

FROM MERSAM TO THE WORLD : A COLLABORATIVE MODEL FOR DEVELOPING GULAI TALANG AS HALAL CULINARY HERITAGE

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INFO ARTIKEL	ABSTRAK
Diterima: 05 September 2025 Direvisi: 10 September 2025 Disetujui: 18 Oktober 2025 Tersedia Daring: 29 Desember 2025 Kata Kunci: <i>Gulai Talang</i> <i>Warisan Kuliner Halal</i> <i>Pemberdayaan Mustahik</i>	Penelitian ini mengkaji potensi transformasi Gulai Talang, warisan kuliner tradisional masyarakat Mersam di Kabupaten Batang Hari, Jambi, menjadi produk kuliner daerah halal dan aset ekonomi berbasis komunitas. Menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, studi ini menggabungkan analisis literatur dengan wawancara mendalam yang melibatkan praktisi kuliner, pemangku kepentingan budaya, perwakilan pemerintah, otoritas agama, dan pejabat BAZNAS. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kendala utama bukanlah ketiadaan keunikan kuliner, melainkan lemahnya standardisasi, jaminan halal, <i>branding</i> , pengemasan, pemasaran digital, koordinasi kelembagaan, dan akses pasar. Untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut, penelitian ini mengusulkan model kolaborasi terintegrasi yang melibatkan Pemerintah Kabupaten Batang Hari, Kementerian Agama, BAZNAS, UMKM, masyarakat, dan perguruan tinggi. Model ini memposisikan Gulai Talang tidak sekadar sebagai produk pangan tradisional, melainkan sebagai aset ekonomi-budaya halal yang mampu mendukung pengembangan UMKM dan pemberdayaan <i>mustahik</i> melalui zakat produktif. Pada akhirnya, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa integrasi pelestarian budaya dengan ekosistem halal berbasis komunitas dapat mengubah warisan kuliner lokal menjadi rantai nilai ekonomi yang kompetitif.
Keywords:	ABSTRACT
Keywords: <i>Gulai Talang;</i> <i>Halal Culinary Heritage;</i> <i>Mustahik Empowerment</i>	<i>This study investigates the potential transformation of Gulai Talang, a traditional culinary heritage of the Mersam community in Batang Hari Regency, Jambi, into a halal regional culinary product and a community-based economic asset. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study combines literature analysis with in-depth interviews involving culinary practitioners, cultural stakeholders, government representatives, religious authorities, and BAZNAS officials. The findings indicate that the main constraints are not the absence of culinary uniqueness, but weak standardization, halal assurance, branding, packaging, digital marketing, institutional coordination, and access to markets. To address these challenges, the study proposes an integrated collaboration model involving the Batang Hari Regency Government, Ministry of Religious Affairs, BAZNAS, MSMEs, communities, and higher education institutions. This model positions Gulai Talang not merely as a traditional food product but as a halal cultural-economic asset capable of supporting MSME development and mustahik empowerment through productive zakat. Ultimately, the research demonstrates that integrating cultural preservation with a community-based halal ecosystem can transform local culinary heritage into a competitive economic value chain.</i>

1. Introduction

The global halal industry has evolved significantly from a narrow focus on religious compliance into a comprehensive economic ecosystem encompassing trade, financing, logistics, and micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) development (Riani et al., 2025; Susanto et al., 2024). Within this dynamic landscape, the halal food sector occupies a strategic position, directly linking Islamic values with sustainable value creation and consumer needs (Bahara et al., 2024). Consequently, the development of halal culinary products is no longer merely about meeting basic market demand; it requires building institutional trust, maintaining rigorous quality standards, and generating inclusive economic benefits for local communities. As the global Muslim population grows, the demand for halal products has become a catalyst for regional economic development, positioning the culinary sector as a vital bridge between faith-based principles and global market competitiveness.

