

The Effect of Service Quality and Competence of Assistants with Trusting Intension as an Intervening Variable on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declare Halal in Palembang City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of service quality and companion competence on the interest of business actors in conducting halal self-declare, with trusting intention as an intervening variable. This research uses a quantitative approach with SEM-PLS analysis. The population consists of micro and small business actors in Palembang. The results show that service quality and companion competence have a significant effect on trusting intention and business interest. Trusting intention also mediates the relationship between service quality, companion competence, and business interest. These findings indicate that improving service quality and companion competence can increase participation in halal certification programs.

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Introduction

In 2024, the global Islamic economy will show strong growth despite geopolitical and economic turmoil. As the global Muslim population surpasses two billion, or approximately a quarter of the world's population, the potential for halal market development is growing. This is reflected in global Muslim consumer spending in 2022, which reached approximately US\$2.29 trillion. This spending is expected to continue to grow, reaching US\$3.1 trillion by 2027, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.8%.

If we only focus on OIC member countries, total halal product imports from OIC member countries in 2022 were valued at US\$359 billion and are projected to grow to US\$492.4 billion by 2027 with a CAGR of 7.6%. According to the 2023/2024 SGIE report, Indonesia is the third-largest importer of halal products among all member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), with total imports reaching US\$30.3 billion. Its halal product exports to OIC countries are ranked eighth, with total exports valued at US\$13.38 billion.

Of the ten countries that occupy the top positions as exporters of halal products to OIC member countries, only two countries from OIC membership are recorded in the group, namely Turkey which is ranked 5th with total exports worth US\$16.34 billion and Indonesia

is ranked 8th with total exports worth US\$13.38 billion. Meanwhile, the top three countries that occupy the top positions as exporters of halal products to OIC member countries are China (US\$31.81 billion), India (US\$26.37 billion), and Brazil (US\$20.85 billion), respectively. (DinarStandard 2024)

The development of the halal ecosystem in Indonesia in recent years has shown a positive and dynamic trend. With strong government support and a large domestic market potential, Indonesia has demonstrated a strong commitment to developing an open, competitive, and sustainability-oriented halal ecosystem. These efforts are realized through various strategic government policies, one of which is the development of Halal Industrial Zones (KIH), which are currently being expanded, including in the Modern Cikande area, Bintan, and Sidoarjo. These zones are a strategic step to facilitate halal production, certification, and logistics in a single location. However, their implementation has been less than optimal due to the lack of clear fiscal and non-fiscal incentives for MSMEs to enter these zones. The lack of outreach and education has resulted in low utilization of halal center and KIH facilities (Azwari et al., 2022a). The low level of government support and support in the procurement of goods and services is still evident, particularly regarding the utilization and empowerment of halal products produced by local businesses, including MSMEs. Many MSMEs are unaware of the potential of the global halal market and how to access it. (Zuhrah, 2025)

In the 2023/2024 State of the Global Islamic Economy (SGIE) report, the halal ecosystem encompasses multiple sectors, including food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, fashion, finance, tourism, media, and recreation. Indonesia ranked third in the 2023 Global Islamic Economy Indicator with a GIEI score of 80.1. Specifically, Indonesia scored 93.2 for Islamic finance, 94.4 for halal food, 60.7 for Muslim-friendly tourism, 66.3 for modest fashion, 52.4 for media and recreation, and 58.6 for halal pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. (DinarStandard, 2024)

A halal certificate serves as official legitimacy, providing legal certainty that a product has been declared in accordance with halal principles based on Islamic law. Possession of this certificate authorizes businesses to legally display the halal mark on the packaging of marketed products. Within the framework of Islamic law, determining the halal and haram status of a product occupies a crucial position because it directly relates to the peace of mind and protection of Muslims in consuming food (Uswatun Hasanah, M Rusyidi, Candra Zaky Maulana, Maftukhatushalikhah, n.d.). Therefore, the public requires clear, accountable, and credible information regarding a product's level of compliance with halal requirements. (Faranita Ratih Listiasari et al., 2024)

