The Urgency of Halal Tourism Literacy in Responding to Rejection of Halal Tourism in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Halal tourism has received a rejection from several people in Indonesia because it is understood as a form of Islamization of tourism. This rejection is evidence of the lack of literacy in Halal Tourism in the community regarding Halal Tourism. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the rejection of Halal Tourism in several regions of Indonesia and to discover the important role of Halal Tourism literacy in responding to the rejection of Halal Tourism from some communities. This study used a qualitative descriptive approach using document analysis as a data collection technique. The results of this study indicate that Halal Tourism literacy is very important to be able to increase public understanding of Halal Tourism that the concept of Halal Tourism is a universal concept that can be accepted by all religions, societies, cultures, and governments. Halal Tourism Literacy has an important role to socialize that Halal Tourism is not a form of Islamization of tourism but rather

an extended service in the tourism industry in Indonesia.
Keywords: literacy, tourism, halal, Islamization

INTRODUCTION

The development of Halal Tourism in Indonesia is significantly growing. It was started with the initiative from the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia which is under the command of Arief Yahya in taking the market share of Muslim travelers around the world. Ministry of Tourism has a great role in developing Halal Tourism in Indonesia, and its effort paid off since in 2019 Indonesia was in the first place equalling Malaysia regarding World Halal Travel by GMTI 2019. For the sake of Halal Tourism development in Indonesia, the Ministry of Tourism specify halal tourism destinations and registered the areas that have been set as halal tourism destinations to the World Halal Travel event in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates and won several categories in 2015 and 2016. In 2015, Indonesia won three award categories, whereas in 2016 Indonesia won twelve award categories. Those awards have become a motivation for Indonesia to improve the development of Halal Tourism so that Indonesia could be the center of the world halal tourism industry.

However, the implementation of Halal Tourism in Indonesia is considered to be relatively late, because some countries, both Muslim-majority countries and non-Muslim majority countries such as Thailand, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, etc., have started earlier in promoting their halal tourism to the world in order to attract overseas Muslim travelers. The application of Halal Tourism does not mean that the non-Muslim majority countries disrespect their culture, customs, and local culture, but it is done to fulfill the needs of Muslim travelers.[1]

Halal Tourism market industry is quite large since Muslim tourists spending during their travel is varied. According to Dinar Standard data year 2020/2021 via Salaam Gateway, stated that travel expenses for Muslim travelers from Saudi Arabia are 24,3 billion US$. About 17,2 billion US$ is spent by Muslim travelers from the United Arab Emirates, whereas Muslim travelers from Qatar spent 14,2 billion US$, Kuwait 13 US$, and Indonesian Muslim travelers spent about US$ 11,2 billion. The data shows that the travel expenses of Muslim travelers are huge so that

data shows that the travel expenses of Muslim travelers are huge so that it becomes a factor to implement the Halal Tourism concept around the world.

One serious action from Indonesia government in developing Halal Tourism, Ministry of Tourism has sorted some potential destinations with some considerations in order to develop Halal Tourism. One of which is a region with a Muslim majority population. Some regions that have been set as Halal Tourism destinations are West Nusa Tenggara, West Sumatera, and Aceh are considered successful since the implementation of Halal Tourism does not cause commotion and controversy among local people, even the local government support and encourage this concept. One example is Halal Tourism in West Nusa Tenggara Province which received a positive welcome from everyone, including local people and government, legislators, scholars, public and traditional figures. There is even also a regulation regarding Halal Tourism in the form of Governor's Regulation and Local Regulation.

