aimed at ensuring consumer protection and product authenticity (Nahlah et al., 2023; Syafrida, 2023). However, certification uptake among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) remains limited, despite their central role in the national economy (Messer et al., 2017). This discrepancy highlights persistent structural challenges, particularly the complexity of technical standards and administrative procedures faced by small-scale producers (Yuanitasari et al., 2023).

Academic discourse on halal certification has expanded from normative and theological perspectives toward more integrative analyses encompassing regulation, supply chains, and socio-economic outcomes (Shalahuddin et al., 2024). Recent studies further examine the economic and social implications of certification for MSMEs (Saputri & Astutik, 2024), while also linking halal standards to broader concerns related to sustainability and ethical transparency. Within this literature, halal certification is often framed as a strategic resource that enhances brand credibility, strengthens consumer trust, and facilitates market access for MSMEs (Harahap & Zulvianti, 2024; Purnomo, 2023; Utami & Fetrina, 2024; Sukoso et al., 2022).

At the same time, significant barriers continue to shape MSME perceptions of halal certification. High compliance costs, procedural complexity, and limited technical capacity remain dominant constraints (Jamaluddin et al., 2022; Fathoni et al., 2024). Policy-oriented studies emphasize the importance of institutional support through financial facilitation, subsidies, and effective dissemination of certification-related information (Nahlah et al., 2023; Harahap & Zulvianti, 2024). Technological approaches, particularly blockchain-based traceability systems, have also been proposed as mechanisms to improve transparency and coordination within MSME halal supply chains (Bux et al., 2022; Karyani et al., 2024).

Despite increasing scholarly attention, the relationship between halal certification and MSME performance remains conceptually fragmented. While some studies present certification as a catalyst for market expansion and profitability, others highlight its financial and administrative burden, often without clear short-term returns. Previous research has not sufficiently synthesized these perspectives, leaving limited clarity regarding the conditions under which halal certification enhances MSME competitiveness.

Addressing this gap, this study aims to map the academic landscape of halal certification and its relationship with MSME performance. Specifically, it seeks to identify key research themes, influential publications, and emerging trends through a bibliometric analysis of 598 documents. The study also focuses on uncovering the main drivers of purchasing behavior and sales growth, as well as the primary enabling and constraining factors affecting certification adoption. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of the halal certification literature by

providing a structured overview of existing research and identifying areas that require further investigation. In practical terms, the study offers insights for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and MSME actors in designing strategies that support certification adoption and enhance competitiveness within the global halal market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Foundation of Halal Certification

Halal certification represents a formal mechanism to ensure that products comply with Islamic dietary laws and ethical standards throughout the production process. Initially rooted in theological discourse, the concept has evolved into a multidimensional framework encompassing regulatory compliance, quality assurance, and supply chain integrity (Shalahuddin et al., 2024). Contemporary interpretations emphasize that halal certification extends beyond religious observance, functioning as a signaling mechanism that conveys credibility, safety, and ethical transparency to consumers.

From an economic perspective, halal certification can be understood through the lens of information asymmetry, where certification reduces uncertainty between producers and consumers regarding product attributes. This aligns with signaling theory, which posits that credible certification enhances consumer confidence and influences purchasing decisions (Saputri & Astutik, 2024). As such, halal certification operates not only as a compliance tool but also as a strategic instrument within competitive markets.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

To understand the relationship between halal certification and MSME performance, this study adopts the Resource-Based View (RBV) as its theoretical foundation. RBV emphasizes that a firm's competitive advantage is rooted in its possession and management of resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). Rather than focusing solely on external market dynamics, RBV highlights the importance of internal capabilities in shaping firm performance and long-term competitiveness.

Within the MSME context, halal certification extends beyond compliance and functions as an intangible strategic resource. It operates as a credible signal of product quality and religious compliance, reducing information asymmetry between producers and consumers (Tieman, 2020). This signaling role is particularly relevant in halal markets, where product attributes cannot always be directly verified by consumers.

Halal Certification as a Strategic Capability

Halal certification contributes to the development of firm-level capabilities that support competitive positioning. When MSMEs obtain certification, they embed standardized procedures, quality control mechanisms, and compliance practices into their operational systems. Over time, these practices evolve into organizational capabilities that are difficult to replicate.

This transformation allows MSMEs to strengthen consumer trust and cultivate brand loyalty, both of which are essential for market expansion. Although the certification process may involve

initial financial and administrative costs, the long-term integration of halal standards enhances organizational efficiency and differentiation. As a result, certified MSMEs are better positioned to compete in increasingly crowded markets, achieving improvements in both financial and non-financial performance indicators. From this perspective, halal certification represents not only a compliance requirement but also a strategic asset that shapes firm behavior and outcomes.

The Landscape of Halal Industry Research

The academic discourse on the halal industry has expanded considerably over the past decade, reflecting its increasing economic and social relevance. Bibliometric studies identify halal certification as a central theme within this field, alongside related areas such as halal supply chains, halal tourism, and Islamic business ethics (Haleem et al., 2020; Syahputra et al., 2025). These themes demonstrate the multidimensional nature of halal research, which spans regulatory frameworks, operational processes, and ethical considerations.

Recent studies indicate a growing emphasis on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as key contributors to the global halal ecosystem (Izzah et al., 2023). This shift reflects recognition of the role of MSMEs in driving production and innovation within halal markets. Despite these developments, much of the existing literature remains focused on identifying general trends. There is still limited exploration of the deeper intellectual structures that shape the field, including the relationships among authors, journals, and thematic clusters, particularly in relation to halal certification and MSME operations.

Halal Certification and MSME Performance

Earlier studies predominantly framed halal certification as a regulatory or theological obligation. Over time, this perspective has evolved to recognize its strategic implications for business performance. Research suggests that certification can act as a catalyst for business growth and competitive advantage (Aneesh & Siddiq, 2024). More recent studies highlight a shift in focus from issues related to accessibility toward advanced topics such as halal traceability and the integration of digital technologies, including blockchain systems (Karyani et al., 2024).

Despite these advancements, empirical findings on the relationship between halal certification and MSME performance remain fragmented. Sector-specific evidence, such as studies in the frozen food industry, indicates that certification enhances competitive advantage through improved supply chain resilience (Tumiwa et al., 2023). However, these findings are often limited to financial outcomes and do not fully capture broader performance dimensions. There remains limited understanding of how certification influences other aspects, including market penetration, operational efficiency, and innovation capabilities across diverse MSME sectors.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a bibliometric research design to systematically examine the body of literature related to halal certification and its relationship with MSME performance. The use of bibliometric analysis is grounded in the need to address the fragmented nature of existing studies, which often examine financial, operational, and marketing dimensions in isolation. Such

fragmentation limits a comprehensive understanding of how halal certification contributes to MSME competitiveness.

Bibliometric analysis enables the synthesis of a large volume of scientific publications into structured insights. Through the identification of thematic clusters and intellectual linkages, this approach facilitates the detection of underexplored areas within the literature. In this context, co-occurrence and citation mapping are utilized to provide a macroscopic perspective on research developments. This approach allows for the identification of key variables, dominant themes, and potential gaps, particularly those that may influence MSME performance but remain insufficiently addressed in prior studies.

Data Collection Method

The bibliographic data for this study were obtained from the Scopus database in December 2024. Scopus was selected due to its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed academic publications across multiple disciplines, ensuring the inclusion of high-quality and relevant sources.

