

Navigating Halal-Critical Materials In The Fashion Industry: A Socio-Legal Study Of Non-Halal Animal-Derived Products

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Abstract

The rapid growth of the fashion industry has increased demand for leather products such as shoes, bags, wallets, jackets, and accessories. However, some products still use pig skin without clear material disclosure, raising concerns about sharia compliance, transparency, and consumer protection for Muslim consumers. This study examines the use of pig skin in fashion products from the perspective of Islamic law and explores Muslim consumer awareness of this issue. Using a qualitative socio-legal approach, the research combines Islamic legal principles with empirical practices in the fashion industry. Data were collected through document analysis, interviews with Islamic scholars, halal facilitators, fashion MSME actors, and consumers, and field observations. The findings reveal that pig skin is prohibited in Islam and therefore incompatible with halal principles. Although consumer awareness of halal issues has increased, many Muslims still struggle to identify product materials due to inadequate labeling. The study also finds that the use of non-halal materials can reduce consumer trust and harm brand reputation, while transparent labeling and halal certification improve consumer confidence and market competitiveness. Strengthening halal literacy and labeling transparency is therefore essential in Indonesia's fashion industry.

Keywords

Pig Skin; Halal Fashion; Islamic Law; Socio-Legal

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1. INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry has become a vital component of the global and national creative economy, experiencing continuous growth over the past decades. Fashion is no longer regarded merely as a basic necessity but has evolved into a representation of identity, lifestyle, social status, and consumer preferences. Fashion products—including shoes, bags, wallets, jackets, belts, and accessories—are manufactured using a wide range of materials, including synthetic and animal-derived leather. In Muslim-majority societies, the expansion of the fashion industry has introduced an additional



dimension: the growing demand for products that are not only aesthetically appealing and high-quality but also compliant with Islamic principles.

In the fashion industry, the concept of halal extends beyond food. It encompasses permissible raw materials, production processes, distribution systems, and marketing practices that are free from prohibited (haram) and impure (najis) elements under Islamic law. Previous studies have shown that Muslim consumers increasingly consider halal attributes when purchasing non-food products, including cosmetics and fashion. Anwar reported that brand image and trust in halal brands significantly influence consumer loyalty toward Muslim fashion products (Anwar, 2025). Similarly, Salmiyah and Ali found that consumer religiosity strengthens the relationship between product quality and loyalty to halal fashion brands (Salmiyah & Ali, 2026). Furthermore, Rafdinal et al. (2024) demonstrated that digital information sources and perceived product quality play essential roles in shaping consumers' purchasing behavior in the halal fashion market. (Rafdinal et al., 2026)

Despite the rapid expansion of the global fashion industry, concerns remain about the use of non-halal materials, particularly pigskin. Pigskin is used in certain fashion products for its durability, soft texture, and relatively low price. Several international brands and imported products are reported to use pigskin as a raw material, yet information about its composition is often not clearly disclosed to consumers. This lack of transparency presents a significant concern for Muslim consumers, as pork and all its derivatives are explicitly prohibited in Islam. From the perspective of Islamic law, pigs are classified as both haram and najis. Tokan et al. emphasize that religious fatwas in Indonesia classify pig skin as an impure material that cannot be equated with permissible alternatives. (Toka et al., 2024)

Consequently, the use of pig skin in fashion products is not merely a material issue but also a matter of Sharia compliance, halal assurance, and consumer protection. Although research on halal fashion has expanded considerably, most prior studies have focused on consumer behavior, brand loyalty, marketing strategies, and purchase intentions regarding Muslim fashion products. Sitorus and Faujiah noted that the halal fashion industry has experienced rapid growth, particularly in Indonesia (Sitorus & Faujiah, 2023). Likewise, Maziyyah et al. identified several dominant research themes in Indonesian halal fashion, including consumer motivation, modest fashion and halal lifestyle, consumer purchasing behavior, product development, and halal fashion branding. (Maziyyah et al., 2023)

