

Increasing Halal Industry MSMEs in Gorontalo through *Maqāšid Asy-Syari'ah*

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Abstract: Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are important in fostering economic development through broad-based community engagement, positioning this sector as a strategic priority for governments. The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions to the global economy, severely impacting MSMEs. Therefore, this study aimed to examine strategic measures to accelerate the growth and development of MSMEs in the halal industry in Gorontalo City. A field study method was adopted, and primary data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation, complemented by secondary data from literature. The collected data were analysed using a qualitative descriptive method in the framework of business economics and *Maqāšid Asy-Syari'ah* principles. The results showed that both internal initiatives by MSMEs entrepreneurs and external support from governmental institutions synergise to provide essential moral and material reinforcement. These efforts were critical to the survival and growth of MSMEs and consistent with *Maqāšid Asy-Syari'ah*. Strengthening MSMEs represented a fundamental endeavour in ensuring sustainable economic resilience.

Keywords: economic resilience, halal industry, *maqāšid asy-syari'ah*, MSMEs.

1. Introduction

National and global economies are experiencing significant disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This condition led to changes in social structures, thereby reducing economic performance in most countries, including Indonesia. The Central Statistics Agency (*Badan Pusat Statistik*, BPS) provides data on the decline in Indonesian financial performance since the first quarter of 2020, with an economic growth rate of only 2.97%. A significant decline was recorded in the second quarter of 2020, which grew by minus 5.32%. However, along with the new normal and the adaptation of new habits, there was a growth of 5.05% in the third quarter.¹

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Data on business operations and scale show that during the COVID-19 pandemic, 7.28% of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) ceased operations, while 60.64% continued. Other data suggest that the number of employees in medium-sized companies decreased by 23.36% from July to September 2020, and in MSMEs sector by 9.92%.² A study by Nalini,³ Utami,⁴ Pujowati et al.,⁵ Suryani,⁶ Safitri, and Nurlaila⁷ has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the economic sector for MSMEs entrepreneurs. However, according to Avriyanti,⁸ Komara et al., Nurlinda, and Sinuraya, MSMEs entrepreneurs remain optimistic about maintaining businesses amid the COVID-19 pandemic through digitalisation and cultural and moral strengthening. Adam et al. explained that businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic can be supported to reduce production costs and the number of products.⁹ Based on the study data, it is evident that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the economic conditions of MSMEs, but entrepreneurs are striving to maintain businesses.

According to data from the Office of Cooperatives, MSMEs, Industry, and Trade of Gorontalo Province (*Kantor Koperasi, Usaha Mikro, Kecil, dan Menengah (UMKM), Industri, dan Perdagangan Provinsi Gorontalo – Diskumperindag Gorontalo*), the types of MSMEs businesses in Gorontalo City include 8,879 micro-businesses, 1,938 small businesses, and 112 medium-sized businesses, totalling 11,013 types of MSMEs.¹⁰ Considering this number, the opportunity for economic development in Gorontalo region and the city is tremendous. However, based on data from Diskumperindag Gorontalo, there are currently 94,829 MSMEs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, 29,396

¹ Subdirektorat Indikator Statistik, *Analisis Hasil Survei Dampak Covid-19 Terhadap Pelaku Usaha* (Jakarta: BPS RI, 2020), iii.

² Subdirektorat Indikator Statistik, 3 and 10.

³ Siti Nuzul Laila Nalini, "Dampak Covid-19 terhadap Usaha Mikro, Kecil dan Menengah," *Jesya: Jurnal Ekonomi & Ekonomi Syariah* 4, no. 1 (2021): 662-669. <https://doi.org/10.36778/jesya.v4i1.278>

⁴ Betty Silfia Ayu Utami, "Dampak Pandemi Covid 19 Terhadap Sektor UMKM di Indonesia," *Economie: Jurnal Ilmu Ekonomi* 3, no. 1 (2021): 97-103. <https://dx.doi.org/10.30742/economie.v3i1.1511>

⁵ Yenik Pujowati, Putri Ari Saruhun Hasibuan, and Sucabhyo Tri Budiono, "Analisis Dampak Covid-19 Terhadap Pendapatan UMKM (Usaha Mikro, Kecil Menengah) Di Kabupaten Nganjuk," *Jurnal Pamator* 15, no. 1 (2022): 100-124. <https://doi.org/10.21107/pamator.v15i1.13922>

⁶ Evi Suryani, "Analisis Dampak Covid-19 Terhadap UMKM (Studi Kasus: Home Industri Klepon Di Kota Baru Driyorejo)," *Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian* 1, no. 8 (2021): 1591-1596. <https://doi.org/10.47492/jip.v1i8.272>

⁷ Ela Sapitri and Nurlaila, "Analisis Dampak Pandemi Covid-19 Terhadap Pendapatan Pelaku UMKM di Kabupaten Serdang Bedagai," *Sebatik* 27, no. 2 (2023): 491-498. <https://doi.org/10.46984/sebatik.v27i2.2356>

⁸ Shinta Avriyanti, "Strategi Bertahan Bisnis Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19 Dengan Memanfaatkan Bisnis Digital (Studi Pada UKM Yang Terdaftar Pada Dinas Koperasi, Usaha Kecil Dan Menengah Kabupaten Tabalong)," *Jurnal PubBis* 5, no. 1 (2021): 60-74. <https://doi.org/10.35722/pubbis.v5i1.380>

⁹ Arista Adam, Zainal Abidin Umar, and Idris Yanto Niode, "Analisis Strategi Bersaing dan Strategi Bertahan Pada UMKM di Kota Gorontalo Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19 (Studi Kasus UMKM Zoellen Sagela)," *Jambura: Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen dan Bisnis* 5, no. 2 (2022): 557-567. <https://doi.org/10.37479/jimb.v5i2.16495>

¹⁰ Source of data from the Office of Cooperatives, MSMEs Industry and Trade of Gorontalo Province in 2021.

or 31% of MSMEs experienced a decline and ceased operation.¹¹ Ismail explained that 31 MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.¹² This shows that financial conditions and economic instability have become significant problems for MSMEs entrepreneurs in Indonesia during the post-pandemic period, including in Gorontalo City.