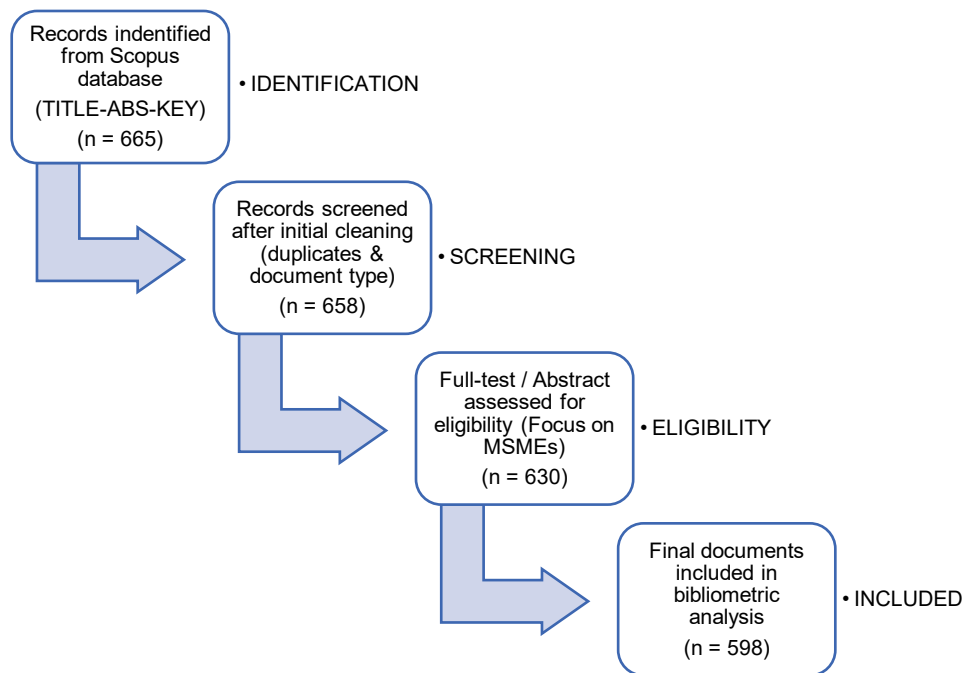


Figure 1. Flow Chart of Study Selection Process

To minimize the risk of omitting relevant studies, the search strategy extended beyond article titles to include abstracts and keywords. The search was conducted using the TITLE-ABS-KEY field, which allows for a broader capture of literature related to the research topic. The search query was constructed to reflect the intersection of three primary domains: halal certification, business performance, and MSMEs. The Boolean query used in this study is presented as follows:

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TITLE-ABS-KEY ("halal certification" OR "halal certificate" OR "halal labeling") AND ("MSME" OR "SME" OR "small business" OR "performance" OR "competitiveness")
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The initial search yielded 665 documents. A structured filtering process was then conducted to ensure the relevance and quality of the dataset:

1. Technical filtering excluded 28 documents categorized as notes, editorials, and short surveys, as these formats generally lack comprehensive empirical or theoretical contributions.
2. Seven duplicate records were identified and removed using the Bibliometrix R-package. Third, a manual screening of abstracts was performed to assess topical relevance.
3. During this stage, 32 documents were excluded because their focus was limited to laboratory-based chemical analysis, such as porcine DNA detection, without addressing aspects related to management, organizational behavior, or business performance.

Following this multi-stage filtering process, a final dataset of 598 documents was established. These documents were subsequently exported in BibTeX format for further analysis. The study selection process is illustrated in Figure 1, which outlines the stages of identification, screening, and inclusion.

Data Analysis Method

The analysis was conducted using Biblioshiny, the web-based interface of the Bibliometrix R-package, in combination with VOSviewer. These tools support comprehensive bibliometric analysis and visualization of scientific data.

The analytical procedure consists of two main components. The first is performance analysis, which examines trends in annual scientific production and citation impact. This analysis provides insights into the growth and influence of research on halal certification and MSME performance over time. The second component is science mapping, which explores the intellectual structure of the field. This includes the analysis of co-authorship networks, country-level collaborations, and keyword co-occurrence patterns. These mapping techniques reveal relationships among researchers, institutions, and research themes, allowing for the identification of dominant clusters and emerging topics within the literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Main Bibliometric Information

Bibliometric analysis demonstrates that halal certification has developed into a rapidly expanding and influential field of study. The high annual growth rate, relatively recent publication age, and extensive collaboration patterns indicate that this area has gained substantial scholarly attention in recent years. The predominance of peer-reviewed journal publications further reflects the academic rigor and relevance of the research produced. In the context of halal certification and MSME performance, these findings suggest the existence of an increasingly mature body of knowledge that can support MSMEs in improving competitiveness, operational quality, and market expansion. The dataset retrieved from the Scopus database consisted of 598 documents published between 2005 and 2024. The main bibliometric characteristics are presented in Table 1.

The annual growth rate of 28.37% reflects a substantial increase in scholarly interest in halal certification studies. The average document age of 4.87 years indicates that the majority of publications are relatively recent and aligned with contemporary developments in the halal industry, including regulatory transformation, digitalization, and supply chain innovation. International collaboration accounted for 24.75% of publications, illustrating the global and interdisciplinary nature of halal certification research.

Table 1. Main Information of the Dataset

Description	Results
Timespan	2005–2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc.)	305
Documents	598
Annual Growth Rate	28.37%
Document Average Age	4.87 years
Average Citations per Document	12.73
Author Keywords	1,515
International Co-authorships	24.75%

The publication profile also shows that journal articles dominated the dataset, accounting for 396 documents, followed by conference papers (79 documents) and book chapters (65 documents). This composition confirms that the field is strongly supported by peer-reviewed academic contributions.

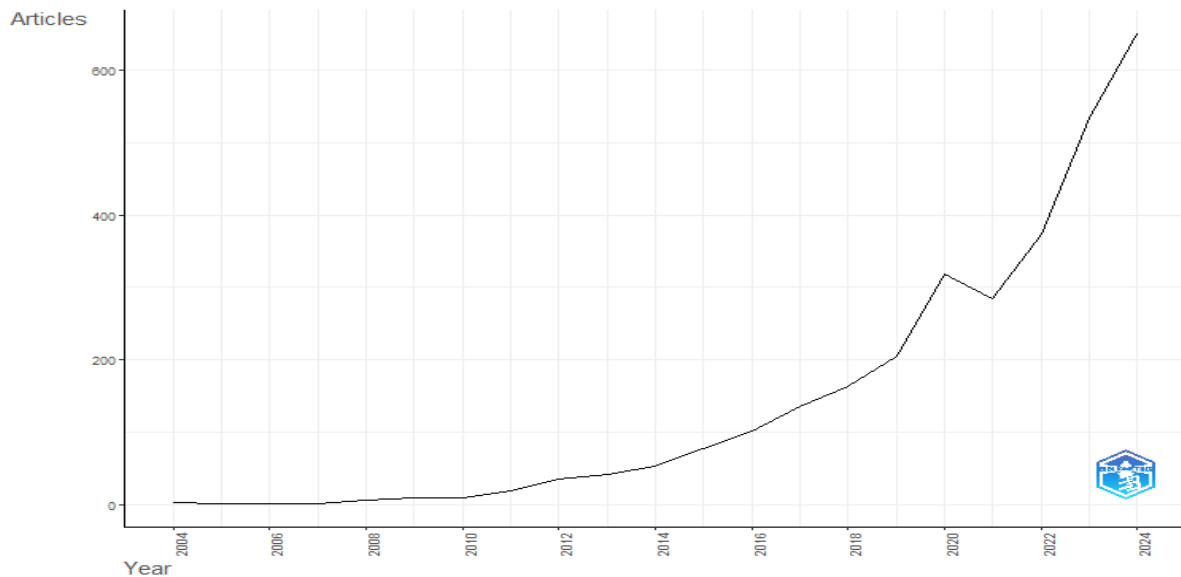


Figure 2. Annual Research Growth
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Figure 2 illustrates the annual growth of publications related to halal certification and MSMEs between 2004 and 2024. The trend demonstrates a continuous increase in research output over time, despite temporary fluctuations. The number of publications rose from only three articles in 2004 to a total of 598 documents in 2024. This upward trajectory indicates that halal certification has become an increasingly important topic within academic discourse.

A slight decline appeared after 2019, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic period. This decrease may be associated with institutional transitions in Indonesia, especially the transfer of halal certification authority from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) to the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH). Nevertheless, the overall trend remained positive, reflecting sustained academic interest and the continuing evolution of the halal industry in response to technological advancement and market expansion.

