

Platformized Halal Governance in Indonesia: Religious Authority, Consumer Citizenship, and Digital Public Legitimacy

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ABSTRACT

Halal has expanded in Indonesia from a narrow category of religious compliance into a public system of trust, legitimacy, and moral regulation shaped by state institutions, religious authorities, and digital intermediaries. In platform-mediated commerce, halal now influences not only market choice but also the public ordering of credibility, responsibility, and acceptable conduct. This article examines how halal operates as a platformized form of public authority in contemporary Indonesia. It adopts a qualitative, theory-driven approach that combines scholarship on halal governance, digital religion, political authority, and consumer citizenship. The analysis draws on academic literature, policy and regulatory materials, certification-related public information, media coverage, and platform-facing commercial and influencer content connected to halal discourse in Indonesia. Analytical attention is directed to regulatory authority, religious legitimacy, platform visibility, influencer mediation, reputational sanction, and consumer citizenship as interrelated mechanisms through which halal becomes publicly actionable. Halal emerges as a hybrid governance device in which state regulation, clerical legitimacy, platform circulation, and consumer practice jointly structure moral order in everyday market life. The article concludes that halal in digital Indonesia should be understood not merely as a market attribute but as a dispersed form of public power embedded in certification, visibility, and reputational governance. It contributes to current scholarship by providing an integrated framework for explaining how religion shapes political authority through platform-mediated consumption and how digital infrastructures reconfigure state–religion relations in everyday public life.

Keywords: Halal, Political Authority, Digital Governance, Consumer Citizenship

INTRODUCTION

Halal in contemporary Indonesia has expanded far beyond its classical role as a dietary or jurisprudential category and now operates as a public grammar of legitimacy, order, and moral belonging. In urban digital life, halal increasingly structures how products are evaluated, how trust is distributed, and how ordinary citizens interpret responsible participation in the marketplace (Dzukroni & Ulinuha, 2023). This transformation matters because halal is no longer confined to clerical interpretation or state certification alone (Marnita, 2024). It circulates through platforms, influencers, branding systems, and consumer publics that translate religious normativity into everyday judgments about safety, authenticity, and civic virtue. Such circulation turns halal into a practical interface between religion and governance rather than a narrow matter of private piety. Indonesia is a particularly important site for examining this shift because state institutions, Islamic organizations, and digital intermediaries all participate in defining what counts as publicly legitimate halal conduct. The rise of halal discourse in platformed consumer life therefore opens a wider question about how religious authority is converted into everyday forms of public power (Suganda et al., 2025).

The central problem lies in the fact that halal is increasingly mobilized as a governance device while often appearing as a matter of lifestyle preference or market transparency (Solahudin & Fakhruroji, 2019). Platform environments make halal highly visible, emotionally resonant, and easily portable across commercial and civic spaces, yet this visibility obscures the institutional struggles that determine who is

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authorized to define halal legitimacy. The issue is not simply whether a product is religiously compliant. It is also who can certify moral reliability, how those claims become persuasive, and what kinds of public authority are exercised through consumer guidance. This has immediate real-world significance because halal labeling, platform reviews, influencer recommendations, and public controversies can affect business survival, reputational order, and the moral status of everyday consumption. In such settings, consumer decisions become politically consequential because they are tied to claims about duty, trust, and public responsibility (Rahim et al., 2025). The governance of halal therefore extends beyond regulation in the narrow administrative sense and enters the broader terrain of social discipline and moral ordering. What appears as consumer choice is often structured by institutions and actors competing to govern the moral terms of public economic life.

A substantial body of scholarship already demonstrates that halal has become a major site of contemporary Islamic authority, market expansion, and identity formation. Research on halal governance has shown that certification regimes, state agencies, and religious councils play an important role in standardizing legitimacy and organizing trust (Marcellina & Arsyianti, 2025). Studies of digital religion and influencer culture have also established that social media platforms transform how authority is recognized, circulated, and contested in everyday Muslim life.