This community service activity is aimed at providing intensive mentoring to business actors, particularly the Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) sector, to facilitate the acquisition of halal certification. The mentoring provided includes structuring business readiness and preparing necessary administrative documents, supporting halal product development and marketing strategies, increasing business actors' understanding and awareness of halal standards and regulations, and strengthening product quality to enhance competitiveness and economic value (Rusdi & Tjahjono, 2023). The most significant challenges faced by MSEs are limited understanding of the basic concepts and principles of halal products, administrative and technical requirements, financial constraints, low halal literacy, and a limited number of Halal Product Processing Assistants (PPH). (Anwar et al., 2024)

In an effort to address the various challenges faced by MSMEs, the government introduced the Free Halal Certification (SEHATI) policy through a *self-declaration approach*. Through this mechanism, businesses simply need to independently declare the halal status of their products, with the implementation accompanied by guidance and assistance from Halal Product Processing Facilitators (PPH). This scheme reduces costs and expedites the certification process (Antasari et al., 2022). However, participation remains low due to the quality of BPJPH services, the competence of halal facilitators, and the level of business actors' trust in the national halal system (Muhammad Rusdi, 2025a). Through these mentoring activities, it is hoped that micro and small businesses will not only successfully obtain halal certification but also strengthen their products' competitive market position while fostering a sense of security and trust among Muslim consumers regarding the quality of their products. (Fitri & Mardiah, 2023)

In line with the growing public understanding of the urgency of using products with guaranteed halal certification, the Indonesian government, through the Halal Product Guarantee Agency (BPJPH), has designed a more transparent and practical halal certification mechanism. One such effort is the implementation of the *Self-Declare scheme*, supported by the use of information technology, making the certification application and management process simpler and more effective, especially for Muslim businesses (Nilawati et al., 2023). This scheme allows businesses, particularly Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), to apply for halal certification independently with the assistance of registered assistants. The halal certification process is carried out entirely online through the Halal Information System (SIHALAL), a digital application owned by BPJPH developed to facilitate businesses in applying for halal certification through faster, more transparent, and integrated procedures.

User convenience in accessing SIHALAL is highly dependent on the quality and ease of use of the system. Solihin and Zuhdi (2021) emphasize that website user convenience is closely related to the quality and ease of use of the website itself. In this regard, BPJPH is continuously developing and refining the SIHALAL system with the aim of simplifying the halal certification application process, making it more practical, fast, and effective for users. (yulma Rosyida, 2023)

The quality of service provided by LP3H and the competence of the facilitators significantly influence the level of trust (*trusting intention*) of business actors towards the halal certification process. The better the quality of service and the more competent the facilitators, the higher the level of trust of business actors in participating in the halal certification process, and this trusting intention, in turn, increases business actors' interest in self-declaring halal. Research by Ade Fitriah (2024) shows that improving the quality of service provided and strengthening the professional capabilities of facilitators play a significant role in fostering business actors' confidence in the implementation of halal certification through the *self-declaring mechanism*. (yulma Rosyida, 2023)

The implementation of halal certification in Indonesia has seen rapid progress in recent years. By 2024, the government set a target of issuing halal certificates for approximately 10 million products as a strategic step to strengthen Indonesia's position as a global leader in the halal food and beverage industry. However, this target has not been optimally achieved, resulting in a significant number of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) still lacking halal certification. (Cahyadi et al., 2024)

In Palembang City, the proportion of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSMEs) that have obtained halal certification remains relatively small. This is despite the government

providing various support schemes, including the Free Halal Certification (Sehati) program. However, many businesses have not yet taken advantage of this opportunity due to a lack of understanding of the importance of halal certification, limited access to information, and technical challenges in the application process through SIHALAL (rmolsumsel, 2024)