In the contemporary halal food industry, halal status transcends basic administrative certification to become a critical instrument for consumer trust, quality assurance, and market positioning. Recent empirical studies demonstrate that halal awareness, certification, and brand image significantly influence consumer purchase intentions and brand loyalty, as consumers increasingly associate halal labels with broader concerns regarding hygiene, safety, and traceability (Aslan, 2023; Djakasaputra et al., 2023; Ramadhan et al., 2024). Therefore, transforming traditional food into a competitive halal product necessitates a robust assurance system that guarantees transparency and reliability from raw material sourcing to final distribution (Wirakurnia et al., 2024). Halal certification must be integrated into the core business culture rather than treated as an isolated regulatory hurdle.

Beyond nutritional value, traditional culinary products represent living cultural heritage, encapsulating local knowledge, historical identity, and social values transmitted across generations. When managed effectively, this cultural authenticity can serve as a foundation for regional tourism, creative economies, and sustainable competitive advantage (Mardatillah, 2020; Rachmiatie et al., 2024). However, commercializing traditional cuisine requires a delicate balance; it demands the standardization of recipes and production processes to ensure consistency and food safety, without compromising the authentic cultural identity that distinguishes the product in the market (Rusfa & Hasanah, 2022). Preserving the narrative and originality of local cuisine is essential, as modern consumers increasingly value the cultural story and geographical origin attached to the food they consume.

Despite Indonesia's strategic position as a global hub for the halal industry, a significant gap remains between national halal ecosystem policies and the grassroots commercialization of local traditional foods. Many regional culinary products struggle to scale due to fragmented institutional support, weak branding, inadequate digital marketing, and limited access to broader supply chains (M. T. Hidayat & Witta, 2024; Nursita et al., 2024). Overcoming these barriers requires more than isolated certification

efforts; it demands a synergistic collaboration among government bodies, religious institutions, and community actors to build an integrated, community-based halal business ecosystem (Rachman & Sangare, 2023). The success of local culinary heritage depends on cross-sectoral governance that aligns cultural preservation with economic empowerment.

This systemic challenge is highly evident in Batang Hari Regency, Jambi, where *Gulai Talang*—a traditional dish rich in cultural narrative—remains confined to local consumption due to weak standardization, poor packaging, and an absence of integrated halal-economic empowerment models. While previous studies have explored halal consumer behavior and MSME performance, there is a distinct scarcity of research connecting traditional culinary heritage with a collaborative ecosystem that incorporates productive zakat and *mustahik* empowerment. To address this gap, this study aims to formulate a collaborative model involving the local government, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, BAZNAS, and MSMEs to transform *Gulai Talang* from a localized tradition into a standardized, halal-certified regional culinary heritage and a catalyst for community economic empowerment.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive case study approach to explore the transformation of *Gulai Talang* into a halal culinary heritage product, utilizing a combination of primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with six key informants selected via purposive sampling to ensure rich, context-specific insights. These informants represented a diverse range of stakeholders, including culinary practitioners, local government officials, representatives from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, BAZNAS, and local community members. To complement the empirical data, secondary data were gathered through a comprehensive literature review and document analysis, focusing on academic literature, institutional reports, and policy documents related to the halal industry ecosystem, traditional culinary heritage, MSME development, and productive zakat.

The collected data were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative framework adapted from Huberman (2014), which involves iterative stages of data reduction, data display, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. This analytical process was guided by a conceptual framework designed to connect culinary heritage preservation, halal assurance, community-based MSME empowerment, and multi-actor institutional collaboration. To ensure the credibility and contextual validity of the findings, the study employed source triangulation, cross-verifying the empirical perspectives of the informants with theoretical foundations and secondary literature. This rigorous methodological procedure enabled the researchers to systematically map the cultural potential, identify developmental barriers, and formulate a collaborative ecosystem model for transforming *Gulai Talang* into a sustainable halal economic asset.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Result

3.1.1 Cultural Identity and Living Heritage of Gulai Talang

The research findings reveal that Gulai Talang functions as far more than a routine culinary consumption item for the Mersam community in Batang Hari Regency. The dish embodies a complex tapestry of culinary traditions, social experiences, local knowledge systems, and collective identity that have been transmitted across multiple generations. Its preparation is deeply embedded in communal rituals, particularly wedding ceremonies, where it serves as a cultural marker that reinforces social bonds and preserves ancestral practices. This embeddedness positions Gulai Talang as a form of living heritage, where continuity depends not on museum preservation but on the active reproduction of culinary knowledge within family and community settings.