Work on consumer citizenship further suggests that markets increasingly operate as moral arenas in which subjects are invited to perform belonging, responsibility, and ethical commitment through patterns of purchase and endorsement (Isra'iyah et al., 2025). Existing scholarship therefore makes clear that halal is not merely a legal category and that digital mediation does more than accelerate communication. It also shows that religious authority is no longer monopolized by formal institutions, since digital intermediaries increasingly shape how ordinary Muslims encounter normativity in public life. What is already known, then, is that halal governance, platform visibility, and religious influence are deeply interconnected in contemporary Indonesia.

What remains less clearly specified is how these developments should be theorized in relation to political authority and public power. Much of the existing literature still treats halal as an issue of market expansion, branding, or pious consumption, even when it acknowledges the role of the state and religious institutions (Bernardo & Ray, 2025). That framing captures important dimensions of economic and cultural change, but it underplays the extent to which halal functions as a mode of governing everyday conduct. It is still insufficiently clear how digital visibility, religious certification, and consumer trust interact to produce enforceable expectations about proper public behavior. There is also limited conceptual clarity about how influencers, review cultures, and platform recommendation systems become intermediaries of authority rather than merely channels of promotion. Without a stronger account of these mechanisms, halal risks appearing as a lifestyle domain rather than as a field in which legitimacy, regulation, and moral order are actively produced (Nugraha, 2021). The unresolved question concerns how halal becomes a practical site of authority formation across state institutions, religious actors, commercial platforms, and digitally mobilized publics.

The research gap becomes sharper when approached through the concepts of hybrid moral governance and consumer citizenship. A hybrid governance perspective is necessary because authority over halal is not monopolized by any single institutional center, but distributed across ministries, certification bodies, ulama, brands, influencers, marketplaces, and user publics (Raya, 2024). Consumer citizenship is equally important because it captures how ordinary subjects are addressed not simply as

buyers, but as moral participants expected to enact responsibility through consumption choices. Yet these concepts have rarely been brought together in a way that fully explains the political authority embedded in halal's digital circulation.

Existing studies often analyze state regulation, religious legitimacy, and influencer mediation separately, which obscures the way they reinforce one another in practice. A more integrated framework is needed to explain how halal moves from certification and religious reasoning into platform rankings, brand trust, and reputational sanction (Putri et al., 2025). The gap therefore lies in the absence of a conceptually unified account of halal as a platform-mediated field of public authority. Such an account is crucial if digital halal culture is to be understood as part of political order rather than as an accessory to consumer modernity.

Filling this gap is theoretically justified because halal in digital Indonesia operates at the intersection of regulation, legitimacy, and social discipline. A purely market-centered account would miss the role of religious institutions and state frameworks in defining the normative boundaries of acceptable consumption. A purely legal account would miss how authority is extended and stabilized through influencer mediation, platform circulation, and public moral signaling (Nurillah, 2023). A purely cultural account would underestimate the extent to which everyday consumption becomes structured by institutionalized expectations backed by certification, publicity, and reputational pressure. The combined framework of hybrid moral governance and consumer citizenship makes it possible to explain how authority is exercised through both formal regulation and diffuse public participation (Karyani et al., 2024). It also clarifies why halal can function simultaneously as a source of trust, a mechanism of discipline, and a claim to public legitimacy. This is precisely the kind of analytical move required for a journal concerned with how religion shapes political authority and how political systems transform religious ideas into practical forms of public governance.

From this foundation, the article is guided by a set of interrelated research questions. How does halal become a form of public authority rather than remaining a narrow category of religious compliance or market preference. Through what mechanisms do state regulation, religious certification, platform visibility, and influencer mediation combine to shape the moral legitimacy of consumption in Indonesia. In what ways does platformed halal discourse transform ordinary buying decisions into acts of consumer citizenship tied to public responsibility and moral belonging. How do digital intermediaries acquire authority in halal governance, and under what conditions do they reinforce or displace established religious and regulatory institutions. Why do controversies over halal products, endorsements, and certification carry consequences that extend beyond commerce into the public ordering of trust and legitimacy. These questions move the discussion beyond branding, lifestyle, or market segmentation and place halal within the broader study of governance, legitimacy, and authority. They also make visible the way everyday economic life becomes a site where religion and public power are mutually constituted.