Strategic efforts are needed to improve service quality and the competence of assistants. Business actors' trust in the halal certification mechanism needs to be strengthened so that the willingness of businesses in Palembang City to apply for halal certification through the *Self-Declare scheme* increases, thus impacting the increase in the number of products that have obtained halal certification in the region. Previous research supports this study, such as Rachman and Rahmi (2025) (Rachman Aulia, 2023) which examines various obstacles in implementing halal certification through the *Self-Declare mechanism* in Indonesia with an expanded *Maqasid al-Shariah -based approach and analysis*. Syariah, Fitriah (2024) (ade Fitriah, 2021) who examines the success factors of Self-Declare halal certification, and LP3H Mathla'ul Anwar (2025) (Anwar et al., 2024) who highlights the golden opportunity for MSMEs in utilizing the 2025 free halal certificate quota. The latest BPJPH guidelines regarding SIHALAL also provide easily accessible technical instructions for business actors. (Nora & Sriminarti, 2023)

Based on available data, approximately 13,634 halal certificates have been issued in South Sumatra Province (Sumsel) by 2024. This study comprehensively examines the various obstacles that arise in the implementation of halal certification in Indonesia through the *Self-Declare scheme*, using an analytical approach based on the Maqasid al-Shariah framework from a broader and contextual perspective. Of these, approximately 32,728 businesses operate in the culinary sector. If it is assumed that 1% of these culinary businesses have halal certification, then approximately 327 businesses have been certified halal. (Selatan, 2024) Although various initiatives have been undertaken to increase ownership of halal certificates, the proportion remains relatively small when compared to the total number of operating businesses. These findings indicate that the halal certification process still faces various obstacles, including limited understanding among business actors, the large costs that must be incurred, and the perceived complexity of administrative stages. Various research results also confirm that the increase in interest of business actors in applying for halal certification through the *Self-Declare mechanism* is greatly influenced by the synergy between service quality, capacity and professionalism of the facilitators, as well as the level of trust that business actors have in the system and related parties, especially for MSMEs in Palembang, so that efforts to increase the number of halal-certified products can run effectively and sustainably.

The quality of halal assistance services encompasses aspects such as speed, clarity of information, friendliness, and responsiveness in providing assistance to MSEs. Research by Nurhasanah & Putri (2022) shows that optimal service quality significantly contributes to increasing the satisfaction level of MSEs when utilizing various facilities and services provided by government agencies. However, this study has not specifically examined the effect of halal assistance service quality on MSEs' interest in self-declaring halal status. (Kambali & Arif, 2024)

Halal assistant competencies include knowledge of halal regulations, technical skills in product assessment, communication skills, and a professional attitude. Sari (2021) in her research found that the professional abilities of assistants have been proven to have a positive impact on the level of satisfaction of business actors in implementing the halal certification

program in the West Java region. However, the study has not integrated the role of assistant competency with *trusting intention* as an intermediary variable, particularly within the framework of implementing the Halal *Self-Declare scheme*. *Trusting intention* or intention to trust is the belief of MSMEs that the halal certification process is trustworthy and provides benefits. (Marshanda et al., 2024) Research by Rahmawati (2023) shows that trusting intention plays a mediator role between service quality and consumer interest in online services.

Meanwhile, Bahrul Ulum Ilham (2022) (Bahrul Ulum Ilham (2022), 2022) in his study “Assistance for Self-Declared Halal Certification in MSMEs Assisted by PLUT South Sulawesi” noted quantitative success (32 out of 40 business actors obtained halal certification). However, because it was not accompanied by inferential statistical analysis (e.g., *t-test*, regression coefficient, *p-value*), it cannot be concluded that the competence of the mentor significantly influences the trusting intention of business actors. Research by Nur Cahyadi, Djoko Soelistya, and Putra Panji Respati (2024) (Cahyadi et al., 2024) entitled “Assistance for Self-Declared Halal Certification in Micro Enterprises” emphasized the importance of technical and administrative assistance in the certification process. However, because it was presented descriptively and without inferential statistical tests, it cannot be directly explained that the competence of the mentor significantly influences the trusting intention of business actors.