Islam promotes life sustenance by fulfilling its basic (clothing, food, shelter), secondary needs (communication tools, vacations) and tertiary needs (gold jewellery, luxury vehicles).¹³ Business activities that serve as a source of income must be consistent with religious values or adhere to Shariah business ethics, including those in MSMEs sector. Doing business as a form of property ownership must be carried out correctly and adequately to bring benefits. Al-Syathibi suggests this benefit as an objective of the formation of Sharia law (*Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah*), namely protecting religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), protecting intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), protecting the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), protecting lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and protecting property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*).¹⁴

This study complements the shortcomings of existing investigations by examining how to strengthen MSMEs in halal industry in Gorontalo City during the COVID-19 pandemic. Halal sector presents a promising opportunity due to its broad reach in the existing target market, where users are not limited to Muslim communities but also include non-Muslims. Halal products receive positive consumer response on both a global and a national scale. MSMEs are a means of fostering economic growth through the broader community's participation as business actors, and are a priority for the government in advancing economic development.¹⁵ Specifically, this study outlines the steps to increase MSMEs strengthening in the post-pandemic period in Gorontalo City, and the analysis was carried out using *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah* method. The study was based on the fact that MSMEs entrepreneurs employ risk management in business operations, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic. This management readiness is achieved through strengthening efforts originating from both internal and external MSMEs entrepreneurs. Strengthening MSMEs is an effort to maintain the sustainability of life. Maintaining life in Islamic teachings is consistent with the pursuit of benefits (*Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah*).

¹¹ Isam, "Sebanyak 29.396 UMKM Gorontalo Tumbang Selama Pandemi Covid-19," <https://gorontaloprov.go.id/sebanyak-29-396-umkm-gorontalo-tumbang-selama-pandemi-covid-19/> accessed on 10 Oktober 2021.

¹² Juniaty Ismail, "Analisis Dampak Covid 19 Pada UMKM Provinsi Gorontalo," *Nominal: Barometer Riset Akuntansi dan Manajemen* 10, no. 2 (2021): 238-252. <https://doi.org/10.21831/nominal.v10i2.41248>

¹³ Muhammad Irkham Firdaus, and Jaya Sahputra, "Prinsip Maqosid Ash-Shariah dalam Konsep Kebutuhan Islam," *Tafaqquh: Jurnal Hukum Ekonomi Syariah dan Ahwal Syabsiah* 7, no. 1 (2022): 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.70032/ksdtd048>

¹⁴ Al-Syāthibī, *Al-Muawafaqat fi Ushul al-Syari'ah*, Juz II (Bairut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2003).

¹⁵ Farah Heliantina, "Ekonomi Digital Mempercepat Pembangunan Ekonomi. Kementerian Koordinator Bidang Perekonomian Republik Indonesia," *Siaran Pers*, 05 Januari 2017, <https://www.ekon.go.id/publikasi/detail/1145/ekonomi-digital-mempercepat-pembangunan-ekonomi>, accessed on 10 Oktober 2021.

2. Methods

In this study, both field and library studies were combined. A field study was used because the data were primarily collected through observations and interviews. The library study was carried out because the source data were obtained from books, articles, results, and online media. Bakker and Zubair suggested that data obtained through field studies and literature studies help correct, complement, detail, and complete each other.¹⁶ Two types of methods were adopted, namely the business economics and *Maqāṣid Asy-Syārī`ah*. The business economics method was used to examine the process of improving and developing MSMEs, while *Maqāṣid Asy-Syārī`ah* explored the benefits to be achieved through human action.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which were conducted by asking questions freely while still adhering to the established guidelines. The questions asked were developed during the interview.¹⁷ This model of interview was used in a semi-structured manner to enable more flexibility in the development of questions. The data explored through interviews pertained to matters related to strengthening MSMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic period in Gorontalo City. According to Sugiyono, purposive sampling required specific considerations.¹⁸ Interviews were conducted with MSMEs entrepreneurs whose businesses were affected by COVID-19. Purposive sampling selected 36 entrepreneurs and 4 government representatives, consisting of officials from Bank Indonesia in Gorontalo and Gorontalo City Government.

Table 1. Data of MSMEs in Gorontalo City as Respondents

No	Name	Name of MSMEs	No	Name	Name of MSMEs
1.	Nilawaty Yahidji	Banana Nuget Cake	19.	Irma Mokoginta	UMKM Fitrah Bersama
2.	Idiyani Pikoli	KUB Lifeta	20.	Lilik Suryani	Putra Kusuma
3.	Zoelkarnain	Zoellen Sagela	21.	Harnida Mustofa	Harnidan Craft
4.	Khairul Solikhin	Rhaumah	22.	Sri Endang Lailu	IKM Nafriza
5.	Rukmiyanthy H. Abdul	Mivira Cake & Food	23.	Kaleb Prasetyo	UMKM Mr. Kaleb Terbang
6.	Dewisuto B. S. Nasaru	Rahida Cookies	24.	Jemmy Sadiki	UMKM Jasmine
7.	Srinita Mokodompit	Kripik Mitha Totabuan	25.	Feny Daud	Fenysha Jaya Group
8.	Risna Tamrin Hasan	Bilal Mekar Snack	26.	Genova Maliombo	Dapur Noella
9.	Ulfa Lawadjo	Sambal Sagela	27.	Agus Lahinta	Rumah Karawo
10.	Eda Huwolo	D' Limututu	28.	Hadjijah Anay	Ta Ijah Cake's
11.	Agustina Litty	F' Delicious Chocolate	29.	Fatmawaty Lasindrang	Ankin Donut Cake & Cookies
12.	Yuyun Imran	IKM Riyadh	30.	Sarintan Limonu	Angsa Putih

¹⁶ Anton Bakker and Achmad Charris Zubair, *Metodologi Penelitian Filsafat* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2007), 94.

¹⁷ Suharsimi Arikunto, *Prosedur Penelitian Pendekatan Praktek* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2010), 270.

¹⁸ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D* (Cet. 1; Bandung: Alfabeta, 2006), 95.

13.	Syarif Abdul	Astry Bakery & Dessert	31.	Yoan Yoflinda	Tilomungo
				Lasindrang	
14.	Dewi Mustapa	Ummi Decho	32.	Wika Lusiana	WLM Food Cokkies
		Homemade		Manorek	
15.	Agus Salim	Sponge Burger	33.	Warda Abdulaziz	UKM Blue Dori
16.	Malinda Lailu	IKM Zaafirah	34.	Sri Agustin	UKM Nurfarab
17.	Mutiara Maliki	Mutfood	35.	Minarty Bou	Titi Food
18.	Aditiawati A. Yunus	Fazy Handmade	36.	Feny Daud	Fenysha Jaya

Source: Primary data, 2022.