The urgency of these questions is heightened by the rapid expansion of digital commerce, influencer economies, and halal public discourse in Indonesia. As platform infrastructures become central to how moral trust is organized, the governance of consumption increasingly shapes wider relations between religion, state authority, and public legitimacy (Koswara & Herlina, 2025). This article contributes by reframing halal not as a secondary cultural marker of Muslim consumer life, but as a politically consequential infrastructure of everyday governance. It also contributes to POLAR's intellectual agenda by showing that religious authority in contemporary Indonesia operates not only through law, institutions,

or formal preaching, but through platform-mediated consumer publics where legitimacy is constantly negotiated. The analysis therefore speaks to broader debates on state–religion relations, public sphere contestation, and the transformation of authority under digital capitalism. Halal consumer citizenship is not a marginal lifestyle phenomenon. It is a field in which moral order, governance power, and religious legitimacy are being actively recomposed in one of the world’s largest Muslim democracies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article employs a qualitative, theory-driven research design grounded in interpretive political sociology to examine how halal becomes a platform-mediated form of public authority in Indonesia. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the central object of inquiry consists of meanings, legitimacy claims, institutional relations, and moral classifications that cannot be adequately captured through numerical indicators alone (Grzeszczyk, 2018). The analytical framework combines hybrid moral governance and consumer citizenship in order to explain how state regulation, religious certification, platform visibility, and influencer mediation jointly shape the governance of everyday consumption. This framework is particularly suitable because the article is not concerned only with market behavior or doctrinal compliance, but with how authority is assembled across regulatory, religious, commercial, and digital arenas.

A qualitative strategy allows close attention to symbolic cues, discursive framing, reputational mechanisms, and the practical ways in which halal norms are made publicly persuasive and socially binding. It also makes it possible to trace how religious legitimacy is translated into everyday governance without reducing the phenomenon to either formal state policy or consumer preference alone. This design works well for the research because halal in contemporary Indonesia operates as a layered field of authority in which multiple actors compete and coordinate to define legitimate conduct. Such an approach is therefore methodologically coherent with a study focused on political authority, religion, and the governance of public moral order under digital conditions (Bhangu et al., 2023; Surawy-Stepney et al., 2023).

The data consist of academic literature, policy and regulatory documents, halal governance materials, certification-related public information, media coverage, platform-facing commercial content, influencer communication, and publicly accessible digital controversies relevant to halal consumer life in Indonesia. Data collection was conducted through purposive selection of materials directly related to halal regulation, religious legitimacy, platform mediation, consumer trust, public controversy, and influencer-based authority claims in digital commerce. The units of analysis are not individual consumers as survey respondents, but the discursive and institutional expressions through which halal is governed and made authoritative, including certification narratives, state statements, influencer performances, platform-facing claims, and public disputes over legitimacy and moral compliance.

A qualitative coding matrix served as the main analytical instrument for organizing the material according to key dimensions, namely regulatory authority, religious certification, platform visibility, influencer mediation, consumer citizenship, reputational sanction, and public legitimacy (Sierpe et al., 2025). These dimensions functioned as the principal variables for tracing how halal becomes actionable as a form of hybrid moral governance in everyday digital consumption. Trustworthiness was strengthened through source triangulation across legal, media, institutional, and platform-related materials; reliability was supported by conceptual consistency in coding and a transparent audit trail of source selection and thematic classification; and validity was enhanced by maintaining explicit alignment between the research questions, the applied theoretical framework, and the selected cases and documents (Toker, 2022). Because the study relies on publicly accessible documentary

and digital materials and does not involve direct interaction with human participants, formal informed consent was not required; nevertheless, ethical safeguards were maintained by treating reputationally sensitive and religiously charged material with caution, avoiding selective misrepresentation, and preserving confidentiality wherever non-public individual information could otherwise be inferred.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Halal in digital Indonesia functions as more than a marker of religious compliance or consumer reassurance. It operates as a practical instrument through which everyday conduct is evaluated, trusted, and disciplined across market and public life. Certification regimes, influencer guidance, digital reviews, and platform-mediated controversy together transform halal into a visible architecture of normative order. In this setting, consumption is no longer framed as a merely private act of preference (Kholili et al., 2024). It becomes a site where moral legitimacy is enacted and publicly interpreted. This shift is politically significant because it relocates religious authority into routine economic action without requiring overt state coercion at every point of interaction. Halal therefore emerges as a governance device that links regulation, reputation, and public morality in a single operational field. The digital marketplace becomes one of the principal arenas through which that field is organized (Jalaluddin et al., 2024).