Interview data from culinary practitioners strongly support this interpretation. Zukiah, an experienced cook, emphasized that the dish has long been a tradition of the Mersam community, particularly prepared during wedding nights with simple sliced spices. Similarly, Badiyah highlighted that the dish is versatile, delicious, and typically prepared using duck or free-range chicken, reflecting the agrarian character of the local community. These narratives demonstrate that the value of Gulai Talang extends well beyond gastronomic characteristics, encompassing historical memory, familial experience, and the social rituals that give the dish its enduring meaning.

However, the informants also acknowledged a critical tension between cultural preservation and market expansion. While the dish holds strong symbolic value locally, its recognition remains geographically constrained. The challenge, therefore, is not to replace traditional characteristics with commercial alternatives, but to leverage the cultural narrative as a foundation for branding, documentation, and economic valorization. The cultural identity of Gulai Talang must become the strategic core of any development initiative, ensuring that commercialization strengthens rather than erodes the authenticity that distinguishes the product.

Table 1. Profile of Key Informants

Code	Name	Role	Relevance to Research
I1	Zukiah	Culinary Practitioner	Knowledge of traditional preparation
I2	Siti Hajar	Culinary Practitioner	Experience in production and development
I3	Marzani	Local Government (Culture)	Cultural policy and preservation
I4	Nur Hadi	Ministry of Religious Affairs	Halal ecosystem and religious guidance
I5	H. Muslim	BAZNAS Batang Hari	Mustahik empowerment and productive zakat
I6	Badiyah	Local Community Representative	Community perspective and economic activities

Visibility Gap: Local Recognition versus Market Awareness

A striking finding from the field research is the pronounced visibility gap between Gulai Talang's strong local recognition and its near-invisibility in broader regional and

national markets. Within Batang Hari Regency, the dish is widely known and culturally celebrated, functioning as a familiar element of communal life. Siti Hajar confirmed that for the people of Batang Hari, Gulai Talang is already well known, yet it remains relatively unknown to the wider public. This asymmetry reveals that the primary obstacle is not the absence of culinary quality or uniqueness, but the absence of systematic mechanisms to communicate the product's identity beyond its geographical origin.

Badiah articulated this challenge with remarkable clarity, noting that introducing Gulai Talang to external audiences requires attractive packaging and continuous marketing. Without proper packaging and sustained promotion, she argued, the dish will struggle to grow beyond its current local confines. This insight underscores a fundamental principle of contemporary culinary economics: taste alone is insufficient for market penetration. Products must be accompanied by coherent narratives, consistent visual identities, and strategic digital presence to capture the attention of consumers who have no prior cultural exposure to the dish.

The implications of this visibility gap extend to branding strategy. The research suggests that Gulai Talang should be positioned not merely as a menu item but as a cultural identity carrier. A proposed brand concept *Gulai Talang Batang Hari: Authentic Halal Culinary Heritage of Jambi* encapsulates this approach by linking the product simultaneously to its geographical origin, its halal status, and its heritage value. Such positioning transforms the dish from an anonymous traditional food into a recognizable regional icon capable of competing in the creative economy and gastronomy tourism sectors.