The dataset was analysed by classifying, selecting, and coding the various problems and the corresponding answer procedures. The data were then analysed through thematic analysis, which included a reflective and critical examination of the study on the issues, followed by inductive conclusions.¹⁹ This was consistent with Miles and Huberman's opinion, which included conducting three streams of activities, namely data reduction, presentation, and conclusions (verification).²⁰ Data reduction was carried out by selecting and organising raw data from interviews with informants. The reduced data was presented by analysing the text narratively to explain the relationship between one piece of data and another. Finally, the study interpreted the given data to draw conclusions or results. This result described the steps taken by related parties to strengthen MSMEs in halal industry during the post-pandemic period in Gorontalo City.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Strategies to Strengthen MSMEs in Gorontalo City Post-Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic had the potential to generate both positive and negative impacts on MSMEs growth because this sector functions as a system composed of multiple resource components, including strategic, physical, financial, human, and other organisational resources. The growth and expansion of this resource system were key to its development.²¹ MSMEs entrepreneurs and government officials had implemented strategies to strengthen MSMEs in Gorontalo City.

3.1. Internal MSMEs Strategies

MSMEs entrepreneurs had strategies to maintain the sustainability of the businesses. The strategy for strengthening MSMEs in Gorontalo City included:

1. Survey and re-observe the business location

Business location critically influenced the success. Tarigan argued that location was related to various kinds of businesses or other activities, necessitating an investigation

¹⁹ Arikunto, *Prosedur Penelitian*, 350.

²⁰ Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber tentang Metode-Metode Baru* (Jakarta: UI Press, 2007).

²¹ Ismail, "Analisis Dampak Covid 19," 238-252.

into the spatial order of these economic activities.²² August Losch, in Sjafrizal, explained the market-oriented land use theory, that the correct location affected demand and supply.²³ Handoko reported that errors in selecting locations to build or establish must be minimised to ensure the industry or business established could operate effectively and efficiently.²⁴

Interviews with several informants of MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City showed that location surveys and observations have been used. This step was quite successful, despite a decrease in sales turnover during the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁵ Therefore, a strong focus on selecting strategic locations was evident among MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City. Accurate location selection served as a key factor guiding decisions to open or continue business operations.

2. Enhancing marketing and promotion of MSMEs products

The following strategies were implemented to improve the marketing and promotion of products produced by MSMEs in Gorontalo City:

First, participating in exhibitions and festivals was a cost-effective marketing action that could bring significant benefits. Based on interviews with MSMEs entrepreneurs and the local government in Gorontalo City, it was evident that participation in exhibitions and festivals was highly beneficial for introducing and selling MSMEs products. Additionally, MSMEs entrepreneurs received a wealth of information related to both similar and dissimilar products, enhancing innovation in MSMEs products. During the COVID-19 pandemic, few events were organised.²⁶ The existence of events, festivals, exhibitions, and other activities was intended to boost the local economy, both in terms of tourism and the people's economy through MSMEs.²⁷ Several events have been participated in by MSMEs in Gorontalo City, as shown in Table 2.

²² Robinson Tarigan, *Ekonomi Regional: Teori dan Aplikasi*, Edisi Revisi (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2006).

²³ Sjafrizal, *Ekonomi Regional: Teori dan Aplikasi* (Padang: Baduose Media, 2008)

²⁴ T. Hani Handoko, *Dasar-Dasar Manajemen Produksi dan Operasi* (Yogyakarta: BPFE, 2000)

²⁵ Nilawaty Yahidji, Idiyani Pikoli, Zoelkarnain Basrewan, Khairul Solikhin, Rukmiyanthy H. Abdul, and Dewisito B. S. Nasaru (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 18 April 2022; Srinita Mokodompit, Risna Tamrin Hasan, Ulfa Lawadjo, and Eda Huwolo (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 20 April 2022.

²⁶ Nilawaty Yahidji, Zoelkarnain Basrewan, Rukmiyanthy H. Abdul, Dewisuto B. S. Nasaru, and Agustina Litty (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 18 April 2022; Yuyun Imran, Syarif Abdul, Dewi Mustapa, Agus Salim, Malinda Lailu, Mutiara Maliki, and Aditiawati A. Yunus (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 21 April 2022; Irma Mokoginta, Lilik Suryani, Harnida Mustofa, Sri Endang Lailu, Kaleb Prasetyo, and Jemmy Sadiki (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Arhjyati Rahim, 18 April 2022.

²⁷ Idarokdy Tonongo, S.E. (Department of Labour, Cooperatives and SMEs of Gorontalo City), Dewi Sintya Alie, S.H. (Department of Trade and Industry of Gorontalo City), and La Ode Muhammad Arief Akbar (Analyst Manager of MSMEs Development Implementation Function, Bank Indonesia in Gorontalo), Interview by Rulyjanto Podungge, 19 April 2022; Kaleb Prasetyo, Jemmy Sadiki (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Arhjyati Rahim, 18 April 2022; Feny Daud, Genova Maliombo, Agus Lahinta, Hadijjah Anay, Sarintan Limonu, and Yoan Yoflinda Lasindrang (MSME

Table 2. MSMEs Exhibitions in Gorontalo Province

No.	Event Name	Event Time	Event Description
1.	Gorontalo Karnaval Karawo (GKK) and Gorontalo Culinary Expo	October 4-6, 2019	The implementation of Mekarawo Traditional Handmade, which was participated in by embroidery crafters and Karawo MSMEs
2.	Maaledungga National Huntu Art District Exhibition	December 11-28, 2019	Featuring fine artworks from Gorontalo State University students and Gorontalo artists
3.	Walama Fine Art Exhibition Series 2	October 18-28, 2021	Organised by Riden Baruadi Galeri Gorontalo, featuring 35 artworks from local, national, and international artists
4.	Enzim Event	March 4-17, 2021	Featuring fine artworks by Gorontalo artists
5.	Festival Pesona Saronde 2021	September 16-18, 2021	Showcasing handcrafted products of MSMEs
6.	Hulonthalo Arts and Craft Festival 2021	June 30, 2021 - July 2, 2021	Organised by Bank Indonesia Gorontalo Representative Office, featuring superior products created by 44 MSMEs assisted by Bank Indonesia in Gorontalo
7.	Persona Otanaha Festival 2021	November 18, 2021	Cultural arts and creative economy activities
8.	"I Look Boalemo" Festival	February 11-13, 2022	Arts and cultural performances and MSMEs exhibitions
9.	Gorontalo Karnaval Karawo 2022	June 6-8, 2022	Followed by MSMEs entrepreneurs in the Culinary Expo

Source: Primary data, 2022.