A central pattern concerns the regulatory character of halal itself. Certification, labeling, and public guidance are not simply informational tools designed to help consumers identify acceptable goods. They are mechanisms that classify actors, standardize expectations, and shape who appears trustworthy within the public economy. Halal governance therefore works through routine distinctions between compliant and doubtful, reliable and suspect, legitimate and potentially harmful (Nurhamidah, 2025). Such distinctions structure behavior in advance of formal sanction because businesses, consumers, and intermediaries anticipate reputational consequences. The practical force of halal lies in its capacity to govern conduct through recognition rather than through direct prohibition alone. This governance is especially effective because it is framed as protective, ethical, and socially responsible rather than merely disciplinary. Religious normativity is thus converted into a usable public order instrument that travels across administrative, commercial, and digital settings.

This conversion becomes possible because halal authority is distributed across multiple actors rather than concentrated in a single institutional center. State bodies, certifying institutions, clerical organizations, platform intermediaries, brands, and influencers all participate in defining what halal means in practice. Their authority is not identical, but it becomes mutually reinforcing when certification, endorsement, and digital visibility converge. A product may gain legitimacy through formal approval, yet that legitimacy often requires amplification and interpretation in public-facing digital environments (Artikel et al., 2025). Conversely, influencers may shape consumer confidence, but their claims often gain durability when attached to recognizable institutional or clerical references. Halal governance in Indonesia therefore depends on a hybrid form of authority composed of regulatory power, religious credibility, and communicative reach. This hybridization matters because it changes how public power operates. Normative order is produced through coordination among overlapping authorities rather than through a single command structure.

The moralization of consumption is another major dimension of this arrangement. Consumers are increasingly addressed not simply as market actors choosing among products, but as morally responsible subjects expected to demonstrate discernment, care, and religious seriousness. Consumption

becomes a field of citizenship in which everyday choices signal belonging to a trustworthy and disciplined public. This dynamic gives halal a civic quality that exceeds its doctrinal origins. A consumer who buys, endorses, or circulates halal-certified goods is participating in a wider public language of virtue, responsibility, and communal safety. The resulting form of consumer citizenship does not depend on formal political participation in the narrow sense. It is enacted through repeated market decisions that appear ethically consequential and socially legible. Everyday economic action is therefore reorganized as a site where public morality is reproduced.

Platform mediation intensifies this process by shaping which halal claims become visible, credible, and socially consequential. Algorithms, recommendation systems, engagement metrics, and viral controversy influence which products, endorsements, and warnings circulate most widely. Platform infrastructures do not create halal norms from nothing, but they reorganize the hierarchy of influence within halal governance by privileging content that is clear, affectively legible, and easily repeatable. This gives special prominence to actors able to combine religious vocabulary with aesthetic fluency, personal trust work, and platform-native communication styles. Halal legitimacy is thus increasingly co-produced through visibility management. A claim may be formally valid yet remain marginal if it fails to travel effectively through platform circuits. Conversely, a highly visible claim can acquire disproportionate public force when digitally mediated endorsement makes it appear urgent, authentic, and morally compelling. Platform power therefore becomes central to the public life of halal authority.

This mediated visibility also changes the structure of controversy. Disputes over ingredients, certification, endorsements, or brand behavior can rapidly escalate into public tests of moral reliability once clips, screenshots, or influencer commentary begin circulating across digital networks. Controversy then functions as a governance mechanism because it pressures firms, consumers, and regulatory actors to respond in the name of trust and public order. Platformed halal governance therefore does not rest on certification alone. It is sustained by the possibility that reputational sanction can be activated through digital publicity. This makes halal authority both stronger and more unstable. Stronger, because public amplification extends the reach of normative judgment well beyond formal regulatory channels. More unstable, because digitally intensified scrutiny can compress complex legal or procedural questions into simplified moral verdicts. Public legitimacy becomes highly sensitive to visibility conditions.