Based on this background, the researcher intends to conduct research with the title **The Effect of Service Quality and Competence of Assistants with Trusting Intension as an Intervening Variable on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declare Halal in Palembang City.**

Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design focused on testing cause-and-effect relationships. The study focuses on analyzing the influence of the independent variables, namely service quality and assistant competence, on the dependent variable, namely business actors' interest in self-declaring halal products, with trusting intention as an intermediary variable. Data used in quantitative research is generally presented in numerical form. This approach emphasizes numerical data processing, which is then analyzed using statistical techniques to obtain objective and measurable conclusions.

The data sources used in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to MSME business actors in Palembang City who participated in the Self-Declare halal certification program, while secondary data were obtained from BPJPH publications, government reports, regulations, statistical data, and previous studies related to halal certification, service quality, companion competence, and trusting intention. The population of this study included business actors in Palembang City involved in the Self-Declare halal certification process. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with a total sample of 150 respondents determined using Hair's formula. Data were collected using closed-ended questionnaires with a five-point Likert scale. This study involved exogenous variables consisting of service quality and companion competence, an endogenous variable represented by business actors' interest in halal self-declare certification, and a mediating variable, namely trusting intention. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The analysis included outer model testing through

validity and reliability tests, as well as inner model testing using R-square, Q-square, and path coefficient analysis. Hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS with a significance level of 5%.

Results and Discussion

Results

Discriminant Validity

Table 1. Cross Loading Value

Indicator	X1	X2	Y	M
X1.1	0.502	0,465	0,349	0,415
X1.2	0,523	0,350	0,346	0,429
X1.3	0,617	0,454	0,426	0,432
X1.4	0,645	0,474	0,443	0,464
X1.5	0,677	0,518	0,477	0,550
X1.6	0,678	0,545	0,528	0,518
X1.7	0,618	0,538	0,429	0,507
X1.8	0,683	0,585	0,486	0,544
X1.9	0,689	0,590	0,489	0,576
X1.10	0,690	0,571	0,419	0,518
X1.11	0,617	0,558	0,447	0,491
X1.12	0,653	0,567	0,446	0,580
X1.13	0,665	0,617	0,413	0,536
X1.14	0,706	0,587	0,437	0,528
X1.15	0,536	0,432	0,385	0,422
X2.1	0,457	0,508	0,351	0,406
X2.2	0,492	0,503	0,337	0,460
X2.3	0,533	0,679	0,456	0,511
X2.4	0,542	0,662	0,399	0,532
X2.5	0,572	0,652	0,450	0,524
X2.6	0,533	0,626	0,462	0,571
X2.7	0,469	0,615	0,456	0,455
X2.8	0,541	0,650	0,432	0,539
X2.9	0,590	0,701	0,425	0,619
X2.10	0,500	0,651	0,431	0,570
X2.11	0,530	0,662	0,402	0,581
X2.12	0,464	0,587	0,350	0,478
Y1	0,490	0,429	0,633	0,397
Y3	0,456	0,489	0,560	0,469
Y4	0,442	0,402	0,571	0,408
Y5	0,468	0,415	0,701	0,413
Y6	0,408	0,438	0,728	0,447
Y7	0,495	0,485	0,756	0,499
Y8	0,467	0,434	0,724	0,464
Y9	0,487	0,475	0,733	0,485

Z1	0,470	0,522	0,459	0,624
Z2	0,524	0,520	0,415	0,621
Z3	0,517	0,575	0,433	0,642
Z4	0,499	0,562	0,418	0,656
Z5	0,435	0,486	0,417	0,627
Z6	0,526	0,538	0,457	0,646
Z7	0,507	0,485	0,385	0,621
Z8	0,518	0,561	0,428	0,652
Z9	0,554	0,546	0,399	0,662

Source: Output SmartPLS, 2026

Based on the cross-loading results, all indicators have the highest loading values on their respective constructs compared to other constructs. This indicates that each construct has good discriminant validity and can be clearly distinguished from one another in the research model.