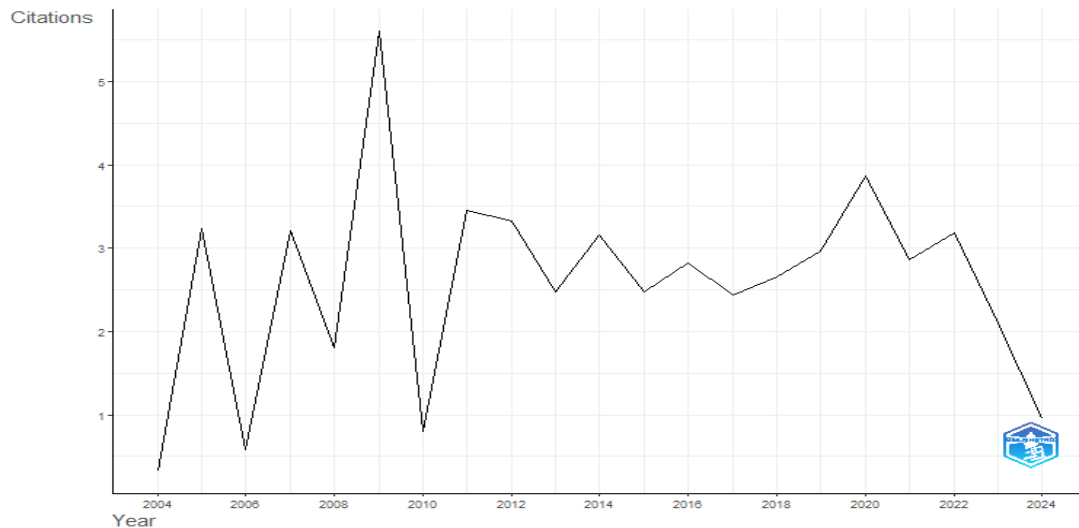


Figure 3. Average Citations Per Year
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Figure 3 presents the average number of citations per year from 2004 to 2024. Citation growth continued to increase throughout the observation period, indicating that studies on halal certification have attracted considerable academic attention. The increasing citation rate suggests that halal certification research has become increasingly relevant across disciplines such as economics, management, consumer behavior, supply chain management, and Islamic business studies.

The positive citation trend also reflects the expanding influence of halal certification literature in shaping future research directions. The growing number of citations confirms that this topic is not only academically significant but also closely connected to practical challenges faced by MSMEs in halal markets.

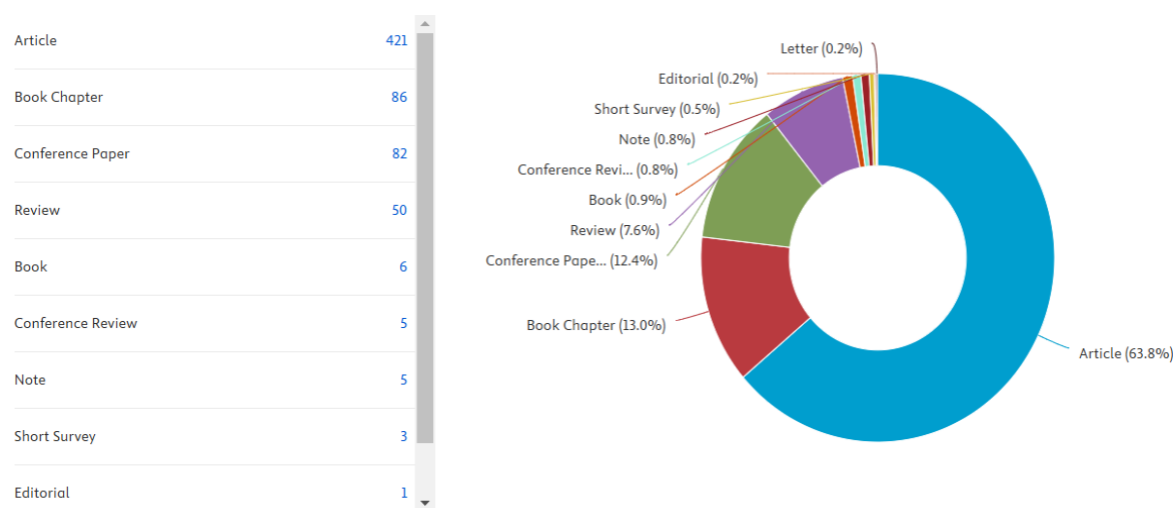


Figure 4. Documents By Type
(Source: Scopus Database)

Figure 4 shows the distribution of publications according to document type. Journal articles constituted the largest proportion of publications, followed by conference proceedings and book chapters. This pattern indicates that halal certification research has achieved a high level of academic legitimacy and methodological rigor.

Although MSMEs were not always explicitly identified as the primary research focus, many studies examined issues directly related to MSME development, including consumer behavior, marketing strategy, operational management, supply chain governance, and product quality assurance. Consequently, the literature provides several important contributions for MSMEs, including:

1. Evidence-based understanding of halal certification processes, opportunities, and barriers;
2. Strategic insights into improving competitiveness through halal certification;
3. Better understanding of Muslim consumer preferences and purchasing behavior that may influence MSME sales performance.

Geographical Distribution and Collaboration

The geographical distribution of halal certification research demonstrates a strong concentration in Southeast Asia, particularly in Malaysia and Indonesia. These two countries emerged as the dominant contributors to global halal certification scholarship.

Table 2. State of Global Scientific Production

Region	Frequency
Malaysia	1,895
Indonesia	1,633
China	348
India	307
United Kingdom	292

The dominance of Malaysia and Indonesia reflects their strategic position within the global halal economy. Both countries possess large Muslim populations, strong halal regulatory frameworks, and expanding halal industries. Their leadership in scientific production also indicates the presence of robust academic ecosystems dedicated to halal studies.

The analysis of corresponding authors' countries revealed a considerable number of Multiple Country Publications (MCP), suggesting that halal certification research has developed through extensive international collaboration. Scholars from Southeast Asia frequently collaborated with researchers from countries such as the United Kingdom, China, Australia, and Pakistan, indicating that halal certification has evolved into a globally interconnected research domain.

Figure 5 identifies the most productive authors within the dataset. Among 7,990 identified authors, Khan et al. (2019) ranked first with 32 publications and a fractionalized contribution score of 9.141667. Other influential scholars included Zailani (2020), A. Haleem (2020), Ali (2017) and Talib et al. (2016).

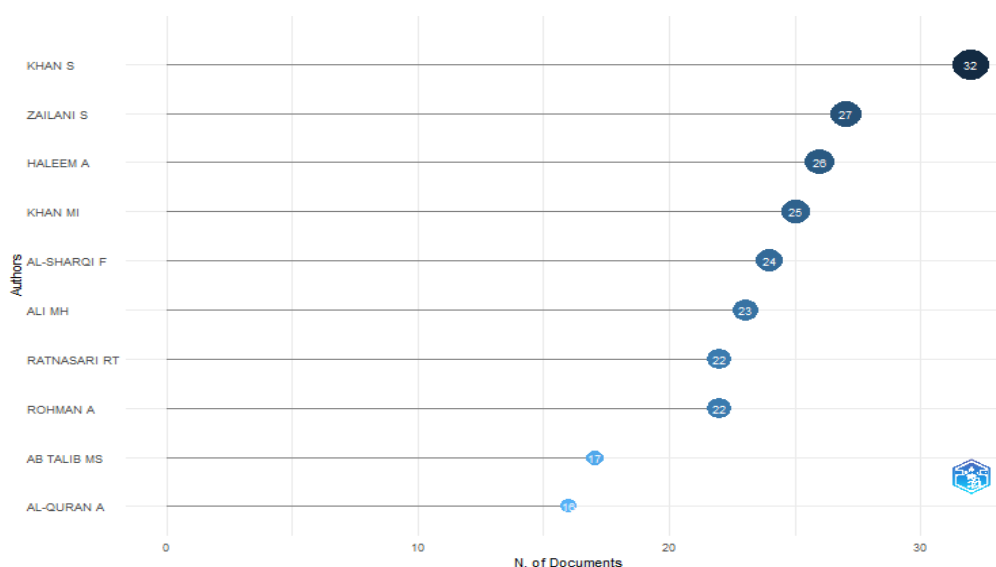


Figure 5. Most Relevant Authors

The diversity of influential scholars indicates that halal certification studies have become multidisciplinary in nature, encompassing areas such as supply chain management, marketing, Islamic economics, consumer studies, and quality assurance. These collaborative scholarly networks have generated a substantial knowledge base that MSMEs can utilize to improve product credibility, strengthen consumer trust, and expand access to halal markets.

