

# The Impact Of Community Responses Toward Unlabeled Halal Peyek Crackers In The Wonomulyo Market Complex

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine public responses toward "kerupuk peyek" (a traditional Indonesian cracker) sold without halal certification and to analyze its impact on purchasing decisions in the Wonomulyo Market Complex, Polewali Mandar Regency. The sale of peyek products without a halal label in traditional markets has raised doubts among some consumers, yet the product remains in demand. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection methods including direct observation, in-depth interviews with 50 informants, and visual documentation. Informants were selected based on criteria such as productive age, traditional product consumption habits, and residence near the market.

The findings indicate that public responses fall into four main categories: trustful, indifferent, doubtful, and unconcerned. Despite varied responses, all informants continued to purchase and consume the unlabeled peyek. This indicates that halal labeling is not the primary determinant of purchasing decisions, especially in traditional markets characterized by strong social and cultural values. The most influential factors include trust in sellers, long-standing consumption habits, affordable prices, and product taste.

This study reveals that social values—such as close relationships between sellers and buyers and collective trust in local products—are more influential than formal considerations like halal certification. Thus, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of Muslim consumer behavior in rural areas and recommends educational and community-based approaches to increase awareness about the importance of halal labeling.

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## INTRODUCTION

As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia places significant importance on the halal status of products in daily life. Muslim consumers seek assurance that food and beverage products comply with Islamic principles. In this context, halal labels serve not only as symbols but also as guarantees of product quality, hygiene, and Shariah compliance (Ernawati & Koerniawan, 2023). Moreover, global halal industry dynamics encourage Indonesia to strengthen its national halal product assurance system. The growing awareness of halal consumption has led to increasing demand for certified halal products.

Consequently, halal labeling has evolved beyond religious obligations into a strategic tool for enhancing consumer trust and strengthening Indonesia's position in the global market. A comprehensive halal certification system is essential to protect consumers and promote sustainable halal economic growth. The implementation of halal policy requires active participation from all business sectors, including micro and small enterprises (MSEs), to ensure that traditionally produced goods meet halal standards. Therefore, halal labeling plays a dual role in religious compliance and inclusive, competitive economic development.

Indonesia's halal labeling is legally supported by Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance. This law mandates that all food and beverage products circulating in domestic markets must have an official halal certificate issued by the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH), based on halal decisions made by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). While implementation has been relatively successful in large-scale industries, halal labeling among MSE-produced traditional goods remains suboptimal (Maulizah & Sugianto, 2024).

MSEs face several challenges, including lack of information on certification procedures, perceived high costs, and limited understanding of the label's importance. This situation is concerning, considering that MSEs play a vital role in the local food distribution system, directly serving consumer needs. Thus, inclusive support from the government and relevant institutions is necessary to empower MSEs to meet halal standards, ensuring a safe, transparent, and Shariah-compliant food system.

A notable case is found in the Wonomulyo Market Complex, Polewali Mandar, West Sulawesi, where kerupuk peyek—a popular traditional snack—is widely sold in simple packaging, mostly without halal labeling. These products are predominantly produced by MSEs through home-based methods. The lack of halal labeling raises concerns, particularly among consumers with higher awareness of halal compliance. However, preliminary observations reveal that most people still purchase and consume these products without hesitation.

This phenomenon reflects a distinctive social dynamic in traditional markets, where consumer decisions are not entirely influenced by formal legality such as halal certification. Instead, consumption patterns are shaped by socio-cultural factors, long-established habits, and the closeness between buyers and sellers. Personal trust in local producers becomes a strong basis for consumer choice, even in the absence of administrative halal certification.

Although many studies affirm the significance of halal labels in building Muslim consumer trust (Abdurrahman et al., 2024), field realities suggest otherwise. Traditional products without halal certification, like kerupuk peyek, still maintain specific market segments. For some consumers, the product's halal status is assumed based on generational consumption patterns. This indicates that perceptions of halal are not solely shaped by formal labels, but also by prevailing community values, trust in local producers, and culturally inherited collective experiences.

Therefore, any halal-related initiative must be grounded in local social and cultural contexts to effectively respond to grassroots realities. In home-based food production, quality control is often lacking—used cooking oil or animal-based seasonings might be used without oversight. Such practices can raise doubts about halal compliance, particularly in the absence of transparent ingredient disclosures (Nur, 2021). Without a halal label, consumers lack accessible information to make Shariah-compliant decisions (Dewanti & Irwansyah, 2021).

This absence of certification in MSE-made traditional products contributes to weak quality oversight and poses a risk of unintentional non-compliance with halal principles. In terms of Muslim consumer protection, this is critical because it concerns their right to access religiously safe products. Therefore, this study explores how people respond to unlabeled halal food products like kerupuk peyek in traditional markets and assesses how religious, social, economic, and cultural values influence their purchasing decisions. Beyond consumer behavior, the study serves as a reflection on the socio-economic dynamics shaping rural Muslim consumption patterns.