Composite Reliability

Table 2. Composite Reliability

Variables	Composite Reliability	Criteria	Information
Companion Competence (X2)	0.885	>0.70	Reliable
Service Quality (X1)	0.910	>0.70	Reliable
Interest in Self-Declare Halal (Y)	0.872	>0.70	Reliable
Trusting Intention (M)	0.861	>0.70	Reliable

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026

Based on the table above, all variables have composite reliability values above 0.70, indicating good internal consistency and reliability. The service quality variable (X1) has the highest reliability value, followed by companion competence (X2), interest in self-declare halal (Y), and trusting intention (M). Therefore, all constructs in this study are considered reliable and suitable for further analysis.

Cronbach's Alpha

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Criteria	Information
Companion Competence (X2)	0.858	>0.70	Reliable
Service Quality (X1)	0.894	>0.70	Reliable
Interest in Self-Declare Halal (Y)	0.830	>0.70	Reliable
Trusting Intention (M)	0.819	>0.70	Reliable

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026

Based on the table above, all variables have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70, indicating good reliability and internal consistency. The service quality variable (X1) has the highest reliability value, followed by companion competence (X2), interest in self-declare halal (Y), and trusting intention (M). Therefore, all variables in this study are considered reliable and suitable for further analysis. The following figure presents the estimated research model based on loading factor and Cronbach's alpha values.

Inner Model Analysis.**Table 4. Nilai R-Square (R²)**

Variabel	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted	Keterangan
Trusting Intention (M)	0,729	0,725	Kuat
Minat Self Declare Halal (Y)	0,515	0,505	Sedang

Sumber: Output SmartPLS, 2026

Based on the table above, the Trusting Intention (M) variable has an R-Square value of 0.729, indicating that 72.9% of the variation in trusting intention can be explained by the independent variables in the model, while 27.1% is influenced by other factors outside the study. Meanwhile, the Interest in Self-Declare Halal (Y) variable has an R-Square value of 0.515, meaning that 51.5% of the variation in business actors' interest can be explained by the model, while 48.5% is explained by other variables outside the study. Therefore, the structural model in this study has good predictive ability, especially for the trusting intention variable

Relevance of Prediction (Q²)**Table 5. Q-Square (Q²) Value**

Variables	Q ² Predict	RMSE	Information
Trusting Intention (M)	0.723	0.546	Good
Interest in Self-Declare Halal (Y)	0.477	0.737	Good

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026

Based on the table above, the Trusting Intention (M) variable has a Q² value of 0.723, indicating excellent predictive ability of the model. Meanwhile, the Interest in Self-Declare Halal (Y) variable has a Q² value of 0.477, which also shows good predictive ability. Therefore, the research model has good predictive relevance and is suitable for further analysis.

Table 6.1 Summary of Results of Direct and Indirect Effect Tests

Hypothesis	Connection	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	T statistics	P values
H1	X1 → Y	0,368	0,376	3,338	0,001
H2	X2 → Y	0,148	0,152	1,146	0,252
H3	X1 → M	0,319	0,320	3,298	0,001
H4	X2 → M	0,570	0,571	6,235	0,000
H5	M → Y	0,248	0,241	1,912	0,056
H6	X1 → M → Y	0,079	0,076	1,659	0,097
H7	X2 → M → Y	0.142	0.139	1,753	0.080

Source: SmartPLS output, 2026

Based on the results of the path coefficient test, the direction and strength of the relationships between variables in the research model can be determined, whether positive or negative, significant or insignificant. The path coefficient value indicates the extent of influence between constructs, thus providing a clearer picture of the causal relationships in the model. Furthermore, these results also demonstrate the contribution of each independent and intervening variable in influencing the dependent variable, both through direct and indirect influences.

Thus, this analysis provides an important basis for understanding the structure of the relationships between variables in the study and for explaining the results of previous hypothesis testing. Therefore, to provide a more comprehensive and visual overview, the following is a research model depicting the relationships between variables based on the obtained *path coefficient values*.