Halal Tourism in West Nusa Tenggara can be categorized as successful with minimum conflict. This shows that Halal Tourism in West Nusa Tenggara is one proof that halal tourism is accepted in the community. This also happens in West Sumatera and Aceh where there is no rejection from local people, in fact, the realization of halal tourism can be accepted by the whole community. Halal tourism is somewhat positive since it is in accordance with Islamic values. If we found no rejection of Halal Tourism in some destinations set by the Ministry of Tourism, this is because the majority of people in West Nusa Tenggara are Muslims.[2]

It is unlike the implementation of Halal Tourism in non-Muslim majority regions such as Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, and North Sumatera. There is a debate and rejection on the Halal Tourism concept since it is considered contrary to local wisdom and culture. There is an excessive concern in implementing Halal Tourism within non-Muslim communities. They found that it will go against the practices, customs, and local wisdom of the destination. This rejection and conflict regarding halal tourism in Indonesia happened in non-Muslim majority regions which do not fully understand the concept comprehensively, as well as not

knowing the substance of Halal Tourism that has been implemented by several non-Muslim majority countries in the world.

It is indeed ironic if Halal Tourism received a rejection from several communities since Indonesia is a country with the biggest population of Muslims in the world. However, Indonesia is not a religious State that followed the Islamic sharia, but it is based on Pancasila with diverse ethnicities, cultures, races, religions, languages, etc. Indonesia is an archipelago State which stretched from Sabang to Merauke. Tourism potential with various local cultures and wisdom are very supportive for tourism sustainable growth in Indonesia. Halal tourism is about taste and choices. It also commits to respecting culture, customs, diversity, and local wisdom.

The fundamental difference in understanding Halal Tourism causing a different realization towards halal tourism development in Indonesia. One proof is the difference of halal tourism implementation in Banyuwangi by applying separated beach areas between men and women as a representative definition of halal tourism. Implementation of halal tourism in Banyuwangi is authentic proof that tourism which is understood by sharia not just attract a niche market only. The separation between men and women on the beach also gives different dimensions to halal tourism understanding promoted by the Ministry of Tourism Republic Indonesia.

Phenomena of rejection on Halal Tourism happened after the statement delivered by North Sumatera Governor, Edy Rahmayadi, that Toba Lake will be one of Halal Tourism destinations.[3] However, the statement directly receives rejection and protest from the North Sumatra people. The rejection could give a negative impact among North Sumatra people because it will cause social restlessness, local wisdom, and cultural disclaimer. This happened because the majority of people surrounding Lake Toba are Christian and Catholic. Halal Tourism is considered disrespectful to cultural differences, local customs and cultures, and diversities. Halal tourism is regarded as something that contrary to the local wisdom and culture of the local community.[4] The rejection also happened in Bali. Bali's governor, I Wayan Koster thought that Bali is a

cultural-based tourism, not a religion-based one, so he refused any kind of religion-related concept, let alone about to be set as a destination of Halal Tourism. This rejection is strictly done to the government, specifically the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Wishnutama, and the later Minister, Sandiaga Uno.

If we looked at the background of rejection for Halal Tourism in Indonesia, it can be classified into several categories. The first category is the region with Muslim majority population, and the second category is the non-Muslim majority region. These categorizations give an impact on understanding Halal Tourism literacy. Acceptance of Halal Tourism concept comprehensively lies on Muslim majority regions where Halal Tourism can be developed better without any rejection and substantive conflict, yet rather a technical problem. On the other hand, rejection of the Halal Tourism concept from non-Muslim majority regions is because the understanding of Halal Tourism literacy was not conveyed well comprehensivel because According to Widagdyo and Kurniawan in Ma'rifah, halal tourism itself is not a special tour for Muslims/Muslims merely a concept that is general or open to all tourists with different beliefs (religion), ethnicity, and culture. In this concept, the priority is how tourism is able to promote values and Islamic norms as the basic foundation.[5] Therefore, we need literacy socialization on Halal Tourism in Indonesia, including its concept, regulation, general policy, technical policy, DSN fatwa of the Indonesian Ulama Council regarding Halal Tourism, etc.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the rejection of Halal Tourism in several regions of Indonesia and to discover the important role of Halal Tourism literacy in responding to the rejection of Halal Tourism from some communities.[6] This rejection linked with Halal Tourism implementation in Indonesia which have been going since couple years ago and won many categories at World Halal Travel, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, even some destination of Halal Tourism set by the government fully support the Halal Tourism concept by creating regulation in form of Governor and Local regulations. In 2019, Indonesia equalling its position to Malaysia to be on the first place Global Muslim Travel Index version (GMTI). It is quite interesting when we found