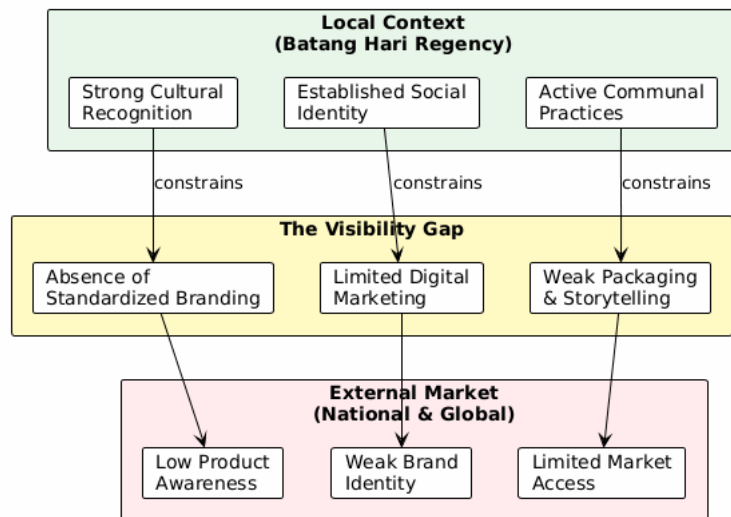


Figure 1. The Visibility Gap of Gulai Talang

Key Barriers to Halal Culinary Transformation

The research identified four interconnected barriers that collectively inhibit the transformation of Gulai Talang into a competitive halal culinary product. The first barrier is the weakness of brand identity. To date, the dish has been recognized primarily through informal community transmission rather than through a deliberate commercial identity. Zukiah observed that while the community knows the dish, outsiders may not even know

what Gulai Talang is or where it originates. This absence of a recognizable brand prevents the product from entering the consideration set of consumers beyond its immediate cultural circle.

The second barrier concerns the lack of recipe and process standardization. In household contexts, variation in spice proportions and preparation techniques is natural and even celebrated. However, when a traditional 859 is his scaled into a commercial commodity, consistency becomes essential for consumer trust. Badiah emphasized that recipes must be documented so that culinary knowledge does not depend solely on the memory of individual cooks. Siti Hajar reinforced this point, noting that consumers who purchase the product on different occasions expect a consistent taste experience. Standardization, therefore, should be understood not as an elimination of tradition but as a mechanism for preserving its core characteristics across expanded production.

The third and fourth barriers involve halal assurance and packaging. Although Gulai Talang is traditionally prepared with halal ingredients, the informal nature of its production means that halal status has not been formally verified or communicated. Badiah argued that halal certification should be integrated from the outset of product development rather than treated as an afterthought. Similarly, packaging has not yet been leveraged as a storytelling medium. The informants agreed that attractive, informative packaging bearing the regional identity and halal information would significantly enhance consumer confidence and market appeal.

Table 2. Matrix of Key Development Barriers

Barrier Category	Specific Issue	Impact on Market Expansion
Branding	Absence of consistent brand identity	Low external recognition
Standardization	Unrecorded recipes and variable processes	Inconsistent product quality
Halal Assurance	No formal certification or verification	Reduced consumer trust
Packaging	Plain presentation without cultural narrative	Weak visual communication
Digital Marketing	Limited online presence	Restricted market reach
Institutional Coordination	Fragmented stakeholder efforts	Inefficient ecosystem development

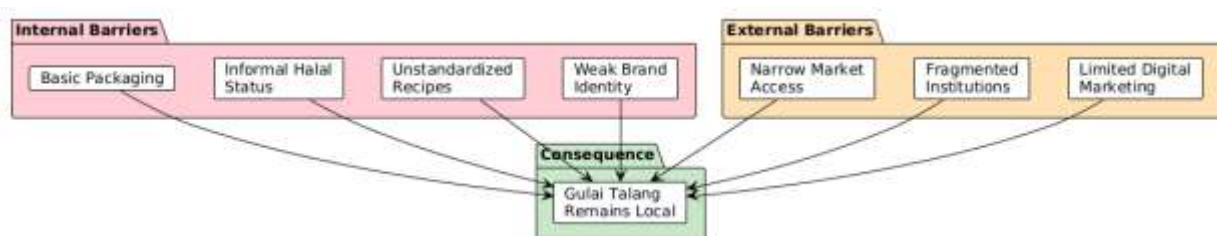


Figure 2. Interconnected Barriers to Halal Culinary Transformation

The Collaborative Ecosystem Model

Addressing these barriers requires a fundamental shift from isolated interventions to a coordinated ecosystem approach. The research proposes the *Gulai Talang Halal Batang*