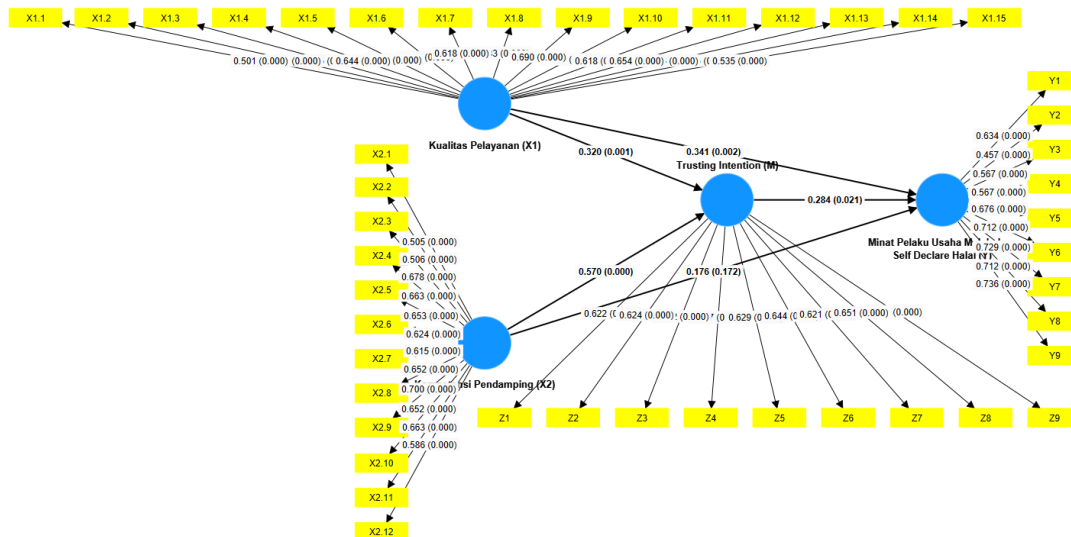


Figure 1. 1Model (Source: SmartPLS output, 2026)

Discussion

1. The Influence of Service Quality on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declaring Halal

The results of this study indicate that service quality has a positive and significant effect on business actors' interest in self-declare halal certification. Good service quality, such as clear information, responsive assistance, and ease of process, can increase business actors' interest and confidence in participating in the halal certification program. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), service quality influences attitudes and perceived behavioral control, which ultimately strengthen behavioral intention. These findings are supported by previous studies showing that quality services, outreach, and ease of certification procedures play an important role in increasing business actors' understanding, satisfaction, and participation in halal certification programs (Hastuti et al., 2024; Trisista et al., 2024; Jefri & Fitri, 2024).

2. The Influence of Companion Competence on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declaring Halal

The results of this study indicate that companion competence does not significantly influence business actors' interest in self-declare halal certification. This finding suggests that business actors' interest is more influenced by internal factors such as attitudes, understanding, perceived ease, and awareness rather than the competence of the assistants. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), intention is primarily shaped by attitudes and perceived behavioral control, while companion competence functions only as a supporting factor. Previous studies also show that many business actors still face obstacles related to literacy, understanding of procedures, and access to information, so the success of the self-declare halal program depends more on the readiness and awareness of

the business actors themselves (Muhammad Rusdi, 2025; Laila & Alim, 2024; Purborini & Harsanty, 2024). Therefore, strategies to increase business actors' interest should focus more on improving education, socialization, and ease of access to halal certification programs.

3. The Influence of Service Quality on Trusting Intention

The results of this study indicate that service quality has a positive and significant effect on trusting intention. Good service quality, such as responsive assistance, clear information, transparency, and ease of process, can increase business actors' trust in facilitators and the halal self-declare certification system. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), service quality helps shape positive beliefs and perceptions that strengthen behavioral intentions. Previous studies also support these findings, showing that service quality plays an important role in building trust and increasing positive perceptions toward halal certification services (Iffat & Harahap, 2024; Camelia & Ekawati, 2024). Therefore, improving service quality is essential to strengthen business actors' trust and support the successful implementation of the halal self-declare program.