rejection towards Halal Tourism, but the majority of Indonesia population are Muslim, this is what underlies the researcher to conduct research in order to discover how important Halal Tourism literacy to give socialization and education to the public, so they would fully understand about Halal Tourism.

Method

In this research, the researcher analyzes Halal Tourism literacy to be able to respond to a few cases of rejection to Halal Tourism using a descriptive-qualitative approach. To collect data related to this study, the researcher using document analysis by learning various journal articles, newspaper, documents related to Halal Tourism, books, and other references by sorting and selecting the data. The data then is being processed, reviewed, and criticized to get a precise formula related to the urgency of Halal Tourism literacy in responding to rejection from several societies on the Halal Tourism concept. Those data will be combined to create a new perspective related to the Halal Tourism literacy topic.

Halal Tourism Literature

Halal labeling in the tourism sector is still being rejected and debated. The refusal was carried out by the majority of religious communities other than Islam, such as the rejection by the Governor of East Nusa Tenggara Province, the Balinese, the Lake Toba community.[7] Indeed, Indonesia is not a religious state, nor a cultural State, but it is a State based on Pancasila. Indonesia consists of many religions, various cultures, Unity in Diversity, and it has many local wisdom from Sabang to Merauke. However, Indonesia is a country with the biggest population of Muslims in the world. The presence of Halal Tourism in Indonesia is not a new thing in terms of substance, because the term "halal" is an obligation that must be obeyed, for example, it is prohibited to eat pork, dog meat, and it is also prohibited to consume alcohol or committing adultery (prostitution). The term "halal" also quite understandable by non-Muslim communities, but they do not mind if there are certified halal food, they even feel comfortable and safe to consume halal foods.

Halal literature paired in tourism sector is emerging in the world when some Muslim and non-Muslim countries competing to implement the "halal tourism" to take over foreign Muslim travelers market, especially from United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia, and other Muslim countries. Halal literacy also appears because "halal" is a safe, clean, and comfortable concept. A certified halal product means the product has passed the processes of checking including raw material checking, production process, packaging, and distribution to the consumers. Halal products have also undergone laboratory inspection process that it is not contaminated with unclean goods, not contaminated with something impure and dirty. This means that halal products are clean, safe, and harmless for consumption. Halal products are an inseparable part of the concept of Halal Tourism because the concept of Halal Tourism prioritizes providing services both halal services and products that do not conflict with Islamic religious principles. The definition of Islamic tourism according to Islamic Tourism Malaysia as quoted from Aulia is every activity, event and experience carried out in travel conditions that are in accordance with Islam, not only halal food and beverage products but also provide the needs of Muslim tourists such as halal hotels, prayer rooms, mosques, places for ablution, providing prayer mats, Al-Quran, caps, Qibla direction, and others.[8]

It is an irony that a minority of Indonesia population rejected Halal Tourism since they consider it as not *"Pancasilais"* (not in accordance to Pancasila), and incompatible with the concept of unity in diversity. The refusal was based on a lack of literacy about the concept of Halal Tourism. The rejection of halal tourism in the some regions is due to: inadequate understanding of halal tourism which only consider it a form of Islamization that violates the values of diversity, tolerance and respect for culture and religion adopted by the local.[9] In fact, Halal Tourism is not only friendly to Muslim travelers but also very friendly for non-Muslim travelers as well. It is in contrary if the one who asked the question regarding halal food and beverages (and others) that available at tourist destinations in Indonesia is a foreign traveler. Foreign Muslim tourists will have more trust in the restaurants or food stalls with the halal label,

because they have been tested and certified by the authorized institutions, in this case, are BPJPH and the Indonesian Ulama Council.