The interaction of these processes can be summarized through four linked dimensions: halal as governance device, hybrid authority, consumer citizenship, and platform mediation.

Table 1. Comparative Dimensions of Platformized Halal Governance in Indonesia

Analytical Dimension	Main Pattern	Political Implication
Halal as governance device	Certification and public guidance regulate everyday consumption	Religious norms become practical tools of governance
Hybrid authority	State institutions, ulama, certifiers, and influencers co-produce legitimacy	Authority is distributed across overlapping actors
Consumer citizenship	Consumption is framed as moral and civic responsibility	Everyday market action becomes publicly normative
Platform mediation	Visibility, endorsement, and controversy shape halal credibility	Digital platforms reorganize religious public authority

Table 1 clarifies that halal governance in digital Indonesia is produced through the convergence of regulatory, religious, civic, and platformed forms of authority. Halal operates as a governance device because it structures conduct through practical classifications that matter in everyday market life. Hybrid

authority explains why no single actor fully controls halal legitimacy, even though binding effects are still routinely produced. Consumer citizenship shows how normative expectations are internalized through ordinary acts of purchase, endorsement, and public signaling. Platform mediation reveals that authority is increasingly dependent on visibility and circulation rather than on institutional pronouncement alone. The table therefore supports the article's broader argument that halal in contemporary Indonesia is not merely a market attribute but a field of public power. Religious normativity becomes actionable when it is translated into recognizable governance tools, socially desirable consumer behavior, and digitally amplified legitimacy.

This interpretation extends existing scholarship on halal governance and digital religion by specifying the political dimension of their intersection. Prior research has established that halal certification is a key mechanism of trust formation and market regulation in Muslim-majority contexts. Studies of digital religion and influencer authority have likewise shown that online visibility reshapes how legitimacy is recognized and contested. The present discussion adds that these developments should also be read through the lens of political authority. Halal governance is not confined to consumer reassurance or cultural branding. It is a practical mode of regulating everyday conduct through a distributed system of authority that includes the state but is not reducible to it. This perspective strengthens the study of consumer citizenship by showing that market participation can become a site of moral governance and public discipline. It also broadens the analysis of state–religion relations by locating their interaction within ordinary digital commerce.

The implications for political authority are substantial. Religion here does not shape public power only through formal law, clerical decree, or institutional lobbying. It also operates through mundane decisions about what may be trusted, purchased, circulated, and recommended in everyday market life. This means that state–religion relations in Indonesia must be understood not only through official policy or constitutional arrangement, but also through the governance of public morality in consumer infrastructures. Halal becomes one of the languages through which legitimacy is distributed across state agencies, certifiers, platforms, and civic intermediaries. Public power is therefore exercised through dispersed normative coordination rather than only through centralized command. This does not make the state irrelevant. It makes state authority one component within a broader moral-regulatory field that includes non-state religious and digital actors. The governance of halal is thus a case of political authority being reassembled through hybrid institutional forms.

These dynamics also matter for public policy, markets, and democratic pluralism. Halal governance can stabilize trust and reduce uncertainty in a large and complex consumer environment, yet it can also narrow interpretive space when moral order is tied too tightly to reputational sanction and digitally amplified certainty. Platformized visibility can strengthen accountability, but it may also intensify pressures for simplification, moral panic, and rapid judgment. This creates tension between protection and pluralism. The same mechanisms that make halal governance effective in public life can also make it more vulnerable to overreach, commercial instrumentalization, and reduced tolerance for ambiguity. Businesses, regulators, and religious institutions therefore operate within a field where authority must be both credible and restrained. The democratic challenge lies in sustaining public trust without allowing one mode of moral certification to collapse diversity into uniformity. Halal governance is politically consequential precisely because it produces order while also shaping the boundaries of legitimate difference.

The discussion also reveals important strengths and limitations. One strength lies in the concept of hybrid moral governance, which makes visible the interaction among certification, religious legitimacy, civic obligation, and platformed circulation. Another lies in the repositioning of halal from a lifestyle or market theme into a field of political authority and public order. At the same time, platform dynamics vary across sectors, audiences, and commercial environments, meaning that the force of visibility, controversy, and endorsement may differ considerably by case. Public-facing materials also do not capture every backstage negotiation among regulators, brands, certifiers, and influencers. One particularly important complexity is that influencer authority can strengthen halal governance while simultaneously commercializing it. This does not weaken the analysis. It shows that governance and commodification may reinforce one another under digital conditions. The moral regulation of consumption is therefore inseparable from the political economy of visibility.