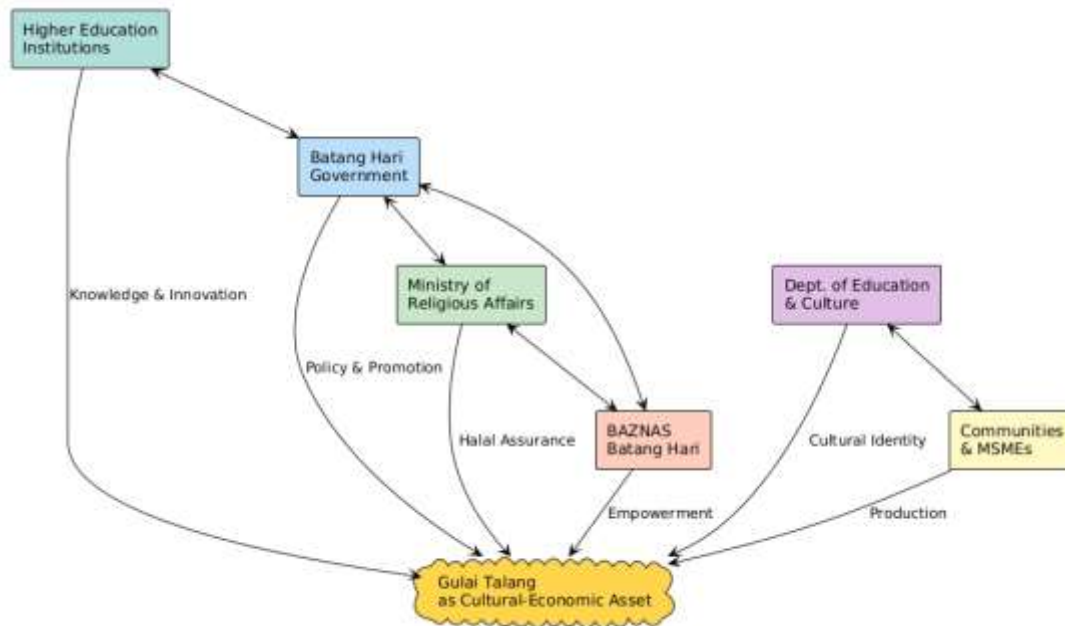
Hari model, a collaborative framework that distributes responsibilities among multiple institutions according to their respective authorities and capacities. This model recognizes that no single actor—whether government, religious institution, or community—possesses the comprehensive capacity required to transform a traditional dish into a competitive halal economic asset. Instead, transformation emerges from the synergy of complementary roles.

The Batang Hari Regency Government serves as the policy coordinator and ecosystem facilitator, responsible for positioning Gulai Talang within creative economy, tourism, and MSME development agendas. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, represented by Nur Hadi, contributes halal literacy, religious guidance, and the integration of Islamic boarding schools into the halal service ecosystem. Nur Hadi emphasized that halal should not be merely a label on packaging but must become part of the business culture, with communities and business actors understanding ingredients, processing methods, cleanliness, and marketing ethics from an Islamic perspective. Marzani from the Department of Education and Culture reinforces the cultural foundation, insisting that commercialization must not cause the dish to lose its connection with the community that created and preserved the tradition.

BAZNAS Batang Hari occupies a distinctive position within this ecosystem as an empowerment actor rather than a commercial investor. H. Muslim, Chairman of BAZNAS, clarified that the institution can contribute through the economic empowerment of mustahik who possess culinary skills or potential, provided that such empowerment complies with zakat management provisions. This positioning ensures that the transformation of Gulai Talang generates not only commercial value but also social welfare, aligning economic development with the Islamic economic principle of *maslahah*.

Table 3. Institutional Roles in the Collaborative Model

Institution	Primary Role	Key Functions
Batang Hari Regency Government	Policy Coordinator	Regulation, promotion, tourism integration, MSME facilitation
Ministry of Religious Affairs	Halal Ecosystem Builder	Halal literacy, certification facilitation, religious guidance
BAZNAS Batang Hari	Empowerment Actor	Mustahik capacity building, productive zakat programs
Department of Education and Culture	Cultural Custodian	Documentation, identity preservation, knowledge transmission
Local Communities & MSMEs	Principal Producers	Production, innovation, market engagement
Higher Education Institutions	Knowledge Partner	Research, standardization, packaging design, digital strategy



Mustahik Empowerment through Productive Zakat

A distinctive feature of the proposed model is the integration of mustahik empowerment through productive zakat programs. H. Muslim articulated a vision in which BAZNAS does not simply provide equipment and disengage, but instead implements a comprehensive empowerment pathway encompassing skills training, packaging development, digital marketing, business record-keeping, and ongoing mentoring. This approach transforms zakat from a consumptive safety net into a productive instrument for building economic independence among eligible beneficiaries. The empowerment logic is sequential and developmental: mustahik are first equipped with culinary skills, then supported in establishing micro-enterprises, and ultimately enabled to graduate into independent entrepreneurs who may themselves become muzakki.