Halal Tourism is a part of the sharia economy. Its literature in Indonesia is considered low, since Halal Tourism is a newly implemented concept in Indonesia, the same goes for sharia financial literature. Even though it has been developed for a long time, the understanding of Sharia financial literacy is still low. According to a survey conducted by Financial Services Authority through National Literacy Survey and Financial Inclusion in 2019, the sharia financial literacy index reached 38,03%. That literacy is still relatively low compared to the total population of Indonesian Muslims. However, the literacy index has increased compared to 2016 which was 29.7%. Likewise, Halal Tourism literacy which is still relatively new to be implemented in Indonesia makes the public lack of understanding on Halal Tourism, even Halal Tourism definition itself is still a debate among academics and practitioners. Therefore, socialization and education related to Halal Tourism are necessary, so the public will understand that Halal Tourism is not an Islamization to tourism, and not something that is contrary to Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

Substance Discourse of Halal Tourism Concept

Halal Tourism definition has not been agreed widely and there are some different opinions, both from academics and the government. Therefore, it is necessary to have discussions carried out by the Ministry of Tourism, academics, businessmen, community leaders, and cultural leaders to discuss and formulate the right definition of Halal Tourism to be implemented in Indonesia. The use of the terminology of halal tourism and Islamic tourism is a matter of debate until now. According to El-Gohury and Battour and Ismail that the use of terminology Halal tourism and Islamic tourism are different. Islamic tourism is like explaining certain activities or products "Islamic" i.e. giving an indication that the activity or product fully complies with Islamic law (which may not apply to every product and or halal tourism activity). Besides Therefore, the term Islamic is only applied to things that are directly related to the faith and teachings of Islam (such as Islamic/Sharia law, Islamic values, principles

and beliefs, and Islamic worship). The use of the word Islamic tourism also gives the impression that an activity or the product is only used for Muslims, even though non-Muslims can also consume the product or halal tourism activities.[10]

Moreover, the existence of Halal Tourism as complementary tourism or a new variant of tourism is still in debate. However, there are several popular terms in some Countries (even Indonesia), such terms are Sharia Tourism, Islamic Tourism, Halal Tourism, Halal Travel, Halal Lifestyle, Muslim-Friendly Travel Destination, and other terms linked to Halal Tourism. The difference of definitions gives implicate meanings, regulations, and technical policies for Halal Tourism implementation in Indonesia and even worldwide. Since there is no agreement yet on the term "Halal Tourism", it encourages everyone to differently define the terms. Mohamed Battour stated that the challenge for academics and practitioners is identifying a proper terminology for Halal Tourism terms. In his article titled *"Halal Tourism or Muslim-Friendly Tourism?"* he stated that the term "halal" sounds more Islamic if to be paired with the tourism sector, or more precisely using Islamic Tourism terms since Islam has a direct connection with faith and its doctrine.[11]

Hafizah Awalia criticized the confusing, ambiguous, and non-standard "halal tourism" terms. Since there is no agreement yet to define it precisely in Tourism terms, then everybody can define it differently according to their own understanding.[12] She also criticized that Halal Tourism is for Muslim tourists only, and not for the non-Muslims, since in the Halal Tourism concept prostitution and discotheque are prohibited, alcohol is haram, and halal tourism only provides separated facilities between men and women that are not a close relatives. Jafari and Scott define Islamic Tourism as basically an interpretation of new tourism from a pilgrimage that combines religious tourism and recreation, and consider it as an alternative to the hedonistic conceptualization of mass tourism.[13] Kessler categorized Islamic Tourism as a strict market, purpose, lifestyle, and strength of culture.[14] This difference shows that Halal Tourism still in debate among academics and practitioners. Most countries also give different definitions of Halal Tourism that means halal

well-defined so that it needs a long discussion to set a whole definition that can be set as a reference for every research.