Second, the use of social media platforms and digital marketing offered significant benefits, including a more targeted and wider market reach, data-driven strategy evaluation, lower costs, and an increased brand reputation.²⁸ Digitalisation through social media was claimed to alter consumer behaviour, with significant consequences for companies, products, and brands.²⁹ Nielsen in Himawan explained that this digital marketing strategy was more prospective because it allowed potential customers to obtain all kinds of information about products and transactions through the Internet.³⁰ The implementation of social distancing policies prevented sellers and buyers from transacting directly, specifically during the pandemic and in its post-pandemic period.³¹

Entrepreneurs), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 19 April 2022; Wika Lusiana Manorek, Warda Abdulaziz, Sri Agustin, Minarty Bou, and Feny Daud (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 22 April 2022.

²⁸ Faradilla A., "Apa Itu Digital Marketing? Defenisi, Manfaat, dan Strateginya," <https://www.hostinger.co.id/tutorial/apa-itu-digital-marketing>, accessed on 26 Agustus 2022.

²⁹ Daniël Muntinga, Marjolein Moorman, and Edith G. Smit, "Introducing COBRAs: Exploring Motivations for Brand-related Social Media Use," *International Journal of Advertising* 30, no. 1 (2011): 13-46, <https://doi.org/10.2501/IJA-30-1-013-046>

³⁰ Himawan, and Abdurrahman Faris Indriya, "Digital Marketing: Peningkatan Kapasitas Dan Brand Awareness Usaha Kecil Menengah," *Jurnal Analisis Bisnis Ekonomi* 17, no. 22 (2019): 85-101, <https://doi.org/10.31603/bisnisekonomi.v17i2.3030>

³¹ Vincentius A. M. Kusuma, Zainal A. Sahabuddin, and Posma S. J. K. Hutasoit, "Strategi Digital Marketing Pada Usaha Mikro dan Menengah (UMKM) di Masa Pandemi Covid-19 Melalui Pendekatan Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Rakyat," *Jurnal Cafeteria* 3, no. 1 (Januari 2022): 24-35, <https://doi.org/10.51742/akuntansi.v3i1.492>

Interviews with informants showed that to maintain businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the post-pandemic period, digital marketing was used as a platform to promote and market MSMEs products. This facilitated the buying and selling system with conditions that were not possible.³²

Third, the use of e-commerce supported product sales, and MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City maintained business continuity through e-commerce platforms. The government also played a significant role in supporting the use of e-commerce. Based on the interview with an informant, it was known that MSMEs entrepreneurs were given e-commerce training. This training was conducted by the Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs in collaboration with the Central Leadership Council of the Indonesian Entrepreneurs Association of Gorontalo Province (*Dewan Pimpinan Pusat Asosiasi Pengusaha Indonesia Provinsi Gorontalo*) at Maqna Hotel on April 6-8, 2022.³³

Indonesia had several prominent marketplaces, including Bukalapak, Shopee, Lazada, Gojek, Blibli, Electronic City, OLX, Tokopedia, Kaskus, and others.³⁴ Fida et al. explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the presence of e-commerce was beneficial, facilitating business operations by actors.³⁵ Due to social restrictions in the community that almost halt conventional economic activities, MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City motivated people to conduct transactions through digital or online systems, and were supported by the availability of e-commerce businesses.

Fourth, strengthening business networks across sectors played an important role, as operations extend beyond trading and depend on expanding professional relationships. A larger network of professional relationships simplifies the process of finding reliable vendors. An expanded network also increases the need to broaden the business area. *Segala Sagela (Komunitas Segala Sagela)* is a community whose members are MSMEs owners in Gorontalo.

³² Nilawaty Yahidji, Zoelkarnain Basrewan, Rukmiyanthy H. Abdul, Dewisuto B. S. Nasaru, and Agustina Litty (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 18 April 2022; Yuyun Imran, Syarif Abdul, Dewi Mustapa, Agus Salim, Malinda Lailu, Mutiara Maliki, and Aditiawati A. Yunus (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 21 April 2022; Irma Mokoginta, Lilik Suryani, Harnida Mustofa, Sri Endang Lailu, Kaleb Prasetyo, and Jemmy Sadiki (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Arhjayati Rahim, 18 April 2022.

³³ Kaleb Prasetyo, Jemmy Sadiki (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Arhjayati Rahim, 18 April 2022; Feny Daud, Genova Maliombo, Agus Lahinta, Hadjijah Anay, Sarintan Limonu, and Yoan Yoflinda Lasindrang (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 19 April 2022; Wika Lusiana Manorek, Warda Abdulaziz, Sri Agustin, Minarty Bou, and Feny Daud (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 22 April 2022.

³⁴ Nurlela, "E-Commerce, Solusi di Tengah Pandemi COVID-19," *Jurnal Simki Economic* 4, no. 1 (2021): 47-56, <https://doi.org/10.29407/jse.v4i1.53>

³⁵ Imanuddin Abil Fida, et.al., "Transaksi E-Commerce Sebagai Pertahanan UMKM di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19 dalam Perspektif Islam," *Jurnal Imtiyaz* 5, no. 2 (2021): 53-63, <https://doi.org/10.46773/imtiyaz.v5i2.146>

The results of interviews with several informants showed that the existence of a community was intended to foster synergy among MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo, thereby providing input related to management, such as through training, seminars, promotional activities, and other initiatives. Furthermore, partnerships with institutions or agencies that support MSMEs are crucial, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Assistance and evaluation are only carried out in social networks or online meeting platforms.³⁶

Fifth, improving service quality is equally important for developing MSMEs businesses. The results of interviews with informants showed that service to consumers was highly valued and particularly important due to the significant impact on the sales of MSMEs products. During the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic period, both offline and online, visiting the store and digital marketing, the service remained the same because the consumers were paramount, who must be adequately served and optimally.³⁷

Hayati explained that providing good service quality, offering low prices or tariffs to customers, and achieving a high assessment of the company through customer value positively impacted customer satisfaction.³⁸ Similarly, Hidayati and Muslikh found that service quality had a positive and significant effect on satisfaction and loyalty behaviour. The service could be evaluated in terms of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tolerance, empathy, and physical evidence or tangibility.³⁹ Good service quality had a significant impact on customer loyalty, which was a primary goal of the business.