Future inquiry would benefit from closer comparison across platform types, commodity sectors, and regional Muslim markets in order to clarify how different infrastructures produce different configurations of halal authority. Greater attention is also needed to audience reception, especially how consumers interpret competing claims of certification, trust, and moral responsibility under conditions of high visibility and controversy. Research on gendered consumption, transnational halal influence, and platform moderation practices would deepen understanding of how public legitimacy is shaped across multiple scales. There is also substantial practical relevance for regulators, religious institutions, and commercial actors seeking to preserve trust without intensifying exclusionary moral enforcement or reputational volatility. More reflexive policy design could help balance certification integrity, platform accountability, and interpretive pluralism in digital commerce. Halal consumer citizenship in Indonesia thus offers a critical case for understanding how religion, governance, and platform power converge in the ordering of everyday public life.

CONCLUSION

Halal in digital Indonesia has become a practical field of public authority rather than a narrow category of religious compliance or consumer reassurance. The discussion has emphasized that halal now operates as a governance device through which trust, legitimacy, and moral order are organized across everyday market life. Certification, public guidance, influencer mediation, digital visibility, and reputational sanction together transform consumption into a socially regulated domain in which ordinary choices carry moral and civic meaning. Authority in this setting is hybrid because it is co-produced by state institutions, religious actors, certifiers, platforms, brands, and digitally mobilized publics rather than monopolized by any single institution.

Consumer citizenship emerges through this arrangement as individuals are addressed not only as buyers but as morally responsible participants in a public economy ordered by halal legitimacy. Platform mediation intensifies these dynamics by determining which claims become visible, credible, and urgent in digitally networked environments. Halal governance therefore reveals how religion shapes public power through dispersed but consequential forms of regulation embedded in the infrastructures of everyday economic life.

The article contributes to the field by repositioning halal from a problem of branding, market segmentation, or lifestyle consumption into a problem of political authority, legitimacy, and governance. Its main analytical contribution lies in the use of hybrid moral governance and consumer citizenship to explain how religious normativity becomes actionable through the interaction of certification, institutional authority, digital mediation, and public moral expectation. This perspective extends existing scholarship on halal governance by

demonstrating that halal does not merely regulate product status but structures conduct, trust, and public responsibility in ways that resemble everyday governance. It also extends work on digital religion and influencer culture by showing that platform visibility is not simply a mechanism of communication, but a medium through which religious authority is redistributed and made publicly effective.

In relation to POLAR's intellectual agenda, the article shows how religion shapes public power beyond formal legal institutions by entering the routine ordering of markets, reputations, and civic belonging. The broader value of the argument lies in clarifying that state–religion relations in contemporary Indonesia are increasingly mediated through commercial and digital infrastructures where legitimacy is constantly negotiated and enforced. Halal consumer citizenship therefore becomes a particularly important lens for understanding how religious authority is transformed under conditions of platform-mediated governance.

Future research should deepen this framework through comparative analysis across sectors, platforms, regions, and Muslim markets in order to identify which dimensions of halal authority are specific to Indonesia and which reflect broader transformations in contemporary religious governance. Greater attention is also needed to audience reception, especially how different groups interpret competing claims of certification, trust, and moral responsibility under conditions of intense digital visibility. Research on gendered consumption, transnational halal influence, and platform moderation would further clarify how authority is organized across overlapping commercial, religious, and political scales. There is also practical importance in examining how regulators, religious institutions, and market actors can preserve trust and certification integrity without intensifying moral panic, excessive reputational sanction, or narrowing pluralism in consumer life. A more reflexive governance approach would need to balance public accountability, religious legitimacy, and interpretive openness within rapidly expanding digital marketplaces. Advancing this research agenda remains essential for understanding how religion, public power, and everyday governance are being recomposed in one of the world's largest Muslim democracies.

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