4. The Influence of Companion Competence on Trusting Intention

The results of this study indicate that companion competence has a positive and significant effect on trusting intention. Competent halal assistants, through technical skills, understanding of halal regulations, communication abilities, and professional attitudes, are able to increase business actors' trust in the halal self-declare certification process. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), companion competence helps shape positive beliefs that strengthen behavioral intentions and trust. Previous studies also support these findings, showing that competent assistants play an important role in providing guidance, reducing uncertainty, improving understanding, and building trust among business actors toward the halal certification system (Ichsan et al., 2024; Nuraini et al., 2026). Therefore, improving the competence of halal assistants through training and capacity development is essential to support the success of the halal self-declare certification program.

5. The Influence of Trusting Intention on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declaring Halal

The results of this study indicate that trusting intention does not significantly influence business actors' interest in self-declare halal certification. This finding suggests that trust alone is not sufficient to encourage business actors' intention to participate in halal certification, as other factors such as perceived ease, benefits, literacy, and economic considerations are more dominant. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), intention is influenced not only by trust but also by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Previous studies also support these findings, showing that trust often acts as a supporting factor rather than the main determinant of intention or decision-making in the halal context (Thohiriyah et al., 2025; Warty et al., 2025). Therefore, efforts to increase business actors' interest in halal certification should focus more on simplifying procedures, improving literacy, and providing practical benefits for MSMEs.

6. The Influence of Service Quality on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declaring Halal through Trusting Intention

The results of this study indicate that service quality does not significantly influence business actors' interest in self-declare halal certification through trusting intention.

Although service quality can increase trust, trusting intention is not strong enough to mediate the relationship between service quality and business actors' interest. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), business actors tend to prioritize practical factors such as ease of procedures, efficiency, and economic benefits rather than psychological factors such as trust. Previous studies also support these findings, showing that participation in halal certification is more influenced by ease of access, process efficiency, understanding, and direct benefits perceived by business actors (Rohman & Sudiro, 2023; Nasik et al., 2025). Therefore, service quality has a stronger direct effect on interest rather than an indirect effect through trusting intention.

7. The Influence of Mentor Competence on Business Actors' Interest in Self-Declaring Halal through Trusting Intention

The results of this study indicate that companion competence does not significantly influence business actors' interest in self-declare halal certification through trusting intention. Although companion competence can increase trusting intention, the trust formed is not strong enough to mediate the relationship between companion competence and business actors' interest. In the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), business actors' intention is more influenced by internal factors such as attitudes, perceived ease, and perceived benefits rather than trust alone. Previous studies also show that companion competence mainly supports the implementation and understanding of the halal certification process rather than directly shaping initial interest among business actors (Fathurohim & Mulyah, 2024; Nasik et al., 2025). Therefore, efforts to increase business actors' interest should focus more on improving awareness, simplifying procedures, and enhancing the practical benefits of halal certification programs.

Conclusion

1. Service Quality (X1) has an effect on the Interest of Business Actors in Self-Declaring Halal (Y), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $3.338 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$.
2. Companion Competence (X2) does not influence the Interest of Business Actors in Self-Declaring Halal (Y), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $1.146 < t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.252 > 0.05$.
3. Service Quality (X1) has an effect on Trusting Intention (M), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $3.298 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$.
4. Companion Competence (X2) has an effect on Trusting Intention (M), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $6.235 > t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$.
5. *Trusting Intention* (M) does not influence the Interest of Business Actors in Self-Declaring Halal (Y), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $1.912 < t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.056 > 0.05$.
6. *Trusting Intention* (M) does not mediate the relationship between Service Quality (X1) and Interest in Self-Declaring Halal (Y), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $1.659 < t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.097 > 0.05$.
7. *Trusting Intention* (M) does not mediate the relationship between Companion Competence (X2) and Interest in Self-Declaring Halal (Y), this is obtained by a t-statistic value of $1.753 < t\text{-table } 1.96$ and a p-value of $0.080 > 0.05$.

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