3.2. External Government Strategies

MSMEs are the driving forces of economic growth in Indonesia, particularly in Gorontalo City, and cannot operate without government support, specifically during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods. Therefore, national banks and the government have carried out strategies to strengthen MSMEs as follows:

3.2.1 Bank Indonesia (BI)

As part of its efforts to implement the macroprudential policy mandate, particularly in promoting the intermediation function and increasing access to finance, Bank

³⁶ Nilawaty Yahidji, Idiyani Pikoli, Zoelkarnain Basrewan, Khairul Solikhin, Rukmiyanthy H. Abdul, and Dewisito B. S. Nasaru (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 18 April 2022; Srinita Mokodompit, Risna Tamrin Hasan, Ulfa Lawadjo, and Eda Huwolo (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 20 April 2022.

³⁷ Irma Mokoginta, Lilik Suryani, Harnida Mustofa, Sri Endang Lailu, Kaleb Prasetyo, and Jemmy Sadiki (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Arhjayati Rahim, 18 April 2022; Wika Lusiana Manorek, Warda Abdulaziz, Sri Agustin, Minarty Bou, and Feny Daud (MSME Entrepreneurs), Interview by Zumiyati S. Ibrahim, 22 April 2022.

³⁸ Sari Hayati, "Pengaruh Kualitas Pelayanan dan Harga terhadap Nilai Pelanggan dan terhadap Kepuasan Penggunaan Jasa Service (Studi Kasus Pada Bengkel Seruyan Motor)," *Jurnal Terapan Manajemen dan Bisnis* 2, no. 2 (2016): 68-82.

³⁹ Rini Hidayati and Muslikh, "Pengaruh Mutu Pelayanan terhadap Kepuasan dan Dampaknya terhadap Perilaku Loyaitas (Studi Empirik Pada Pelayanan Non Akademik di Universitas Yarsi)," *Jurnal Orientasi Bisnis dan Entrepreneurship* 1, no. 1 (2020): 39-57, <https://doi.org/10.33476/jobs.v1i1.1309>

Indonesia (BI), as the central bank, plays a role in developing MSMEs. The primary concern of BI regarding MSMEs was access to finance. BI's MSMEs development aimed to enhance the capacity and managerial capabilities of Human Resources (HR) and foster innovation among MSMEs entrepreneurs.

The results of interviews with BI in Gorontalo showed that the preparation of MSMEs roadmap, developed by BI, included four stages, namely potential MSMEs, success to market and finance, going digital, and MSMEs going export. Meanwhile, the scope of MSMEs product development included the development of volatile food products, local economic growth, and Bank Indonesia Entrepreneurs (*Wirausaha Unggulan Bank Indonesia*, WUBI). In addition, as a form of strengthening for MSMEs in Gorontalo in 2019, BI in Gorontalo delegated 5 MSMEs groups to Bandung and Garut, namely *Rumah Karawo*, *Seruni*, *Serasi*, *Nirwana*, and *Sumber Usaha*. This activity aimed to further enhance the ability of entrepreneurs to improve product quality and inspire them about current fashion trends. The activity served as a lesson in improving production, product packaging, and marketing.⁴⁰

In general, BI's MSMEs development programme, including BI in Gorontalo, was directed at: (1) supporting volatile food (VF) commodity MSMEs to reduce inflationary pressure on volatile components (VF) from the supply side, (2) promoting export-oriented MSMEs and support tourism to reduce the Current Account Deficit (CAD), (3) promoting increased access to finance, (4) promoting the development of Islamic MSMEs to increase the role of Islamic economy; (5) promoting the use of digital technology to expand access to marketing, financing, and transactions, (6) promoting participation in international exhibitions and events for global market access.⁴¹

BI in Gorontalo has made several initiatives to strengthen and increase MSMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic, including: (1) training of Financial Information Recording Application Information System (*Sistem Informasi Aplikasi Pencatatan Informasi Keuangan*, SIAPIK) to 40 fostered MSMEs groups. The training aimed to promote business financial records to be carried out digitally by using applications developed by BI, (2) MSMEs digitalisation training with Famina and Facebook. Training on the implementation of digital marketing using social media, such as Facebook ads, Facebook groups, and others; and (3) MSMEs payment digitisation programme using Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS), intended as BI's assistance programme for fostering connections with digital payment systems. Utilisation

⁴⁰ La Ode Muhammad Arief Akbar (Analyst Manager of MSME Development Implementation Function of Bank Indonesia in Gorontalo), Interview by Rulyjanto Podungge, 19 April 2022; Agus Lahinta (MSME Entrepreneur), Interview by Rizal Darwis, 19 April 2022.

⁴¹ Bank Indonesia, *Laporan Perekonomian Provinsi Gorontalo, Mei 2022* (Gorontalo: Perwakilan Bank Indonesia Provinsi Gorontalo, 2022), 98.

of technology in a standardised Quick Response (QR) code payment system, such that fostered MSMEs could transact using various digital wallet applications.⁴²

BI in Gorontalo continued to implement various work programmes aimed at developing MSMEs, given the significant role these enterprises played in the local economy. In addition, it continued to innovate, synergise, and collaborate to support the achievement of superior MSMEs development in Gorontalo, enabling penetration into national and international markets.

3.2.2 Government

The state or government should protect its people as mandated by the 1945 Constitution. Therefore, there are several strategic steps in accelerating the strengthening of MSMEs in Gorontalo City, among others:

First, National Economic Recovery Programme (*Programme Pemulihan Ekonomi Nasional*, PEN) is an initiative launched by the government to revive Indonesian economy following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This programme was also the government's response to the decline in activities in the affected communities, particularly in the informal sector or MSMEs. The programme was established in accordance with Government Regulation Number 23 of 2020, which was subsequently amended by Government Regulation Number 43 of 2020.