Ultimately, this research aims to support the design of more contextual and culturally rooted halal education policies. With an inclusive approach, MSEs can be encouraged to pursue certification, while consumers are empowered to recognize the spiritual and social responsibility of choosing halal-certified goods.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a **descriptive qualitative approach** aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of public responses to *kerupuk peyek* (traditional crackers) without a halal label and their impact on consumers' purchasing decisions Sugiono (2020).. This approach was chosen because it allows for thorough exploration and comprehension of how the community interprets the presence of *kerupuk peyek* without halal certification, based on the personal experiences, opinions, and perspectives of the informants.

The main focus of this research encompasses two variables:

1. **Public response** to *kerupuk peyek* without a halal label, which includes consumer perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and views;
2. **The impact** of these responses on purchasing decisions.

The research subjects were *kerupuk peyek* consumers in the Wonomulyo Market Complex, selected based on specific criteria: aged between 25 and 50 years, active consumers of *kerupuk peyek*, residing or conducting activities around the market area, and having occupational backgrounds as housewives or traditional cracker vendors.

Data collection employed **triangulated techniques** to enhance the validity of the findings, including in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted in a **semi-structured format** to obtain broad yet focused responses and insights from informants. Observations were carried out within the Wonomulyo Market Complex to examine real-life market conditions, sales activities, and interactions between *kerupuk peyek* vendors and their customers. Documentation consisted of field notes, photographs of market activities, and interview transcripts, which collectively supported the credibility of the data.

To ensure the reliability of the data, **source and method triangulation** was applied. Source triangulation involved comparing data obtained from informants with different backgrounds but similar status as consumers of *kerupuk peyek*. Method triangulation was carried out by integrating the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to obtain comprehensive and complementary information.

The data analysis process employed **thematic analysis**, which involved several stages. First, the researcher read and familiarized themselves with all interview data and field notes to gain a general overview. Second, relevant data related to the research focus were filtered and sorted, then grouped based on similarities in meaning, expression, or response patterns. Third, these groupings were used to construct the main themes that addressed the research problems and objectives. The next stage involved reviewing and refining the themes, assigning names and definitions to each, and composing descriptive narratives based on the identified themes. Each theme was supported by direct quotations from informants as authentic evidence to reinforce the findings Alwi, M., & Saleh, N. (2022).

Through this approach, the study is expected to produce a **contextual understanding** of the factors influencing the community's decision to purchase *kerupuk peyek* without a halal label in the Wonomulyo Market Complex.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

#### 1. **Public Response to *Kerupuk Peyek* Without Halal Label**

Based on interviews with 50 informants in the Wonomulyo Market Complex, public responses were categorized into four groups: trustful, indifferent, doubtful, and unconcerned. These varied reactions reflect the complexity of the community's perspectives on halal certification and the importance of labels in consumption decisions.

- a. The **"trustful"** category stems from social ties and familiarity with the seller. Informants expressed confidence that the product was halal because it was produced by known Muslim

individuals perceived as honest and trustworthy. Personal trust substituted for formal certification. This supports Fajrianti's (2020) findings that individual responses are greatly influenced by social interaction and personal experience.

- b. The **"indifferent"** category suggests that some individuals assume traditional foods are inherently halal. They believe that since *peyek* is made from common ingredients like flour and peanuts, its halal status is unquestionable. This aligns with Silvia (2023), who found that consumers often rely on general knowledge in purchasing decisions without examining formal legal aspects of products.
- c. The **"doubtful"** category reveals cognitive dissonance—where beliefs clash with behavior. Even though some were uncertain due to the absence of a halal label, they still chose to buy the product because the seller was Muslim or due to a lack of alternatives. This reflects Dewanti & Irwansyah's (2021) concept of cognitive dissonance, where personal beliefs do not align with actual consumption practices.
- d. The **"unconcerned"** category includes consumers who prioritize taste, price, and habitual consumption over halal status. For them, as long as the product is tasty and affordable, a halal label is not a concern. This view is consistent with Laroibafih (2020), who noted that halal labels are not always the primary consideration for certain consumer groups.

## 2. Impact of Public Response on Purchasing Decisions

Interestingly, all informants continued to purchase *kerupuk peyek* regardless of their category of response. This indicates that the halal label is not yet a dominant factor in purchasing decisions within traditional market environments like Wonomulyo. Instead, informal factors such as trust, habit, and economic considerations play a more influential role.

Those in the "trustful" and "indifferent" categories showed consistent purchasing behavior. Those in the "doubtful" category, despite ethical concerns, were still influenced by practical factors like availability and taste. Meanwhile, the "unconcerned" consumers did not consider the halal label at all in their decision-making.

This supports Putra and Zakariya's (2023) findings that purchasing decisions for halal products are influenced by multiple factors—religion, health, culture, and socio-economic context—not just religious considerations alone.

## 3. Factors Influencing the Decision to Purchase

Four dominant factors motivated the community to continue purchasing *kerupuk peyek* without a halal label:

- a. **Trust in the seller**  
Social relationships and the seller's reputation served as assurances of halal compliance. This underscores the strong influence of local values in consumption behavior.
- b. **Consumption habits**  
Traditional products like *kerupuk peyek* have long been part of local culinary culture. Their long-standing presence fosters a sense of safety and comfort among consumers.
- c. **Price**  
*Kerupuk peyek* is perceived as affordable, making it a more economical choice compared to modern products. For lower-income consumers, price is often a top priority in decision-making.
- d. **Taste**  
The savory and crispy flavor remains a strong pull for consumers, regardless of the product's labeling status.