However, studies on halal-critical raw materials, especially the use of pigskin in fashion products, remain limited. Existing research has largely emphasized marketing perspectives, while integrative analyses that combine Islamic legal perspectives, business practices, and consumer awareness remain scarce. Consequently, empirical research adopting a socio-legal approach to examine non-halal materials in fashion products alongside consumer behavior remains underdeveloped. This study contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, it specifically examines pig skin as a halal-

critical material in the fashion industry rather than discussing halal fashion in general. Second, it integrates Islamic legal perspectives with market realities through interviews with Islamic jurisprudence scholars, halal facilitators, fashion MSME entrepreneurs, and Muslim consumers. Third, it offers policy implications by emphasizing the importance of transparent labeling of raw materials and strengthening halal governance within the fashion supply chain.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the use of pig skin in fashion products from the perspective of Islamic law while examining the level of awareness among Muslim consumers regarding non-halal materials. Specifically, it addresses three research questions: (1) How does Islamic law view the use of pig skin in fashion products? (2) What is the level of Muslim consumer awareness regarding non-halal materials used in fashion products? (3) How do business actors respond to the growing demand for halal-compliant fashion products? The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by enriching the discourse on halal fashion through the perspective of halal-critical raw materials and, practically, by providing recommendations for policymakers, halal certification authorities, and fashion industry stakeholders to strengthen Muslim consumer protection. In addition, the study is expected to serve as a reference for fashion MSMEs seeking to enhance their competitiveness by adopting halal materials and increasing transparency in product information.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative socio-legal approach to examine the interaction between the normative framework of Islamic law and its empirical implementation within the fashion industry. This approach was selected because the issue of using pig skin in fashion products extends beyond Islamic legal rulings on halal and haram. It also involves the practical implementation of these rulings in production processes, halal certification, and distribution, as well as the responses of both business actors and consumers. Therefore, the study seeks to bridge the normative principles of Islamic law with the socioeconomic realities of the contemporary fashion industry.

The study utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews using purposive sampling, in which informants were deliberately selected for their relevance to the research objectives. The informants consisted of four groups. The first group included Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) scholars and Islamic economics experts who provided insights into the Islamic legal perspective on the use of pig skin and halal principles in the fashion industry. The second group comprised halal certification officials and halal facilitators with expertise in halal certification procedures, critical control points, and halal assurance systems. The third group consisted of fashion industry practitioners, including small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), who shared their experiences regarding production practices, raw material selection, and the challenges of implementing

halal standards. The fourth group included Muslim consumers, who were interviewed to explore their awareness, preferences, and purchasing behavior concerning halal fashion products.

Secondary data were obtained through document analysis, including primary Islamic legal sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, classical and contemporary scholarly opinions, relevant fatwas on halal products, and Islamic legal maxims (qawā'id fiqhiyyah). The study also reviewed national regulations, including Law No. 33 of 2014 on Halal Product Assurance, regulations issued by the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH), and other policy documents related to halal fashion products and Muslim consumer protection. In addition, scholarly literature, including journal articles, books, and previous studies, was examined to strengthen the analytical framework.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting, organizing, and focusing interview data to align with the research objectives. As noted by Fadli (2021), data reduction provides a clearer understanding of the findings and facilitates subsequent data collection and analysis. The reduced data were then presented in descriptive narratives and tables to facilitate interpretation.

Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying recurring patterns, relationships, and themes that addressed the research questions. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from different categories of informants. This technique enhanced the validity and consistency of the data. Overall, the research process consisted of identifying the research problem, selecting informants, collecting and analyzing data, and formulating conclusions and policy recommendations.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study addresses three main research questions: (1) the Islamic legal perspective on the use of pig skin in fashion products, (2) the level of awareness among Muslim consumers regarding non-halal materials, and (3) the responses of business actors to the increasing demand for halal fashion products. Based on in-depth interviews with Islamic jurisprudence scholars, halal facilitators, fashion MSME owners, and Muslim consumers, the main findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Interview Findings

Informant	Position	Findings	Implications
Dr. Nurlaili	Halal Product Assistance Institution,	Critical halal issues in fashion include raw materials, tanning processes, dyes, and	(1) Halal compliance in fashion must be monitored throughout the entire supply chain. (2)

	UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri	potential contamination by najis during production.	Stronger halal supervision is required.
Dr. Azidni	Campus Coordinator, Association of Islamic Economists	(1) Pig skin is not compliant with Islamic law and should be avoided. (2) Halal labeling increases confidence among Muslim consumers.	(1) Pig skin is a halal-critical material. (2) Halal certification provides economic value by strengthening consumer trust.
Bunga	Owner of Mumins Official	The use of non-halal materials reduces consumer trust.	Halal compliance positively influences brand reputation.
Syahid	Fashion MSME Entrepreneur	Raw materials should be tested and disclosed transparently to consumers.	Transparency is essential for consumer confidence and business sustainability.
Naufal	Muslim Consumer	Rejects pig skin products regardless of attractive design.	Muslim consumer awareness of halal issues continues to increase.

3.1. Critical Analysis of the Use of Pig Skin in Fashion Products from the Perspective of Islamic Law

In Islam, halal fashion serves two primary functions. First, it fulfills the religious obligation of covering the awrah (parts of the body that must be covered according to Islamic teachings). Second, it enhances personal appearance while preserving human dignity before both society and Allah. Consequently, clothing in Islam is not merely a material necessity but also embodies spiritual, moral, and social values. Muslim fashion, which refers to clothing that complies with Islamic principles, has undergone a significant transformation in recent years. (Mega Oktaviany, Ardelia Maharani, 2025)

As the industry has evolved, halal fashion has become more than a religious necessity; it has emerged as a lifestyle trend among Muslim communities. Nugraha argues that halal fashion has adapted to changing consumer preferences and has become an important cultural and commercial trend

(Pratama et al., 2023). Similarly, Zaki and Nazir emphasize that the halal lifestyle is fundamental for Muslims because halal products are closely associated with goodness, cleanliness, hygiene, and well-being. In this context, the selection of raw materials has become a critical issue in the fashion industry, particularly when products contain prohibited materials such as pigskin. (Zaki & Nazir, 2025)

The interview findings indicate that the use of pig skin in fashion products is considered inconsistent with Islamic principles. Islamic jurisprudence experts explained that, although the general principle of mu'amalah (commercial transactions) permits all activities unless explicitly prohibited, this principle does not apply to objects that are intrinsically forbidden (*haram li dhatihi*). Since pigs are explicitly prohibited in the Qur'an, pig skin cannot be regarded as a permissible material for fashion products intended for Muslim consumers. Critically, the issue extends beyond the legal status of pig skin to encompass transparency and consumer protection. In the global fashion industry, manufacturers do not always disclose the origin or composition of product materials.

As a result, Muslim consumers may unknowingly purchase products containing prohibited materials. This situation creates information asymmetry between producers and consumers. From the perspective of Islamic economics, such practices contradict the ethical principles of honesty (*sidq*), transparency, and fairness in commercial transactions. Consumers have the right to obtain complete and accurate information regarding the products they purchase so that they can make informed decisions consistent with their religious beliefs.

Furthermore, the presence of pig skin in fashion products highlights broader challenges within the halal fashion supply chain. Halal fashion should not be evaluated solely based on modest designs or compliance with Islamic dress codes. Rather, halal compliance must encompass every stage of the value chain, including raw material sourcing, manufacturing, processing, storage, distribution, and marketing. Accordingly, halal fashion should be understood as a comprehensive system rather than merely a symbolic representation of Islamic identity.

From the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the classical schools of thought differ on the permissibility of using leather from animals that are not lawful for consumption. The Shafi'i school permits the use of leather from certain non-halal animals after tanning, except pig and dog skin. Meanwhile, the Hanbali, Maliki, and Zahirī schools hold differing opinions regarding the legal effect of tanning animal hides (Sari & Syatar, 2012). Despite these differences, pig skin remains one of the most controversial materials in Islamic jurisprudence because of its explicit prohibition in Islamic sources.