Different points of view in giving terms and defining Halal Tourism create a room for discussion to uniform perception on Halal Tourism concept applied in Indonesia, because if it does not formulate nationally, then the growth of Halal Tourism will run without standard reference in terms of regulation, model, concept, even strategy so that it will cause many conflicts which can be an obstacle in developing the next Halal Tourism. Therefore, we need the Halal Tourism concept that can accommodate sharia principle values, and the economy by keeping eye on and respecting the customs, culture, and local wisdom of one region. [15]The differences indeed are based on the background of application and substance of Halal Tourism. Tourism is an economic activity which can be reviewed as a multi-dimensional activity that can reach every aspect of life. Tourism can also increase the cultural values of a region, and it can also create more job opportunities, as well as developing infrastructure, services, and facilities.

Several points of view in Halal Tourism stated by Sihar Sitorus as parliament member is that Halal Tourism is designed by the government to create separation/segregation among inter-religious, even ethnic groups. Halal Tourism is considered breaking the Nation since it creates discrimination between one community and others. This is a normal thing to happen because we do not truly understand Halal Tourism literacy. Another opinion delivered by I Wayan Koster as Governor of Bali who stated that Halal Tourism is somehow reducing and narrowing the tourist destinations value in Bali as if only the island belongs to one specific group, although in fact, Bali is an island of culture-based tourism which develops in accordance with all religions, ethnicity, and culture. Those views can be a suggestion to be handled professionally, so there will be no misunderstanding in comprehending Halal Tourism literacy.

The Existence of Halal Tourism in Indonesia

Halal Tourism in Indonesia grows and develops because of the policy from Central Government, that is the Ministry of Tourism which was led by Arief Yahya at that time. The policy is taken to take over foreign

Muslim travelers market, especially from the Middle East such as United Arab Emirate (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, and others. In a research conducted by Mohammed Battour and M. Nazari Ismail create an output regarding a reason behind the new concept in the sharia-based tourism sector, and code of Ethics is tourists from the Bay area.[16] The reason is very realistic since tourists coming from the Middle East have an extremely high buying power that motivates the sharia-based tourism industry in order to meet the needs of Middle East Muslims. The research result becomes the excuse for non-Muslims countries to participate in applying the Halal Tourism concept without any rejection on the Halal Tourism concept. For an instance, South Korea has already developed a Halal Tourism by holding Halal Restaurant Week event which shares information about halal culinary, and create an application that eases Muslim travelers who want to look for information on halal restaurants, halal foods, praying sites, and schedules.

Looking at the phenomenon in some countries, both the Muslim majority and non-Muslim majority Countries that develop Halal Tourism concept, then Indonesia also takes part. Halal Tourism concept application in Indonesia can be categorized as "late" compared to other countries. However, Indonesia is truly serious to build the market of Muslim tourists from the Bay area. In 2016, according to Crescentrating and Master Card, Indonesia achieved the fourth rank GMTI version of 2016 after being in the sixth position before. Indonesia's effort in developing Halal Tourism needs to be appreciated because in 2019, Indonesia and Malaysia to equal their position as the first rank GMTI version of 2019. However, Halal Tourism development in Indonesia facing some obstacles and challenges, including several rejections in some regions, lack of regulation in form of the Constitution which regulate Halal Tourism policy that still referring to conventional tourism law, infrastructure is still not tourist friendly and human resources must receive training and understanding regarding Halal Tourism literacy comprehensively. However, there is a Law that supports Halal Tourism development that is Law number 33 year 2014 on halal product guarantee. The Law only mentioned about food, cosmetics, pharmacy,

and other products, no discussion about Halal Tourism as a whole.