As part of the government's efforts to advance MSMEs in PEN programme, several measures were implemented. These measures included interest (margin) subsidies, spending on guarantee fees (IJP), placement of government funds in banks, guaranteeing MSMEs credit loss limits, MSMEs final income tax borne by the government, productive micro-enterprise presidential assistance programmes (*Bantuan Presiden*, Banpres), and investment financing to cooperatives through the Revolving Fund Management Institution (*Lembaga Pengelola Dana Bergulir*, LPDB) of MSMEs Cooperative.

Information from an informant stated that Gorontalo Provincial Government took follow-up action on PEN programme. The government issued Governor Regulation No. 55 of 2020, which provided Technical Guidelines for Stimulus for Regional Economic Recovery through the Provision of Assistance for MSMEs in Gorontalo Province in 2020 (SPEDA). Meanwhile, SPEDA assistance for micro businesses was provided in the form of working capital amounting to IDR 1,500,000.⁴³

Second, People's Business Credit (*Kredit Usaha Rakyat*, KUR) programme, another government initiative to promote MSMEs, was a guaranteed loan scheme channelled

⁴² Bank Indonesia, *Laporan Perekonomian Provinsi Gorontalo*, Mei 2022, 99-100.

⁴³ Idarokdy Tonongo, S.E. (Office of Labour, Cooperatives and SMEs of Gorontalo City), Interview by Rulyjanto Podungge, 19 April 2022.

through financial institutions. The service fee (interest rate) for working capital credit (financing) was subsidised by the government. KUR aimed to increase access to funding and strengthen the capital of MSMEs. The majority of MSMEs loans in Gorontalo are channelled to micro-level MSMEs, as the nominal distribution of IDR 10 million to IDR 50 million dominates, accounting for 33.02% of the total. The distribution of micro MSMEs loans was consistent with the large share of agricultural businesses, as well as the need for capital to cover agricultural and fisheries production costs, which typically ranged from IDR 10 million to IDR 50 million. Partially, MSMEs loans were channelled to MSMEs located in Gorontalo City and Gorontalo Regency, with shares of 45% and 39.91%, respectively.⁴⁴

An interview with an informant from the Department of Labour, Cooperatives, and SMEs stated that Bank Sulut Gorontalo 2022 launched KUR financing ecosystem for MSMEs in the *Bobusami Batibo* and *Bobusami Bosuma* clusters in Gorontalo City. Through this partnership, KUR was provided to 1,000 MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City who were engaged in trade and fisheries. MSMEs entrepreneurs also gathered at Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI) in Gorontalo region.⁴⁵

Third, the national movement 'Proud to be Made in Indonesia' (*Gerakan Nasional Bangga Buatan Indonesia*, Gernas BBI) was a government programme, launched in 2020, as part of its effort to advance MSMEs. This programme aimed to promote national branding of high-quality local products, thereby developing new industries and driving economic growth. Through this programme, the government promoted MSMEs entrepreneurs to join the digital platform.

Based on the explanation of Rony Widijarto, Head of BI in Gorontalo at the Opening Ceremony of Hulonthalo Art and Craft Festival (HACF) at the Grand Palace Convention Centre, Gorontalo City, the existence and role of MSMEs could increase economic growth, reduce poverty levels, and accelerate the economic cycle in Gorontalo. HACF Festival aimed to increase economic growth in Gorontalo Province as well as the spirit of Gernas BBI. This festival was a strategic flagship event for the development of MSMEs, supporting creative industries in fashion, handicrafts, and processed food with high added value and export potential. The products had specific value and uniqueness by incorporating cultural values and heritage elements.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Bank Indonesia, *Laporan Perekonomian Provinsi Gorontalo, Mei 2022*, 97.

⁴⁵ Idarokdy Tonongo, S.E. (Office of Labour, Cooperatives and SMEs of Gorontalo City), Interview by Rulyjanto Podungge, 19 April 2022.

⁴⁶ asoutiarahman@gmail.com, "BI Gorontalo: UMKM Berperan Sebagai Bantalan Perekonomian Daerah," <https://gosulut.id/post/bi-gorontalo-umkm-berperan-sebagai-bantalan-perekonomian-daerah>, accessed on 9 Agustus 2022.

Gernas BBI programme was very beneficial for MSMEs entrepreneurs because the products were local. Therefore, when the Government introduced a programme that supported local products, MSMEs entrepreneurs expressed strong support for the initiative. This showed that Gernas BBI aimed to make the people of Indonesia, specifically those in Gorontalo, love and use the work of the nation's children, particularly MSMEs products in Gorontalo area.

3.2. *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah* Analysis of the Acceleration of MSMEs Strengthening in Gorontalo City

Humans were created perfectly and made to live and survive in the world. To fulfil the needs of life, humans were obliged to try or work. Specifically, Muslims were required to work in an Islamic manner (QS at-Taubah 9:105), which could be interpreted as working by the purpose of the law, namely, obeying the commands and avoiding the prohibitions of Allah Almighty to maintain benefit and prevent harm.

Maintaining benefits and preventing harm in Islam was known as *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah*. Al-Ghazali in Al-Ayubi explained that *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah* was an eternity by rejecting all forms of harm and attracting benefits (*jalbul mashalih wa dar'ul mafasid*).⁴⁷ The context of *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah* according to Al-Syathibi included several key points. The primary purpose of Sharia was the benefit of humans in this world and the hereafter. Sharia must be understood, functions as an imposed liability law (*taklifi*) that must be carried out and aimed to ensure that humans remain under the guidance of the law.⁴⁸

Al-Syatibi and Al-Ghazali explain *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah* as five things, namely protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*).⁴⁹ The five protections have essentials needs (*al-darūrīyyah*), secondary needs (*al-ḥājīyyah*), and luxuries (*al-taḥsīmiyyah*) conditions.⁵⁰ Based on this, strengthening MSMEs in Gorontalo City from *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari'ah* perspective could be known as follows:

3.2.1. *Protection of religion (ḥifẓ al-dīn)*

Economic issues were associated with three forms, namely what was produced, how it was produced, and for whom it was produced. In relation to products, MSMEs

⁴⁷ Muhammad Said bin Ahmad bin Mas'ud al-Yubi, *Maqāṣid al-Syari'ah al-Islāmiyyah wa 'Alāqatuha bi al-Adillah al-Syar'iyyah* (Riyadh: Dar al-Hijrah, 1998). See too, Al-Gazālī, *Al-Mustasyfa fi Ilm al-Uṣul* (Bairut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 2000), 17.