In Indonesia, this legal position is reinforced by official religious rulings. Fatwa No. 56/2014 issued by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) and Fatwa No. 022/DFPA/II/1441 issued by the Al-Irsyad Fatwa Council state that pig skin is *najis* (ritually impure) and cannot be purified through the tanning process. These fatwas provide authoritative guidance for producers, consumers, and regulators in

determining the halal status of fashion products and serve as an important normative foundation for halal governance within the fashion industry. Interviews with Islamic economics experts further revealed that halal labeling significantly strengthens Muslim consumers' confidence in fashion products. A halal label serves as assurance that a product has been verified in accordance with Sharia standards. From a market perspective, compliance with halal principles creates economic value by increasing consumer trust, enhancing competitiveness, expanding access to the growing Muslim market, and fostering long-term customer loyalty.

Conversely, the use of non-halal materials, such as pigskin, may erode public trust, damage brand reputation, and weaken market acceptance. Overall, the use of pig skin in fashion products presents significant challenges from both Islamic legal and Islamic economic perspectives. Legally, pig skin is classified as a prohibited material and therefore should not be used in products intended for Muslim consumers. Economically, the use of such materials may generate consumer distrust, undermine brand credibility, and hinder the sustainable development of the halal fashion industry. Consequently, fashion businesses should demonstrate a strong commitment to sourcing halal-certified raw materials, ensuring transparency in product labeling, and implementing robust halal supply chain management. These measures are essential for protecting Muslim consumers while fostering a sustainable and globally competitive halal industry

3.2. Muslim Consumer Awareness of Non-Halal Materials in Fashion Products

This study finds that Muslim consumers' awareness of non-halal materials in fashion products has gradually increased. Consumer informants stated that they would reject fashion products made from pig skin, even if the products featured attractive designs or were produced by well-known international brands. These findings indicate that Muslim consumers increasingly prioritize halal compliance over fashion trends or brand prestige. Nurhaliza et al. also argue that halal lifestyle and halal awareness play significant roles in shaping purchasing decisions, particularly among female consumers. (Nurhaliza et al., 2025)

Consumer awareness, however, varies across different socioeconomic groups. Sofiani (2018) explains that Muslim consumers' legal awareness of halal products can be assessed through four indicators: knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and legal behavior. While lower-middle-income Muslim consumers generally possess limited knowledge of halal regulations and policies, middle- and upper-income consumers tend to have a better understanding of halal laws and certification systems.

Consequently, they are more likely to consider halal labels and certifications when purchasing products and can even assess the authenticity of halal certification before making purchasing decisions. Previous studies have identified several factors influencing halal consumption behavior. Bachtiar et al

found that product cleanliness, quality, and compliance with halal standards are major determinants of consumer preferences. At the same time, producers face considerable challenges in maintaining halal integrity throughout the supply chain. (Adamsah & Subakti, 2022)

Their study further demonstrates that halal certification enhances both product competitiveness and consumer trust. Similarly, Eka Putra et al. reported that halal consumption behavior is influenced by religiosity, trust in halal certification, attitudes, subjective norms, and halal literacy (Eka Putra et al., 2025). These findings suggest that Muslim consumers' purchasing decisions are driven not only by functional product attributes but also by religious beliefs, social influences, and their understanding of halal principles.

In the context of fashion products, the presence of halal certification and transparent information regarding raw materials plays a crucial role in building consumer confidence and encouraging purchase intentions. Assyarofi and Wulandari (2023) found that religiosity has a significant influence on purchasing decisions for halal consumer goods (Assyarofi & Wulandari, 2023). Their study also revealed that religiosity does not mediate the relationship between halal labeling and purchasing decisions, indicating that halal labels directly influence consumer choices.

However, religiosity partially mediates the relationship between halal awareness and purchasing decisions, meaning that the positive effect of halal awareness becomes stronger among consumers with higher levels of religiosity. Furthermore, Nurlaili, a representative of the Halal Product Assistance Institution at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri, explained that the critical control points in halal fashion include raw materials, leather tanning processes, dyes, and the potential contamination of products with najis substances during production. Consequently, halal assurance in the fashion industry must be implemented throughout the entire supply chain, from raw material procurement to the distribution of finished products. This perspective demonstrates that halal compliance in fashion extends far beyond the selection of the primary material and requires comprehensive oversight at every stage of production.