The development of Halal Tourism in Indonesia is supported by many factors in which the biggest factor is religious support from Muslim majority population in Indonesia who are friendly and be tolerant of others. The next factor is Indonesia's huge and beautiful natural wealth, a country with a wide-stretched beach, and full of various cultures and local wisdom, which encourages tourism sector to grow aggressively. To make it real, the Ministry of Tourism has a logo and tagline "Halal Tourism Indonesia, The Halal Wonders" to accelerate Halal Tourism development in Indonesia. The nation set some Halal Tourism destinations, including West Nusa Tenggara Province, Aceh Province, West Sumatera Province, Banten Province, East Java Province, and other destinations in several provinces/districts, and cities with many interesting and beautiful attractions that can accept Halal Tourism concept.[17] The concept can increase national economy, even tourism gives multiplier effects to many people, and it also creates many businessmen who open job opportunities. Therefore, public welfare will be realized. David Mc Cleland found that if the economy of one country becomes stronger, then the number of its businessmen is at least 2% of its total population.[18] Schumpter explained that entrepreneurship is an innovative activity to utilize business opportunities.[19]

Destination Mapping For Halal Tourism in Indonesia

The effort made by the Central Government to develop the Halal Tourism concept is by specifying some regions to be Halal Tourism destinations. As mentioned before, there are some destinations set based on mapping, both from local community support, readiness human resources readiness, facilities, and supporting infrastructure in regions that become the focus of tourism activities. The existence of Halal Tourism in Indonesia is actually growing significantly, both in terms of national and international branding. We need to appreciate and pay attention to the Government's effort because they gave a big contribution in accelerating Halal Tourism development in Indonesia. However, in reality, the mapping of Halal Tourism in Indonesia can be

seen as forced, since some potential regions for Halal Tourism destination mapping receive rejection and debate.

Some regions that support the Central Government's effort in applying the Halal Tourism concept in local tourism ecosystem are West Tenggara Province, Aceh Province, and West Sumatera Province. When we see it from the majority of the sMuslim population, even the local government creates a regulation in form of Governor Regulation and Local Regulation. Those regulations are truly helpful in developing Halal Tourism in destination areas since it gives legal certainty for investors, businessmen, communities, associations, and other stakeholders. Looking at the success of specifying Halal Tourism destinations based on the support of Muslim majority communities should be a measured achievement that Halal Tourism concept cannot be implemented in every region of Indonesia. Therefore, we should anticipate rejections of Halal Tourism in Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, and North Sumatera, since we know that those three regions are non-Muslim majority regions. Therefore, destinations mapping should consider the region's background, majority of population, natural resources, etc.

Implementation of Halal Tourism in some potential regions as Halal Tourism destinations somewhat forced by the domination of capitalism. A SWOT analysis should be done in the mapping for Halal Tourism destination. For rejection cases happened in some area, the Researcher agrees with Frankfurt teachings[20] which believe that people who consume cultural products are generally driven by constructs and logics of desire formed by the charm of popular culture, and not driven by needs. That means Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, and North Sumatera are not yet categorized as destinations to implement Halal Tourism concept, and still needs socialization and education related to the Halal Tourism concept, so that people can understand comprehensively about Halal Tourism. The researcher also agrees with Adorno's theory[21] which stated that we live in a commodity society that is a society in which the production of goods is not made primarily for the satisfaction of human desire and needs, but for profit.[22] That means Halal Tourism is about choices in giving the best facilities in terms of praying and religious values for Muslim travelers, so they can do both traveling and praying.

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Study and Discussion on Halal Tourism Literacy

The rejection of Halal Tourism in Indonesia comes from non-Muslim communities who are allergic to "halal" terms that is linked to Islam. That is a normal phenomenon, moreover to assume that Halal Tourism will suppress customs, local wisdom, and even local culture such as in Lake Toba where there is a pig slaughterhouse. Rose Emmaria Tarigan, and Abdul Basit in their research titled *Public Rejection of Danau Toba's Halal Tourism Program,* stated that the causative factor of Halal Tourism is an unfinished communication between the government and the people. That means, there is no education and socialization regarding Halal Tourism as a whole, so that it creates different perceptions and they judged Halal Tourism as something terrible.