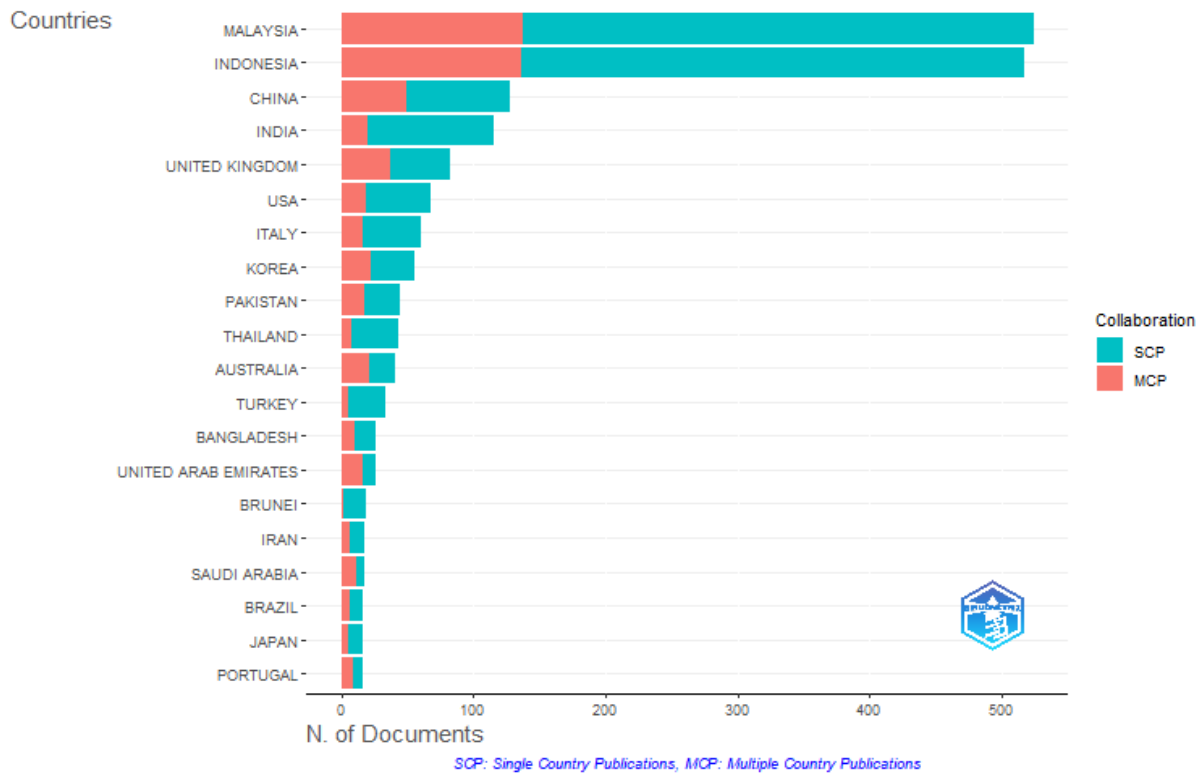


Figure 6. Corresponding Author’s Country
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Figure 6 distinguishes between Single Country Publications (SCP) and Multiple Country Publications (MCP). Malaysia and Indonesia recorded the highest publication outputs, each exceeding 500 publications. Other countries, including China, India, the United Kingdom, the United States, Pakistan, and South Korea, also contributed significantly to the literature.

The presence of extensive MCP patterns demonstrates that halal certification research has developed through cross-border academic collaboration. Such collaboration allows the exchange of regulatory perspectives, technological approaches, and market insights across different national contexts. For MSMEs, this global research environment offers valuable references for adapting halal certification practices to international market requirements.

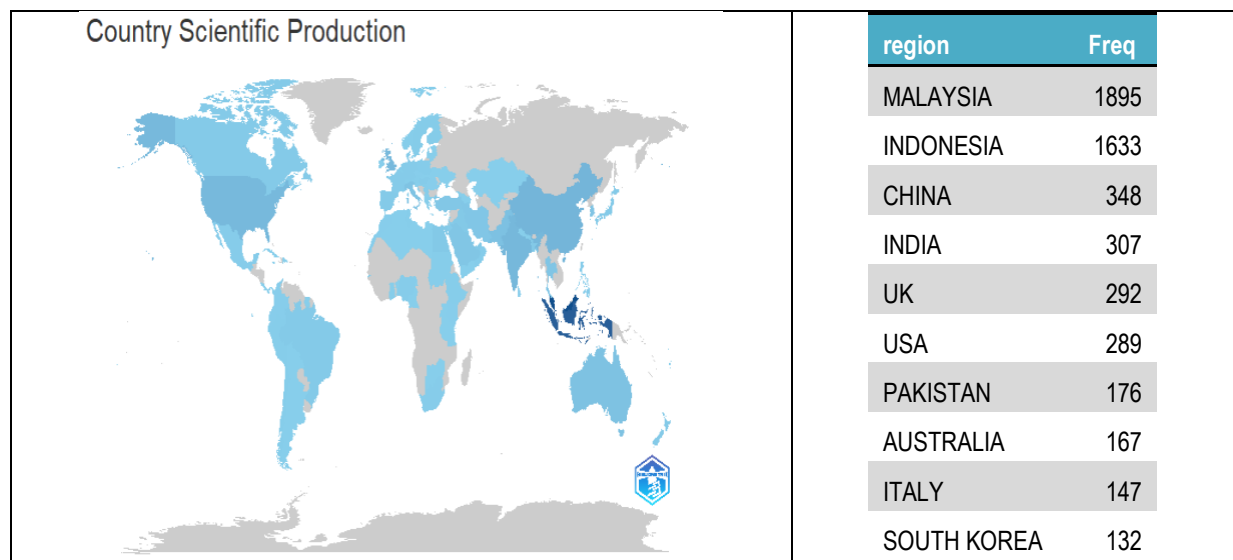


Figure 7. State Of Scientific Production

(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Figure 7 further confirms the dominance of Malaysia and Indonesia in halal certification research. The contribution of 103 countries illustrates the global reach of the field and highlights the growing international relevance of halal studies. The concentration of publications in Southeast Asia reflects both the economic significance of halal industries in the region and the increasing policy emphasis on halal governance.

From the perspective of MSME development, this expanding international literature provides important insights into consumer protection, regulatory compliance, and market opportunities. MSMEs operating within halal industries may benefit from these findings to improve competitiveness and adapt to evolving market expectations.

Figure 8 demonstrates the evolution of research themes in halal certification studies. Earlier discussions focused primarily on Sharia compliance and certification procedures, whereas recent studies increasingly address consumer behavior, food safety, supply chain management, sustainability, and digitalization. This thematic shift indicates that halal certification is no longer viewed solely as a religious requirement. Instead, it has become associated with broader business performance dimensions, including operational efficiency, product quality, market trust, and competitiveness. For MSMEs, these developments suggest that halal certification may function as both a compliance mechanism and a strategic business asset.