The empowerment model also emphasizes the activation of local value chains. H. Muslim noted that the economic benefits of Gulai Talang development should not concentrate in the hands of a single business actor. Instead, the value chain should involve multiple participants across raw material supply, cooking, packaging, marketing, and sales. When this chain becomes active, economic benefits are distributed more widely, creating employment opportunities and strengthening the local economy. This perspective aligns with the Islamic economic principle that wealth should circulate broadly within the community rather than accumulate among a few.

The transformation pathway can be conceptualized as a four-stage progression. In the first stage, mustahik receive targeted training and productive asset assistance. In the second stage, they operate as business actors producing Gulai Talang under standardized and halal-certified conditions. In the third stage, they develop into micro-entrepreneurs with expanded market access and digital capabilities. In the final stage, successful entrepreneurs may transition into muzakki, thereby contributing back to the zakat ecosystem. This pathway demonstrates that cultural heritage development and social empowerment are not separate agendas but mutually reinforcing dimensions of a single development strategy.

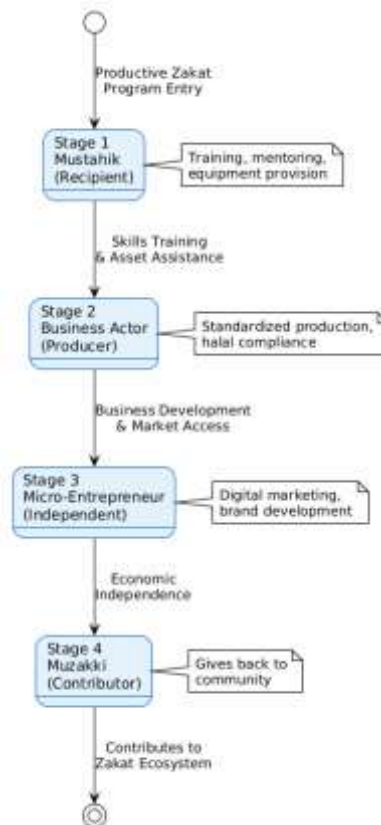


Figure 4. Mustahik Empowerment Transformation Pathway Integrated Transformation Framework

Synthesizing the findings across cultural, economic, institutional, and empowerment dimensions, the research proposes an integrated transformation framework that positions Gulai Talang at the intersection of cultural heritage preservation, halal industry development, creative economy activation, and community-based empowerment. The framework operates through a sequential yet iterative logic: cultural documentation establishes the foundation; standardization ensures consistency; halal assurance builds consumer trust; branding communicates identity; MSME development activates production; digitalization expands reach; market engagement generates revenue; and empowerment distributes benefits across the community. Each stage is supported by specific institutional actors, creating a coherent ecosystem rather than a collection of isolated programs.

The framework also introduces the concept of *community-based halal culinary heritage*, which distinguishes the proposed model from conventional approaches that treat halal certification, MSME development, and cultural preservation as separate domains. In this integrated conception, the sustainability of Gulai Talang is measured not only by the extent to which the dish remains known and practiced within the community, but also by its capacity to generate added economic value, create business opportunities, expand market access, and improve the welfare of communities involved throughout its value chain. The halal principle of *halalan thayyiban* thus becomes not merely a compliance requirement but a holistic standard encompassing quality, ethics, transparency, and social responsibility.