## 4. Comparison with Previous Studies

This study adds to the understanding of Muslim consumer behavior in traditional market settings. Several similarities and differences with prior research highlight the influence of local context:

- a. Consistent with findings by Abdurrahman et al. (2024) and Maulizah & Sugianto (2024), halal labels enhance trust. However, in this study, personal trust in the seller replaced the need for formal labeling.
- b. Contrary to Nuraini & Saepurohman (2024), who noted that some consumers reject products without halal labels, all informants in Wonomulyo still purchased the product despite doubts.
- c. This research emphasizes local social and economic factors, which are not deeply explored in previous studies, providing a fresh perspective on traditional consumer behavior.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrate that the community in the Wonomulyo Market Complex exhibits diverse responses to *kerupuk peyek* without a halal label. Despite these differences, all informants still purchased and consumed the product. This indicates that the halal label is not the sole determinant of purchasing decisions in this local context. The findings suggest that dominant roles are played by social and cultural values that are deeply embedded in the community environment.

Consumers' decisions to buy *kerupuk peyek* despite the absence of a halal label reflect personal and collective trust toward local producers or sellers. In traditional markets, social relationships and personal experiences often outweigh formal product validation such as halal certification. Trust in the seller emerged as a key factor influencing purchasing decisions, especially among respondents who expressed confidence and continued to buy the product. These social connections significantly affect perceptions of a product's halal status. Informants indicated that while the halal label is important, personal trust in a local seller is more influential. This supports the findings of Putra and Zakariya (2023), who argued that while religious values do play a role, they are not the sole influencers of consumer decisions. In socially cohesive communities, interpersonal trust can substitute for formal certifications like halal labels.

Moreover, long-standing consumption habits of traditional foods such as *kerupuk peyek* also shape perceptions. Many informants shared that they have been consuming the product since childhood without experiencing any issues related to its halal status. This habitual familiarity fosters a collective understanding that *kerupuk peyek* is inherently halal. This helps explain why respondents in the "indifferent" category were largely unbothered by the absence of a halal label. These findings align with Laroibafih (2020), who noted that consumer preferences are often shaped by general product perceptions rather than certification. In communities with strong culinary traditions like Wonomulyo, such perceptions tend to be more lenient toward formal standards such as halal certification.

Nevertheless, a small portion of informants did express doubt about consuming unlabeled *kerupuk peyek*, though they ultimately still purchased it. These informants acknowledged the importance of halal labeling as both an official and spiritual assurance. This reflects growing awareness of halal certification, particularly in religious communities that increasingly emphasize cautious consumption (*ihhtiyat*). These results are in line with Nuraini & Saepurohman (2024), who found that products lacking halal certification may cause uncertainty (*syubhat*) among Muslim consumers. However, in this study, such doubts did not necessarily lead to product rejection; rather, they were mediated by continued reliance on trust in the producer.

Meanwhile, respondents who were unconcerned with halal labeling emphasized price and taste as primary factors in their purchase decisions. In a traditional market setting highly sensitive to economic conditions, affordability is often prioritized over formal certification. Informants stated that as long as the product is tasty and cheap, the halal label is not a major concern. This reinforces the idea that consumer behavior is not always rational within formal legal or religious frameworks, but is heavily shaped by socio-economic conditions. These findings support Abdurrahman et al. (2024), who, while highlighting the

importance of halal labeling, also acknowledged that consumers' economic status plays a significant role in their purchasing choices—especially among lower-income communities.

Finally, although halal labels are not yet the dominant purchasing factor, most informants are aware of their importance. This awareness is driven not only by religious values but also by increasing consumer literacy through government programs and halal education initiatives. This aligns with Maulizah and Sugianto (2024), who noted that public awareness of halal certification is influenced by policy interventions and systematic outreach. Thus, there is significant potential to increase halal label awareness in the future. However, such efforts should be adapted to the local socio-economic and cultural context—as seen in Wonomulyo—since community-based, relationship-driven approaches may prove more effective than legalistic strategies alone.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that despite the absence of a halal label on *kerupuk peyek* sold at the Wonomulyo Market Complex, all informants still chose to purchase the product. Public responses to the lack of halal certification varied significantly, ranging from trust, indifference, and doubt to outright disregard. This indicates the complexity of consumer behavior in traditional market settings, which is more strongly influenced by social, cultural, and economic factors than by formal certification.

Four primary factors drive purchasing decisions: trust in the seller, habitual consumption, affordable price, and product taste. These findings emphasize the significant role of interpersonal trust and local values in shaping consumption choices. Moreover, while the halal label has not yet become a dominant consideration, awareness of its importance is growing alongside increased consumer literacy and educational efforts from relevant institutions.

This research contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of Muslim consumer behavior in traditional markets and highlights the need for community-based approaches to effectively raise awareness of halal product certification.

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