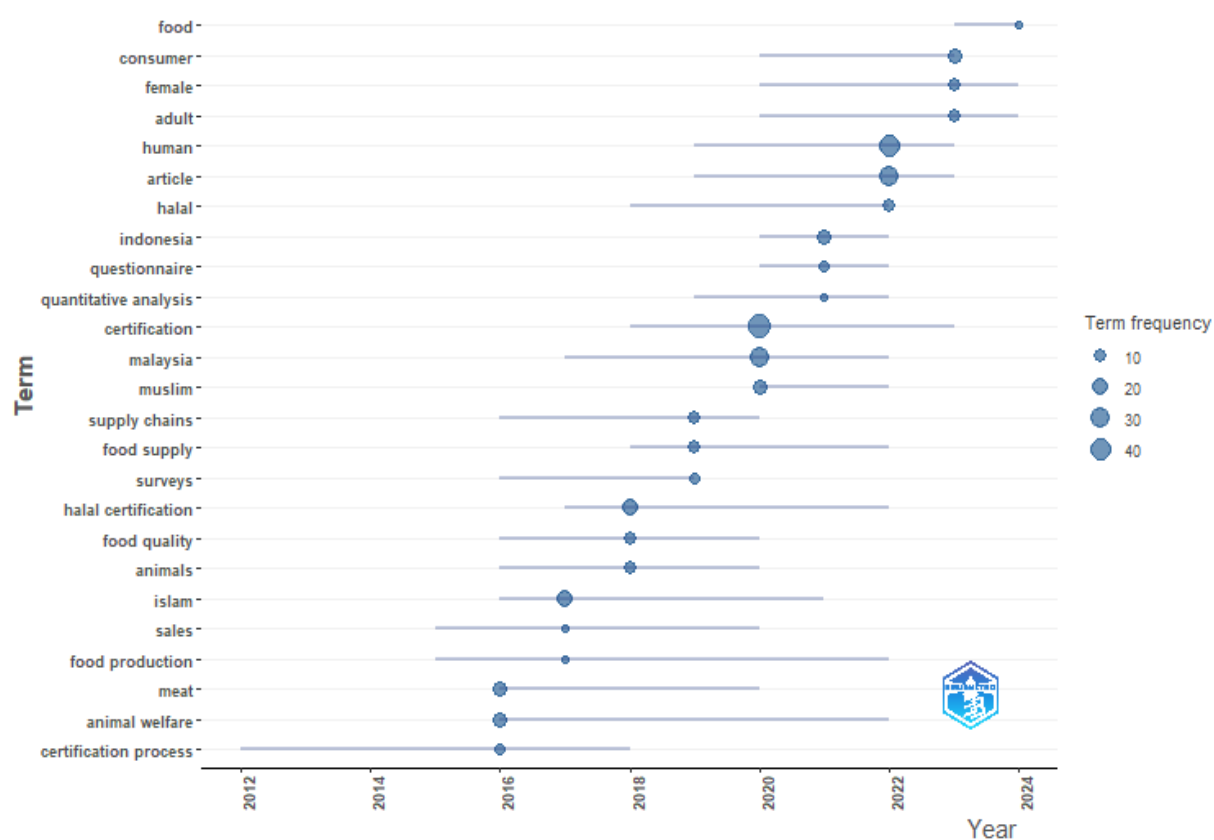


Figure 8. Trending Topics
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Intellectual Structure and Thematic Mapping

Peripheral keywords such as “ethanol” and “beverages” indicate specialised technical inquiries within the broader discourse. The network illustrates a noticeable shift from theological discourse toward applied business and operational studies.

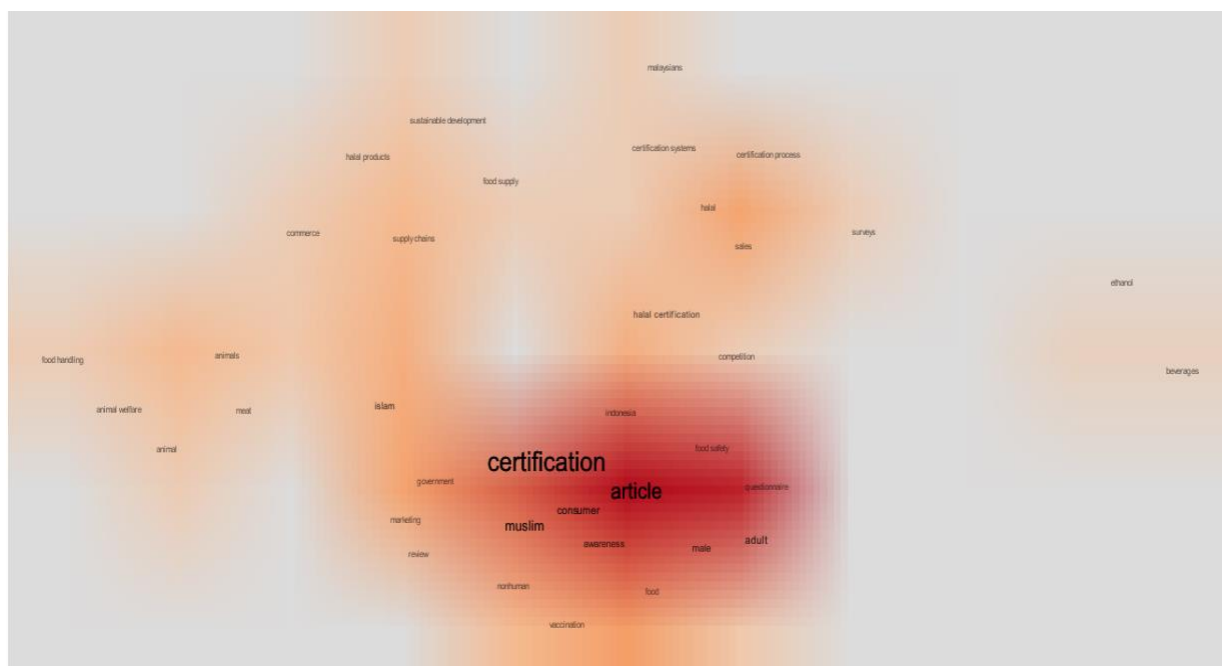


Figure 10. Overlay Visualization Based on Co-Occurrence Distribution
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

The findings suggest that halal certification research has evolved from theological and normative discussions toward practical business-oriented applications. Topics such as e-commerce, blockchain technology, and digital traceability increasingly appear within recent literature. These developments provide strategic implications for MSMEs, particularly in relation to market strategy, operational quality improvement, and regulatory compliance. Importantly, the co-occurrence relationship between “halal certification” and “MSME performance” represents scholarly association rather than direct empirical causality. Nevertheless, the repeated linkage between these themes indicates strong academic recognition of halal certification as a factor related to MSME competitiveness and sustainability.

The overlay visualization as illustrated in Figure 10 further demonstrates that research activity is heavily concentrated around keywords such as “certification,” “Indonesia,” “Muslim,” and “food safety.” Other prominent themes included supply chain management, halal products, food handling, and consumer awareness. This pattern indicates that halal certification studies have increasingly integrated managerial, operational, and market-oriented perspectives. For MSMEs, these discussions provide valuable insights into marketing strategies, quality assurance systems, supply chain governance, and consumer trust formation.

Figure 11 demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of halal certification research. Major clusters linked halal certification with supply chain management, quality management, information technology, traceability, consumer behavior, and food safety.