Ultimately, the transformation framework demonstrates that tradition and modernity need not be oppositional forces. When managed through knowledge, technology, halal assurance, institutional support, and strategic business planning, local culinary heritage can become a gateway to broader economic participation. The vision articulated by the informants is one in which Gulai Talang moves from the kitchens of the Batang Hari community to recognition across Indonesia and potentially the global halal market, carrying with it the cultural narrative, religious integrity, and economic empowerment that define its unique identity. This vision positions Batang Hari Regency not as a peripheral locality but as an active contributor to Indonesia's growing leadership in the global halal economy.

The collective findings underscore a central proposition: Gulai Talang does not lack cultural value, culinary quality, or community commitment. What it lacks is an integrated ecosystem capable of converting these latent assets into recognized economic value. The proposed collaborative model addresses this gap by aligning cultural preservation with halal assurance, MSME development with mustahik empowerment, and local identity with market expansion. Through this alignment, Gulai Talang can evolve from a cherished local tradition into a standardized, halal-certified, and economically empowering regional heritage product that represents Batang Hari Regency on both national and global stages.

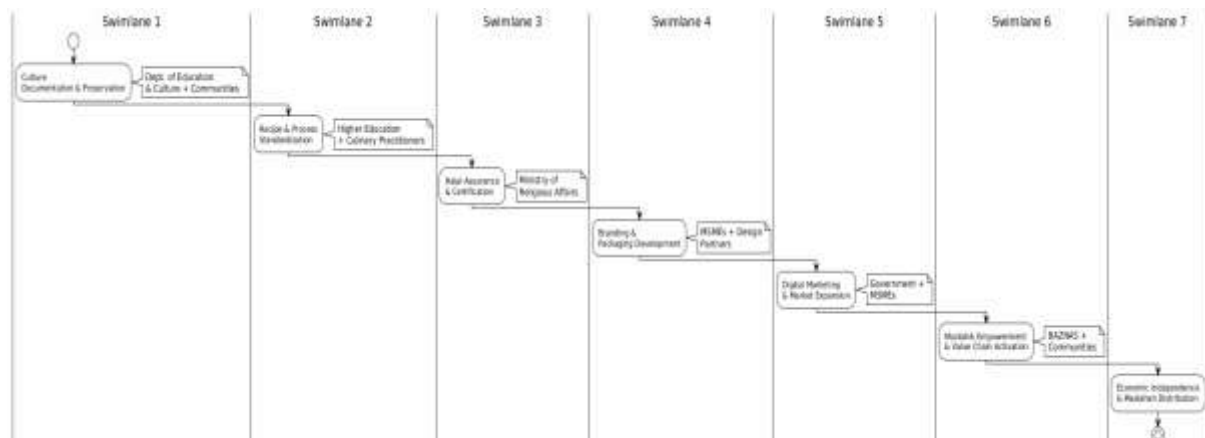


Figure 5. Integrated Transformation Framework for Gulai Talang

3.2 Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the cultural embeddedness of *Gulai Talang* constitutes its principal development asset rather than a constraint to be overcome. The informants consistently described the dish as a living heritage reproduced through wedding rituals, family practices, and intergenerational knowledge transmission, which aligns with the argument that culinary heritage generates sustainable competitive advantage when cultural values are preserved within economic activity (Demirović et al., 2025; Syahrul et al., 2024). This resonates with studies on Jambi's culinary sector, which confirm that local food functions simultaneously as identity marker and creative economy driver (Abdillah & Hamsah, 2025; Ramdani et al., 2025; Rizki et al., 2025). Consequently, commercialization need not erode authenticity; rather, cultural narrative can be converted into what may be termed narrative capital, differentiating the product in an

increasingly saturated halal market (Agustinar et al., 2025; Gauthier, 2020; A. Hidayat et al., 2025).

The pronounced visibility gap between strong local recognition and weak external awareness indicates that the central problem facing *Gulai Talang* is communicative rather than substantive. This finding corroborates evidence that halal certification, halal awareness, and brand image jointly determine purchase intention, implying that products lacking deliberate brand positioning remain excluded from consumer consideration sets regardless of intrinsic quality (Djakasaputra et al., 2023). Similarly, research on millennial consumers shows that halal certification strengthens both purchase intention and brand loyalty, suggesting that branding and certification are mutually reinforcing rather than separate strategies (Ali Azhar, 2025; Putra et al., 2023). The proposed brand concept, *Gulai Talang Batang Hari: Authentic Halal Culinary Heritage of Jambi*, therefore addresses a structural deficiency in market visibility rather than a deficiency in the product itself.