Despite increasing awareness among Muslim consumers, many interview participants acknowledged difficulties identifying the materials used in fashion products due to inadequate labeling. Many products simply display general descriptions such as "genuine leather" or "synthetic blend" without specifying the actual source of the materials. This lack of transparency creates information asymmetry between producers and consumers, making it difficult for Muslim consumers to determine whether a product complies with Islamic principles.

These findings indicate that although halal awareness among Muslim consumers continues to grow, it is not yet fully supported by sufficient product information in the marketplace. Therefore, stronger regulatory frameworks, improved halal literacy, and greater transparency in raw material labeling are essential to enable Muslim consumers to make informed purchasing decisions consistent

with Islamic values. Such measures would not only strengthen consumer protection but also enhance trust in the halal fashion industry and encourage sustainable market development.

3.3. Business Responses to the Growing Demand for Halal Fashion

From the perspective of business actors, this study reveals that the use of non-halal materials is perceived as a significant threat to consumer trust. Interviews with fashion MSME owners indicate that Muslim consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about the halal status of products, including fashion items. This shift in consumer preferences encourages businesses to be more selective in sourcing raw materials and to ensure that their products comply with Islamic principles. Daulay et al. argue that the successful implementation of the concepts of halal and tayyib in Indonesia's halal fashion industry requires strong commitment and motivation grounded in the objectives of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah. (Daulay et al., 2023)

In this context, the development of the halal fashion industry should not merely pursue economic growth but also safeguard Muslim consumers' welfare by providing products that meet their religious and ethical needs. The industry is therefore expected to remain dynamic and innovative while utilizing digital markets to strengthen the competitiveness of Indonesian halal fashion.

These findings suggest that fashion businesses should not focus solely on profit maximization but also consider broader objectives, including public welfare (maslahah), product quality, ethical business practices, and long-term sustainability, in accordance with Islamic values. Similarly, Mega Oktaviany et al. emphasize that meeting the needs and expectations of Indonesian consumers has become a key benchmark for product development. (Mega Oktaviany, Ardelia Maharani, 2025)

They further argue that establishing dedicated halal industrial zones is essential for supporting the growth of the halal fashion industry by providing an ecosystem that integrates manufacturers, fashion agents, and Muslim lifestyle media. This indicates that business responses to halal market demands require not only individual commitment but also supportive industrial infrastructure and collaborative marketing networks. Innovation has also emerged as a strategic factor in strengthening the halal fashion industry. Putriningsih and Stiawan contend that innovation in Muslim fashion contributes significantly to the development of the halal creative economy and reinforces an economic system based on Islamic values. (Putriningsih, S. & Stiawan, 2025) Such innovation includes developing contemporary fashion designs, using environmentally friendly, halal-certified materials, expanding digital marketing strategies, and creating products that cater to the preferences of younger Muslim consumers. Consequently, businesses that successfully integrate Islamic values with creativity are more likely to achieve sustainable competitive advantages.

Furthermore, Rusdah emphasizes that maximizing the development of Indonesia's halal fashion industry requires strong collaboration among government agencies, halal certification bodies, academics, business communities, and MSMEs (Rusdah, 2023). Without such cooperation, the industry is likely to encounter challenges, including limited access to halal raw materials, insufficient halal literacy, and the relatively weak competitiveness of domestic products. The interview findings reinforce these arguments. Bunga, owner of Mumins Official, explained that using non-halal materials can negatively affect the brand image and reduce customer trust.

This finding demonstrates that halal compliance has become an essential component of brand reputation, particularly in Muslim-majority markets. Businesses that consistently maintain halal standards are more likely to achieve higher levels of customer loyalty than those that neglect halal considerations. Similarly, Syahid, a fashion MSME entrepreneur, emphasized that raw materials should be carefully tested and transparently disclosed to consumers. Transparency is regarded as an important strategy for creating consumer confidence, strengthening trust, and fostering long-term customer relationships. In an increasingly competitive fashion market, providing clear information about material composition, production processes, and the origin of raw materials represents a valuable competitive advantage.