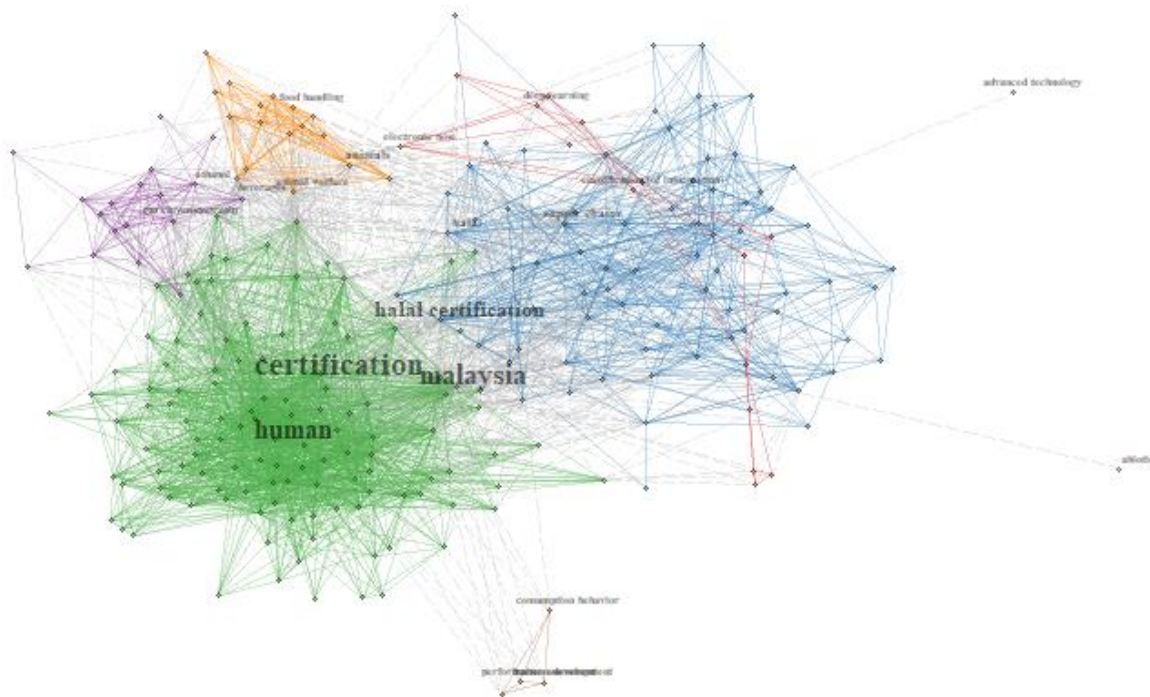


Figure 11. Keyword Co-occurrence
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Although MSMEs did not always appear as central keywords, the thematic relationships identified in the network remain highly relevant to MSME development. The literature suggests that halal certification contributes to:

- improving operational efficiency through better supply chain and quality management practices;
- strengthening consumer trust through product assurance and halal compliance;
- supporting market expansion through enhanced consumer perception;
- encouraging technological adaptation within certification and production systems.

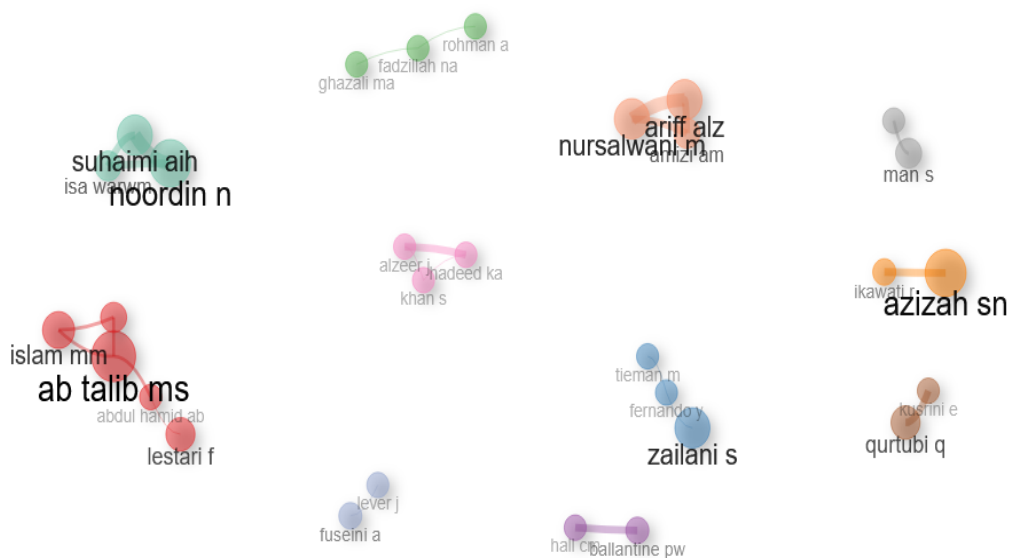


Figure 12. Collaboration Network
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

The collaboration network depicted in Figure 12 reveals the dynamic and multifaceted nature of halal certification research. Studies clustered around supply chains and standards highlight the foundational role of infrastructure and compliance in certification processes (Talib et al., 2015; Lestari, 2023). Economic and performance-oriented studies demonstrate a notable shift toward evaluating financial outcomes, reputation, and competitiveness associated with certification (Zailani, 2020; Tieman, 2020; Akbar & Rohman, 2023; Laili & Fajar, 2022).

The expansion of halal certification into service sectors, particularly halal tourism, illustrates thematic diversification beyond food and manufacturing (Katuk et al., 2021; Musa et al., 2021). Additional clusters encompass methodological developments, review studies, and testing procedures, enriching the intellectual depth of the field. This collaborative structure reinforces the understanding that halal certification research increasingly intersects with MSME performance. Empirical studies comparing certified and non-certified enterprises offer concrete evidence of performance differentials, while research on constraints faced by MSMEs provides a basis for policy interventions and support mechanisms.

Figure 13 demonstrates extensive international collaboration, with Southeast Asia—particularly Indonesia and Malaysia—emerging as the epicenter of halal certification research. The high frequency of collaboration reflects both countries' large Muslim populations and advanced halal regulatory frameworks. Beyond regional collaboration, these countries maintain research linkages with partners across Asia, Europe, North America, and Oceania, underscoring the global relevance of halal certification discourse. Countries with dense outbound collaborations, especially Malaysia and Indonesia, likely host specialized research centers and leading scholars, contributing to a robust global research ecosystem that shapes certification standards and practices.



Figure 13. Collaboration Of Country Maps
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

Figure 14 shows the thematic evolution of halal certification studies between 2005–2021 and 2022–2024. Earlier studies concentrated on general certification concepts, whereas recent studies increasingly examine food safety, supply chains, sustainability, e-commerce, animal welfare, and halal industry development.

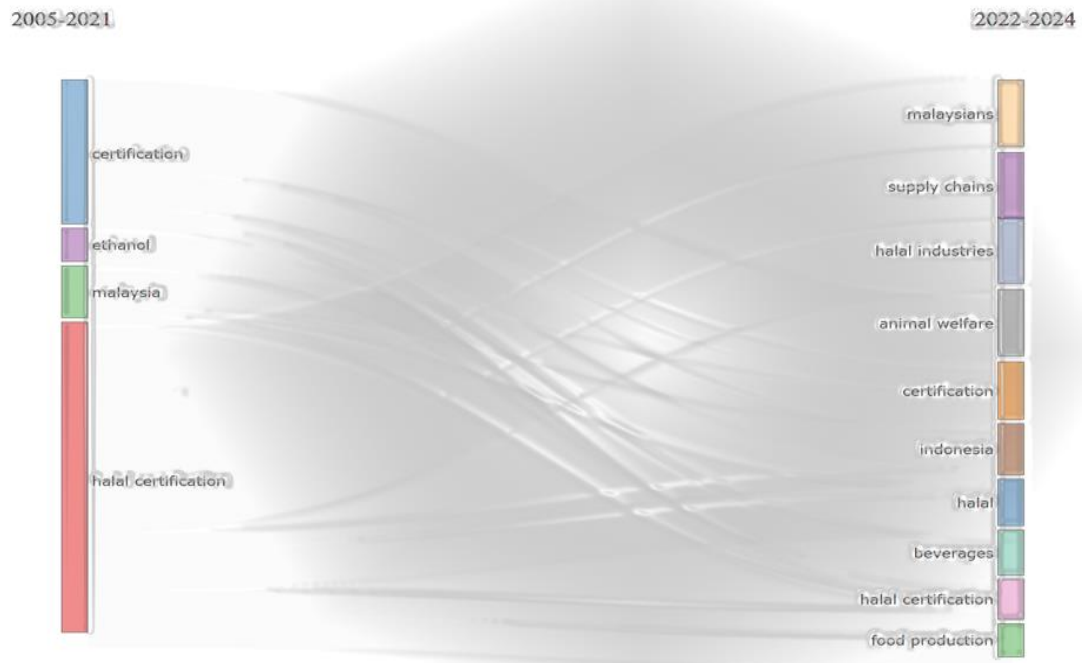


Figure 14. Thematic Evolution
(Source: Bibliometrix R package with Biblioshiny – Web Interface)

This thematic transition reflects the growing complexity of halal ecosystems. Halal certification has increasingly been associated with broader business and economic concerns, including market competitiveness, consumer behavior, and technological adaptation. For MSMEs, these developments indicate that halal certification may function as a strategic instrument for expanding market access, enhancing consumer trust, improving product quality, and strengthening competitive positioning within the global halal market.