Equally significant is the observed transition from halal as a taken-for-granted social assumption to halal as a verifiable assurance system. The informants acknowledged that while the dish has always been prepared with customary halal ingredients, formal certification remains absent, a condition that limits consumer trust in wider markets. This mirrors findings that halal certification exerts a strong influence on trust, perceived hygiene, and food safety among Muslim consumers (Aslan, 2023; Septiani & Ridlwan, 2020), and that religiosity, halal knowledge, and certification collectively shape purchase decisions for packaged halal food (Wirakurnia et al., 2024). For MSMEs specifically, certification carries implications extending beyond compliance into operational credibility and market access, although benefits materialize only when accompanied by consistent quality management (M. T. Hidayat & Witta, 2024). Standardization thus emerges not as an erosion of tradition but as the mechanism through which authenticity becomes reproducible at scale.

The study further confirms that no single institution possesses sufficient capacity to transform traditional culinary heritage into a competitive halal product, reinforcing the ecosystem perspective in halal industry scholarship. Almunawar et al. (2025) and Raimi et al. (2025) argue that halal competitiveness depends on interdependent actor relationships rather than isolated business activity, a proposition clearly illustrated by the fragmented institutional support reported in Batang Hari. This is consistent with evidence that government–private synergy constitutes a decisive factor in halal ecosystem formation (Rachman & Sangare, 2023), and that non-state actors play an equally critical role in sustaining such ecosystems (Nursita et al., 2024). Extending these frameworks, the present findings indicate that cultural agencies and religious education institutions must be incorporated alongside economic actors, since culinary heritage cannot be detached from the tourism and creative economy networks that give it market relevance (Rachmiate et al., 2024).

Finally, the integration of productive zakat and *mustahik* empowerment distinguishes this study from prior literature that treats halal industry development and Islamic social finance as separate domains. While existing research has examined certification, consumer behaviour, and business ecosystems in isolation, the proposed

model positions zakat institutions as empowerment actors rather than commercial investors, thereby aligning economic transformation with the Islamic principle of *maslahah*. The staged pathway from *mustahik* to business actor, micro-entrepreneur, and potentially *muzakki* reframes culinary heritage as an instrument of equitable value distribution across the local value chain. In doing so, the study advances the concept of community-based halal culinary heritage, offering a transferable framework for regions possessing comparable cultural endowments but limited institutional coordination.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the transformation of *Gulai Talang* from a localized traditional dish into a competitive halal culinary heritage requires shifting from isolated culinary practices to an integrated, community-based economic ecosystem. The primary barriers to its development are not a lack of cultural value or culinary quality, but rather the absence of recipe standardization, formal halal assurance, strategic branding, and coordinated institutional support. To address these challenges, this research proposes the "Gulai Talang Halal Batang Hari" collaborative model, which synergizes the roles of the local government as a policy facilitator, the Ministry of Religious Affairs as a builder of halal literacy and assurance, the Department of Education and Culture as a custodian of heritage, and BAZNAS as an agent of productive *mustahik* empowerment. Through this cross-sectoral collaboration, *Gulai Talang* is repositioned not merely as a regional food product, but as a strategic cultural-economic asset capable of driving MSME development and gastronomy tourism.

Ultimately, this integrated framework demonstrates that the commercialization of traditional culinary heritage can be successfully aligned with Islamic economic principles, specifically the pursuit of *halalan thayyiban* and communal *maslahah*. By embedding productive zakat and *mustahik* empowerment into the culinary value chain, the model ensures that economic benefits are distributed equitably, transforming beneficiaries into independent micro-entrepreneurs and potentially future *muzakki*. This approach proves that globalization and modern market demands do not necessitate the erosion of local traditions; rather, when managed through knowledge, technology, and robust institutional collaboration, indigenous culinary heritage can become a powerful gateway to the global halal economy, proudly carrying the cultural identity of Batang Hari to the world.

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