⁴⁸ Al-Syatibi, *al-Muwafaqat*, 2-3.

⁴⁹ Al-Syatibi, *al-Muwafaqat*, 2-3. See too, Al-Gazālī, *Al-Mustasyfa*, 17.

⁵⁰ Al-Syatibi, *al-Muwafaqat*, 3.

entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City packaged and distributed *halal* goods. Running a *halal* lifestyle was a religious demand that could have a positive impact on life. Similarly, living a non-*halal* lifestyle could hurt life significantly.

To provide a guarantee of benefits in a *halal* lifestyle, the state has regulated it in Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantee. Muslims were commanded to consume *halal* food (QS al-Baqarah/2: 168). In other words, producing, packaging, and distributing halal products helps maintain benefits in the field of religion, particularly concerning *al-darūriyyah*. Ignoring a halal lifestyle can harm religious integrity and threaten Muslims' well-being. Muslims strengthened the pillars of faith by embracing halal lifestyle. MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City, which was predominantly Muslim (36 informants), had awareness of registering products with Halal Product Assurance Organising Agency (*Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal*, BPJPH).

At *al-darūriyyah* level, the focus was to ensure that MSMEs could fulfil the most essential needs to survive and operate. This was the primary foundation, and when not fulfilled, the existence of MSMEs could be threatened. Increasing the strengths of MSMEs must ensure that business and operational models do not conflict with Shariah principles. This included *halal* certification of products, the use of Shariah-compliant contracts in transactions, and avoiding prohibited practices such as *riba* (usury), *gharar* (uncertainty), and *maysir* (speculation). The government and relevant institutions need to facilitate easy and affordable access to *halal* certification and Sharia financial literacy.

3.2.2. Protection of the soul (*ḥifz al-nafs*)

Protection of the soul (*ḥifz al-nafs*) was an obligation aimed at protecting an individual and subsequent life. For example, the provision of basic food and drinks. MSMEs entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City have experienced an increased growth by providing halal products through digital marketing mechanisms and e-commerce, as well as by participating in festivals and exhibitions during the COVID-19 pandemic and its post-pandemic period. The use of digital marketing and e-commerce in conducting business during the COVID-19 pandemic helped prevent the spread of the virus, which could cause death, and was being adopted by both producers and consumers.

PEN programme and the government's provision of KUR to MSMEs sustained the viability of MSMEs businesses in Gorontalo City. The sustainability of MSMEs businesses was a crucial factor in fulfilling the cost of family livelihood. Increasing the use of digital marketing and e-commerce was categorised as *al-darūriyyah* benefit, while participating in exhibitions and festivals was classified as *al-ḥājīyyah* benefit.

The marketing of *halal* products by MSMEs in Gorontalo City provided a form of assurance of safety and security that both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers value. Chaniago et al. mentioned that the primary purpose of preserving life was to help consumers consume *halal* commodities, such as food and beverages.⁵¹ This showed that ensuring the safety of consuming good and *halal* food was essential (*al-darūrīyyah*).

The concept was supported in QS al-Baqarah 2:168 and 172, Al-Maidah 5:3 and 91, and QS al-An'am 6:145. *Halal* and good food (*halalan thayyiban*) referred to food that was permissible to consume according to Islamic law, both in terms of substance, method of acquisition, and preparation, which was suitable for health and beneficial for the body and mind. This concept included the prohibition of *haram* food and also the recommendation to make selection healthy, nutritious, and clean selection, obtained in a manner that complied with Islamic law, avoiding practices such as theft or deception.

MSMEs must be encouraged to provide products and services that are not only *halal*, but also *thayyib* (good and of high quality). This means ensuring product safety for consumers, for example, health standards for culinary MSMEs, and developing a safe and decent working environment for their employees. The local government's support could take the form of occupational health and safety training, as well as adherence to production standards.

3.2.3. Protection of the intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*)

Ḥifẓ al-'aql required everyone to continue developing thoughts based on rational methods and scientific principles. The development of scientific thinking was achieved by continually training the reasoning power of the human brain, examining the realities of the times. The development of the mind was consistent with the words of Allah Almighty. The Quran calls for reflection and understanding through questions, such as "Do you not think or understand?" (*afalā ta'qilūn*,⁵² *afalā tatafakkarūn*,⁵³ *afalā yatadabbarūn*⁵⁴).

Strengthening MSMEs in Gorontalo City to maintain reason involved several strategies. Entrepreneurs surveyed business premises, expanded marketing through festivals or exhibitions, used digital marketing and e-commerce, built community relationships, improved service quality, and participated in business training. Meanwhile, the

⁵¹ Siti Aminah Chaniago, et.al., "Implementation of Halal Supply Chain in the Cooperative of Islamic Boarding School: Maqashid Syariah Perspective," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 22, no. 1 (2024): 57-88, https://doi.org/10.28918/jhi_v22i1_3

⁵² See QS al-Baqarah 2:44, and 76; Ali Imran 3:65; al-An'am 6:32; al-A'raf 7:169; Yunus 10:16; Hud 11:51; Yusuf 12:109; al-Anbiya' 21:10; al-Mu'minun 23:80; al-Qashas 28:60; and as-Saffat 37: 38.

⁵³ See QS al-Baqarah 2:219; and al-An'am 6:50.

⁵⁴ See QS an-Nisa' 4:82.

government strengthened MSMEs by providing business training, organising PEN programmes, and issuing KUR.

Strengthening at this level focused on improving the intellectual and managerial capacity of MSMEs entrepreneurs. Training program memes, business mentoring, and education on innovation and technological adaptation were crucial. MSMEs will struggle to grow and compete effectively without adequate knowledge.

3.2.4. Protection of lineage (*ḥifz al-nasl*)

Protecting lineage represented a fundamental human need, as offspring constituted the generation prepared for a better life. Entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City maintain businesses by adopting various development models. These entrepreneurs were essentially trying to support themselves and families to live a more prosperous life, regardless of the circumstances. Providing for the family was an obligation for both a husband and a wife, and a wife could also contribute to income.⁵⁵ In addition, there was a prohibition on leaving children in a weak or incapable state (QS an-Nisa' 4:9). The government had the responsibility to help its people survive in the business by assisting MSMEs.