Discussion

Dynamics and Evolution of Halal Certification Studies

The bibliometric findings demonstrate that halal certification research has undergone substantial transformation between 2005 and 2024. During the earlier phase (2005–2021), scholarly attention primarily focused on general concepts of “certification” and “halal certification,” indicating that the literature was still concentrated on foundational discussions, regulatory mechanisms, and certification procedures. Research during this period largely explored normative, legal, and Sharia-related dimensions of halal practices, including institutional legitimacy and standardization processes. The increasing number of publications and international collaborations indicates that halal certification gradually evolved into a globally recognized research domain with contributions from 103 countries. Malaysia and Indonesia emerged as the dominant contributors, reflecting the strategic importance of halal industries within Muslim-majority economies (Fauzi et al., 2024; Faishal et al., 2024; Tieman et al., 2012; Ahmed et al., 2018).

The thematic evolution observed in the recent period (2022–2024) reveals a clear diversification of research topics. Contemporary studies increasingly address operational and technological issues, including food production, food safety, halal supply chains, traceability systems, and sustainability. Additional attention has been directed toward animal welfare, beverages, ethanol detection, and quantitative laboratory analysis, suggesting that halal certification research has expanded beyond normative discourse into multidisciplinary and application-oriented investigations. This development reflects the growing complexity of halal ecosystems, where certification no longer concerns religious compliance alone but also involves quality assurance, safety standards, ethical production, and global trade requirements.

The emergence of themes related to supply chain management and technological integration also demonstrates how halal certification studies have adapted to industrial transformation and digitalization. Recent studies discuss blockchain technology, traceability systems, and digital verification mechanisms as instruments for strengthening transparency and maintaining halal integrity throughout the production and distribution process (Calder, 2020; Rusydiana et al., 2023; Ardiantono et al., 2024; Susanty, 2024; Karyani et al., 2024). Within the framework of innovation diffusion theory, this shift reflects how industries and researchers respond to evolving market expectations through the adoption of technological innovations that improve efficiency, accountability, and consumer trust.

The bibliometric mapping further indicates that halal certification research has increasingly shifted toward practical and managerial concerns, particularly those associated with Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Keywords such as “marketing,” “electronic commerce,” “consumer behavior,” “food safety,” and “supply chain” demonstrate that halal certification is now widely discussed within business and management contexts. This shift suggests that researchers are no longer limiting halal certification to theological or regulatory discussions; instead, they increasingly examine its strategic implications for business competitiveness and organizational performance.

This evolution aligns with market signaling theory, which explains that certification functions as a credible signal of product quality and compliance in markets characterized by information asymmetry. Halal certification communicates assurances regarding product safety, ethical production, and Sharia compliance, thereby reducing consumer uncertainty and strengthening purchasing confidence. In highly competitive markets, especially within digital commerce environments, certification serves as a differentiating mechanism that helps firms establish legitimacy and credibility.

The concentration of research in Indonesia and Malaysia also reflects the institutional and economic significance of halal industries within Southeast Asia. Both countries possess large Muslim populations, strong halal regulatory frameworks, and rapidly expanding halal markets. Consequently, halal certification studies in these regions often focus on practical business challenges, including certification accessibility, consumer trust, market expansion, and operational compliance for MSMEs. The collaborative nature of the research network indicates that halal certification has become part of a broader global discourse involving technological, economic, and policy perspectives across multiple regions.

Overall, the bibliometric evidence demonstrates that halal certification studies have evolved from foundational religious and regulatory discussions into a multidimensional field encompassing supply chain management, technological innovation, sustainability, consumer behavior, and MSME competitiveness. The increasing diversification of themes indicates that halal certification is now positioned as both a religious compliance mechanism and a strategic economic instrument within the global halal ecosystem.

Impact of Halal Certification on MSME Performance

The findings also demonstrate that halal certification has become increasingly associated with discussions concerning MSME performance, competitiveness, and sustainability. The growing concentration of keywords related to marketing, consumer behavior, electronic commerce, and supply chain management indicates that halal certification is now widely recognized as a strategic business instrument rather than merely an administrative or religious requirement.

Previous studies consistently report that halal certification strengthens consumer confidence and influences purchasing behavior, customer loyalty, and market preference (Rusydiana et al., 2023; Hamidifani & Karim, 2023; Calder, 2020; Susanty, 2024; Nurhidayat et al., 2024; Ariska et al., 2024; Kalbarini, 2022; Munir et al., 2024; Kasanah & Andari, 2024; Syafrida, 2023; Museliza et al., 2023). From the perspective of consumer behavior theory, halal certification operates as an external assurance mechanism that shapes perceptions of quality, hygiene, safety, and ethical production. These perceptions significantly influence purchasing decisions, particularly among Muslim consumers who prioritize religious compliance in consumption activities.

The relationship between halal certification and MSME performance can also be explained through the resource-based view (RBV), which emphasizes the importance of intangible assets in generating competitive advantage. Halal certification represents a strategic intangible resource that enhances organizational legitimacy, strengthens brand image, and increases market credibility. Certified MSMEs possess stronger opportunities to access broader consumer segments, including domestic and international halal markets. As a result, certification contributes not only to market expansion but also to long-term business sustainability.

Several studies further indicate that halal certification contributes to positive brand differentiation and product positioning in competitive markets (Alfiansyah, 2024; Karimah & Darwanto, 2021; Karyani et al., 2024; Alfarizi, 2023; Fuadi et al., 2024; Kalbarini, 2022). The certification label functions as a quality signal that distinguishes products from competitors lacking formal halal verification. This differentiation becomes increasingly important in food processing, pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and electronic commerce sectors where consumer awareness regarding halal standards continues to increase. Titisari (2024) also emphasized that ethical compliance through halal certification contributes to stronger brand reputation and customer trust (Ibrahim & Kamri, 2017).

The bibliometric results reveal that MSMEs are frequently discussed alongside themes such as electronic commerce, marketing strategy, and consumer awareness. This finding indicates that halal certification increasingly supports digital market participation and online business expansion. Within e-commerce environments, where consumers cannot physically verify product quality, halal certification functions as a trust-building mechanism that reduces

uncertainty and enhances purchasing confidence. This is particularly relevant for MSMEs seeking to expand their market reach beyond local boundaries.

The thematic evolution analysis also highlights the growing relevance of halal supply chain management for MSMEs. Research related to food safety, traceability, and supply chain integration suggests that certification encourages MSMEs to improve operational standards and quality management systems. Talib et al. (2015) and Lestari (2023) emphasize that halal compliance involves comprehensive operational adjustments, including production management, storage systems, distribution channels, and supplier coordination. These improvements may strengthen operational efficiency and enhance institutional legitimacy within increasingly regulated halal markets.

The discussion surrounding MSME challenges also remains prominent in the literature. Laili and Fajar (2022) identify several barriers faced by MSMEs in obtaining halal certification, including certification costs, administrative complexity, limited institutional support, and insufficient understanding of halal procedures. These findings suggest that although certification offers strategic benefits, MSMEs often encounter structural constraints during implementation. Institutional theory explains that organizations frequently adapt to regulatory expectations in order to obtain legitimacy and maintain market relevance. However, smaller enterprises may require additional institutional assistance to meet formal compliance requirements effectively.

The increasing integration of halal certification into broader industrial ecosystems also demonstrates the expansion of halal markets beyond food products alone. Research concerning pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, tourism, and digital commerce indicates that halal certification now influences multiple sectors within the halal economy. This diversification creates new business opportunities for MSMEs while simultaneously increasing the importance of regulatory adaptation and quality assurance.

From a strategic perspective, halal certification contributes to MSME performance through several interconnected mechanisms. First, certification enhances consumer trust and purchasing confidence. Second, it strengthens market access and competitiveness in domestic and global halal markets. Third, it encourages operational improvements related to quality control, food safety, and supply chain management. Fourth, it supports brand differentiation and organizational legitimacy in increasingly competitive industries. These interconnected dimensions explain why halal certification is increasingly discussed as a business performance driver rather than solely a religious compliance instrument.