From an Islamic legal and economic perspective, Dr. Azidni, Campus Coordinator of the Association of Islamic Economists, affirmed that pig skin is incompatible with Islamic law and should not be used in fashion products. He further argued that halal labels significantly increase Muslim consumers' confidence in a product. This finding indicates that halal certification and labeling should be viewed not only as symbols of religious compliance but also as strategic economic instruments that enhance business competitiveness and expand access to the growing global Muslim market. From the perspective of halal assurance, Nurlaili from the Halal Product Assistance Institution at UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri explained that the critical control points of halal fashion extend beyond raw materials to include leather tanning processes, dyes, and the potential contamination of products with najis substances during manufacturing.

Therefore, halal supervision must cover the entire production chain, from raw material procurement to the distribution of finished products. These findings demonstrate that responding to halal market demands requires more than simply replacing prohibited materials; it also necessitates standardized production systems, comprehensive halal assurance procedures, and continuous monitoring throughout the supply chain. From the consumer perspective, Naufal, a Muslim consumer, stated that he would reject fashion products made from pig skin regardless of their attractive design. His response confirms that Muslim consumers' halal awareness continues to increase and has become a tangible market force influencing business strategies. Consumers no longer evaluate products solely

based on design, price, or brand reputation but increasingly consider whether products comply with Islamic principles.

Overall, this study demonstrates that business responses to the growing demand for halal fashion are reflected in the adoption of Sharia-compliant raw materials, greater transparency in product information, improvements in production quality and halal assurance systems, and the strategic use of halal certification and labeling. As Muslim consumers become increasingly aware of halal issues, fashion businesses that successfully adapt to these expectations will be better positioned to strengthen consumer trust, enhance brand reputation, and achieve sustainable competitive advantages in the rapidly expanding global halal fashion market.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the use of pig skin in fashion products is incompatible with the principles of Islamic law, as pigs are explicitly classified as haram (prohibited) under Sharia. Within the fashion industry, pigskin is a halal-critical material, meaning it is highly sensitive from a halal perspective and requires strict supervision throughout the production process. Accordingly, the halal status of fashion products should be determined not only by their final appearance but also by the origin of raw materials, manufacturing processes, storage, distribution, and the accuracy of the product information provided to consumers.

These findings highlight that halal compliance in the fashion industry must be understood as a comprehensive concept rather than merely a symbolic attribute or aesthetic feature. From the consumer perspective, the findings indicate that Muslim consumers' awareness of non-halal materials in fashion products has increased significantly. Many participants reported rejecting products made from pig skin even when they offered attractive designs, superior quality, or were produced by well-known international brands. This demonstrates that purchasing decisions among Muslim consumers are influenced not only by price, quality, and fashion trends but also by religious values, personal beliefs, and the desire for confidence that products comply with Islamic principles. Consequently, halal has evolved beyond a religious obligation to become an important component of the halal lifestyle and consumption preferences of contemporary Muslim consumers.

Despite this growing awareness, consumers continue to face considerable challenges in identifying the materials used in fashion products. Many products provide only limited information about material composition, making it difficult to distinguish genuine leather, synthetic leather, and pigskin. This lack of transparency places consumers at risk of making purchasing decisions that conflict with their religious beliefs and underscores the need for stronger consumer protection mechanisms in the non-food sector, particularly within the fashion industry.

From a business perspective, the study finds that adopting halal-compliant materials is a strategic advantage for enhancing consumer trust, strengthening brand reputation, and expanding access to the growing Muslim market. Conversely, the use of non-halal materials may reduce customer loyalty and create significant reputational risks. Therefore, compliance with halal principles should be viewed not only as a religious and ethical responsibility but also as a sound business strategy in an increasingly competitive market. Transparent disclosure of raw materials, systematic material verification, and halal certification are essential instruments for improving the competitiveness of the fashion industry.

Finally, this study highlights several challenges to the development of Indonesia's halal fashion industry, including weak raw-material traceability systems, limited implementation of halal regulations in the non-food sector, insufficient public education on halal issues, and uneven awareness among business actors of the importance of halal-critical materials. Unless these challenges are effectively addressed, Indonesia's substantial potential to become a leading global hub for the halal fashion industry may not be fully realized.

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