Economically strong MSMEs could provide prosperity for the families of the entrepreneurs. A stable income enables parents to meet the children's educational and health needs, thereby developing a higher quality next generation. This also implied that the business could be passed on and sustained.

3.2.5. Protection of property (*ḥifz al-māl*)

Property and material resources were essential aspects of human life, providing the means to meet basic needs and support well-being. Islam provided guidance on the proper acquisition and management of wealth, which should be handled practically and effectively while adhering to religious principles. The acceleration of MSMEs strengthening carried out by entrepreneurs in Gorontalo City was a step in good and clear management. The need for wealth management fostered discipline in maintaining wealth, which could support the welfare of families and communities. The need to acquire wealth was a motivation to work hard and strive. Moreover, working and striving were among the commands of Allah Almighty (QS at-Taubah 9:105). The ability of a Muslim to acquire and distribute wealth gave hope to those who needed it. Acceleration referred to providing MSMEs with access to fair and non-exploitative Islamic financing through *Badan Maal wa Tamwil* (BMT), Islamic banks, or Islamic

⁵⁵ See QS at-Talaq 65:7; al-Baqarah 2:233; and an-Nisa' 4:34.

peer-to-peer (P2P) lending fintech platforms. Other important elements included financial literacy in cash management, the separation of personal and business finances, and asset protection through Islamic insurance (*takāful*).

At *al-darūrīyyah* level, the focus was to ensure that MSMEs could meet the most essential needs to survive and operate. This primary foundation will threaten the existence of MSMEs when not fulfilled. After meeting the requirements of *al-darūrīyyah*, *al-ḥājīyyah* level aimed to eliminate difficulties and improve the ease of MSMEs operations, ensuring efficiency and competitiveness, namely:

1. Wider market access: while at *al-darūrīyyah* level, MSMEs only focused on the local market to survive. At *al-ḥājīyyah* level, MSMEs are motivated to enter digital platforms and e-commerce. This removed geographical barriers and opened up access to broader markets, both domestic and international. The government and relevant institutions need to provide digital marketing training and facilitate partnerships.
2. Infrastructure and technology: the provision of adequate infrastructure, such as stable and affordable internet access and efficient logistics, was part of *al-ḥājīyyah*. Acceleration also included ensuring the adoption of appropriate technology to increase productivity, such as utilising digital cashier applications, inventory management systems, or more modern production machines.
3. Ease of regulation and licensing: complex bureaucratic processes were often an obstacle for MSMEs. Simplifying the licensing process, such as Business Identification Number (*Nomor Izin Berusaha*, NIB), offering tax incentives, and easing the establishment of a business entity were essential steps that will spur the growth of MSMEs.

Al-taḥsīniyyah level referred to refinement and improvement in quality that extended beyond basic and secondary needs. It related to broader ethical, aesthetic, and social contribution aspects, which built a positive image and reputation:

1. Attractive branding and packaging motivated MSMEs to produce quality products, featuring beautiful designs, hygiene, and informative packaging. This increased the selling value and appeal of products in the eyes of consumers.
2. Social and environmental responsibility (CSR): guiding MSMEs to have social and environmental awareness. For example, using environmentally friendly raw materials, managing waste properly, or setting aside a portion of profits for social activities in the surrounding community. This practice was consistent with Islamic concept of *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (mercy for all creation).
3. Sustainable innovation and excellent business ethics: at this level, MSMEs are motivated to continue innovating and maintaining the highest ethical standards in business, such as honesty in promotion, exceptional customer service, and

fostering good relationships with suppliers and partners. This fostered customer loyalty and long-term business sustainability.

In general, *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari`ah* method provided a comprehensive roadmap for strengthening MSMEs. It ensured that growth was not only measured in terms of turnover or profit, but also in terms of the ability to uphold fundamental values (*al-ḍarūrīyyah*), improve efficiency and convenience (*al-ḥājīyyah*), and achieve ethical and aesthetic excellence (*al-taḥsīniyyah*). MSMEs not only become pillars of the economy but also agents of spreading benefits in community.⁵⁶

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study substantiates that the strategies used to strengthen MSMEs in Gorontalo City's *halal* industry post-pandemic are not merely reactive economic measures, but are profoundly congruent with *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari`ah*. This study examines the synergy between internal initiatives by entrepreneurs, such as strategic location analysis, digital marketing, e-commerce adoption, and network building, and external support from government agencies and financial institutions, including Bank Indonesia. Key external interventions, such as PEN, KUR, and digitalisation training, have proven important to the country's development.

The analysis through the lens of *Maqāṣid Asy-Syari`ah* shows that these collaborative efforts comprehensively fulfil the five foundational principles (*al-ḍarūrīyyāt al-khamsah*). These efforts aim to protect religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) by promoting the production and certification of halal products. The soul is protected (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) by ensuring business continuity for family sustenance and providing safe products for consumers. Intellect (*ḥifẓ al-`aql*) is safeguarded through training and mentoring that enhance managerial capacity and innovation. Lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*) is supported by securing family income to fund the health and education of the next generation. Finally, property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) is protected through access to fair financing and education in sound financial management. The strategies operate across all three levels of public interest (*maṣlaḥah*), ranging from essential needs (*al-ḍarūrīyyah*) for survival, to secondary needs (*al-ḥājīyyah*) easing operations, and to embellishments (*al-taḥsīniyyah*) enhancing quality and branding. Therefore, a *Maqāṣid*-based framework provides a holistic and practical blueprint for fostering a resilient, ethical, and sustainable MSMEs ecosystem that drives economic growth and actualises the community's well-being (*ḥalāl*).

⁵⁶ Tamam Al-Assaf, Oumama Hamasha, and Hana Al-Assaf, "Safeguarding Life as a Higher Objective (Maqṣad) in Islamic Law: The Prophetic Perspective on Paternal Retribution in Filicide and Its Application in the Jordanian Penal Code," *Manchester Journal of Transnational Islamic Law and Practice* 21, no. 2 (2025): 157–77, <https://www.electronicpublications.org/stuff/1221>.

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