The bibliometric evidence therefore illustrates that halal certification studies have progressively shifted toward understanding practical business implications, particularly for MSMEs operating within competitive halal industries. The growing integration of marketing, technology, supply chain management, and consumer behavior within halal certification research reflects the expanding strategic role of certification in supporting MSME sustainability and competitiveness in the global halal economy.

Research Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on halal certification by demonstrating that the field has evolved from predominantly normative and religious discussions toward multidisciplinary and performance-oriented research. The bibliometric findings reveal that halal certification is increasingly examined through the lenses of consumer behavior, supply chain management, marketing, digital commerce, sustainability, and organizational performance. This shift broadens the theoretical scope of halal studies and positions halal certification as an important construct within Islamic economics and business research.

The findings also reinforce the relevance of signaling theory in explaining the strategic role of halal certification. In markets characterized by information asymmetry, halal certification functions as a credible signal of product quality, safety, ethical production, and Sharia compliance. The strong co-occurrence between halal certification, consumer trust, and MSME performance suggests that certification serves not only as a religious identifier but also as a market-based mechanism that influences purchasing behavior and competitive positioning.

In addition, the study supports the resource-based view (RBV), particularly regarding the role of intangible assets in improving firm competitiveness. Halal certification may be understood as an intangible strategic resource that strengthens organizational legitimacy, brand reputation, and market credibility. MSMEs possessing halal certification are more likely to access wider consumer markets, increase customer confidence, and enhance business sustainability. The bibliometric mapping demonstrates that scholars increasingly associate halal certification with operational quality, product differentiation, and market expansion.

The study also contributes to institutional theory by illustrating how regulatory environments shape organizational adaptation. The dominance of research originating from Indonesia and Malaysia reflects the influence of strong halal governance systems and institutional frameworks in encouraging certification adoption. The findings indicate that MSMEs often pursue halal certification not only to satisfy market demand but also to obtain institutional legitimacy within increasingly regulated halal ecosystems.

Furthermore, the identification of emerging themes such as blockchain, traceability systems, food safety, and halal supply chains provides an important theoretical direction for future research. The integration of technological innovation into halal certification studies demonstrates that the field is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, linking Islamic economics with digital transformation, sustainability studies, and operations management.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for MSMEs, policymakers, halal certification institutions, and industry stakeholders. For MSMEs, the results indicate that halal certification should be viewed as a strategic business investment rather than solely a regulatory obligation. The bibliometric evidence demonstrates that halal certification is closely associated with consumer trust, product differentiation, and market competitiveness. MSMEs can utilize halal certification to strengthen branding strategies, improve customer loyalty, and expand access to domestic and international halal markets. This is particularly important within digital commerce environments, where certification functions as a trust indicator for consumers who cannot directly verify product quality.

The findings also suggest that MSMEs need to strengthen operational capabilities related to food safety, quality management, traceability, and halal supply chain integration. Research trends increasingly emphasize that halal compliance extends beyond the final product and includes the entire production and distribution process. Therefore, MSMEs that successfully integrate halal standards into operational systems may achieve stronger market positioning and long-term sustainability.

For policymakers, the study highlights the importance of strengthening institutional support for MSMEs seeking halal certification. Previous studies identified several barriers, including certification costs, administrative complexity, limited technical knowledge, and insufficient assistance programs. These obstacles may reduce MSME participation in halal certification systems, particularly among small-scale enterprises with limited resources. Policymakers may therefore consider simplifying certification procedures, expanding subsidy programs, and improving educational outreach related to halal compliance.

The findings also indicate the need for greater collaboration between governments, universities, halal certification agencies, and industry actors. The strong international collaboration patterns identified in the bibliometric analysis demonstrate that halal certification research benefits from cross-border knowledge exchange. Collaborative initiatives may facilitate the development of harmonized halal standards, digital certification systems, and technology-based monitoring mechanisms that improve transparency and efficiency.

For halal certification institutions, the results underscore the importance of adopting technological innovation within certification processes. The increasing scholarly attention toward blockchain technology, digital traceability, and supply chain transparency suggests that future halal ecosystems will become increasingly technology-driven. Certification agencies may therefore need to modernize verification systems in order to maintain credibility and respond to evolving consumer expectations.

In addition, the study highlights emerging opportunities for sectors beyond food production, including halal tourism, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and electronic commerce. This expansion indicates that halal certification possesses broader economic implications across multiple industries. MSMEs operating within these sectors may leverage certification as a strategic tool for market penetration and product positioning in rapidly growing halal economies.

The bibliometric analysis also identifies several opportunities for future studies. First, although halal certification and MSME performance frequently appear together within the literature, empirical studies investigating causal relationships remain relatively limited. Future research may therefore explore how halal certification directly affects financial performance, operational efficiency, innovation capability, and export readiness among MSMEs.

Second, the increasing emergence of technological themes such as blockchain and traceability systems indicates the need for more studies examining digital transformation within halal certification ecosystems. Future investigations may analyze how technological adoption influences certification efficiency, consumer trust, and supply chain transparency.

Third, future research may further examine sector-specific dynamics of halal certification, particularly within pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, tourism, and digital commerce. Comparative studies across industries and countries may also provide deeper insights into how regulatory systems, cultural contexts, and market structures shape halal certification practices and outcomes.

Finally, future scholars may explore the social and behavioral dimensions of halal certification, including consumer awareness, religiosity, ethical consumption, and sustainability preferences. Such studies would enrich the understanding of halal certification as both an economic and socio-cultural phenomenon within the global halal industry.

CONCLUSION

This bibliometric study demonstrates that halal certification has developed into a major area of scholarly discussion within the context of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The findings reveal a significant annual growth rate of 28.37%, indicating the increasing global attention toward halal-related studies. The intellectual mapping further shows that the focus of research has gradually shifted from discussions centered on basic Sharia compliance and certification procedures toward broader and more practical issues, including halal supply chain management, food safety, digital traceability, consumer behavior, and competitive business strategies. Indonesia and Malaysia consistently appear as the leading contributors to this field, reflecting their strategic position within the global halal economy. In addition, the growing pattern of international collaboration confirms that halal certification is no longer viewed solely as a religious requirement, but also as an important economic instrument that influences market expansion, consumer trust, and business sustainability. The findings also indicate that halal certification is closely associated with MSME performance, particularly in strengthening brand reputation, increasing competitiveness, and improving access to domestic and international halal markets.

The results of this study carry important implications for policymakers, business actors, and researchers. For policymakers, halal certification should be understood as a strategic economic investment capable of strengthening the competitiveness of MSMEs rather than merely an administrative obligation. Support mechanisms such as certification subsidies, technical assistance, digital literacy training, and simplified certification procedures remain essential, especially for micro and small enterprises facing financial and operational limitations. The findings also highlight the importance of integrating halal certification with digital transformation initiatives, including traceability systems and e-commerce platforms, to help MSMEs participate more effectively in global halal value chains. For MSMEs, halal certification functions not only as a marker of religious compliance but also as a tool for building consumer confidence, improving product quality standards, and creating stronger market differentiation. From an academic perspective, this study enriches the literature on halal certification through bibliometric mapping that clarifies the evolution, thematic structure, and collaborative patterns within this research field.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The bibliometric analysis relied solely on the Scopus database, which may exclude relevant

publications indexed in other databases or regional journals. In addition, the study focused primarily on publication trends, thematic structures, and citation patterns, without directly measuring the financial or operational outcomes experienced by MSMEs after obtaining halal certification. The existing literature also remains dominated by qualitative discussions and conceptual approaches, while large-scale quantitative evidence regarding the direct economic impact of halal certification is still limited. Future studies are therefore encouraged to employ longitudinal and empirical approaches to examine the relationship between halal certification and MSME performance indicators such as profitability, sales growth, market expansion, and operational efficiency. Further research may also explore emerging sectors within the halal economy, including halal cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, modest fashion, and digital halal ecosystems, as well as investigate the role of advanced technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence in supporting halal assurance systems and sustainable business development.

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