Even though the phenomena of rejecting Halal Tourism is a normal thing, but it is considered odd since Halal Tourism is not only applied in Indonesia but also implemented in non-Muslim majority countries that already accepted the "halal" label. Yukichika Kawata, Sheila Nu Nu Htay, and Ahmed Salman Syed in their research entitled *Non-Muslims' acceptance of imported products with halal logo: a case study of Malaysia and Japan* found that a halal logo product with certification will be welcomed in Japan's stores so that it can boost Muslim foreigner travelers.[23] The research argued that "halal" is intended for Muslims only. Instead, "halal" is meant for every human being with any religious belief. The non-Muslim majority Countries even hold a Halal Tourism such as in Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, etc.

Many factors cause the rejection of Halal Tourism.[24] Different religion will have impact on defining Halal Tourism that is complex and vary. The rejection can also be caused by the lack of understanding related to Halal Tourism literacy so that people make their own perception that is not based on Halal Tourism as a whole. The impact of lacking understanding on Halal Tourism literacy can also lead to a superficial and judgmental understanding that Halal Tourism has a negative reputation. In fact, Halal Tourism is implemented with a focus on providing the needs of Muslim tourists by not disturbing other non-Muslim tourists. However, in Halal Tourism there is a provision on certified halal food and beverages, and

other matters. Indeed, a halal product shows the cleanliness and safety of one product to be consumed. The urgency of Halal Tourism literacy is truly necessary, so we will be able to develop Halal Tourism in Indonesia aggressively without rejection from a few communities.

Halal Tourism is actually implemented to meet the needs of Muslim travelers. Its implementation refers to Muslim life rules in terms of product, service and accommodation, food and beverages. Currently, big cities in Muslim majority countries such as Malaysia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate, and Indonesia, etc. are still the favorite destinations for travelers. In Buchalis' opinion[25], tourism purpose has five important elements namely, attraction, access, facilities, activities, and travel agent. Halal Tourism is implemented and developed with some purposes and objectives. Some purposes identified by the researcher are as follows; first, Halal Tourism is a branding to improve the potential of Muslim travelers visit. Second, Halal Tourism is a new market, and gives many tourism choices for foreign and domestic travelers, Muslim and non-Muslims. The third is that Halal Tourism may keep natural conservation, tourist's belief, and keeping tourism destination according to sharia. The fourth is that Halal Tourism can fulfill the needs of praying for Muslim travelers, and the fifth is that Halal Tourism can contribute to improving the economy of a country.

Diagram 4.0 Halal Tourism Destinations in Indonesia

Level of Halal Tourism Literacy in Indonesia

There is no definitive research regarding the index level of Halal Tourism literacy in Indonesia so that national research is needed by related institutions such as KNEKS to be able to determine the index level of Halal Tourism literacy in Indonesia. So far, there have only been results of a survey on the level of Islamic financial literacy in Indonesia conducted by the Financial Services Authority. The survey provides a clear description that the level of Islamic financial literacy is still low compared to the reality of Islamic financial sector development in Indonesia. Although Halal Tourism is not Islamic finance, Halal Tourism is part of the Islamic economy. The survey data can be used as study material for the development of Halal Tourism which is still low.[26] Research result conducted by Alfonso Vargas-Sánchez and Murko Perano entitled *Halal Tourism and new generations: The Indonesian case* stated that although halal tourism is a suitable economy sector to fulfill the needs of Muslim travelers that in accordance with religious manners. However, the new generation that consistsa of students, lacks an understanding of the halal tourism industry in Indonesia, so that it becomes an obstacle for halal tourism development in Indonesia. Therefore, special attention is necessary to deliver knowledge about halal tourism to Indonesia students that is a Muslim majority country.[27]

The level of people's literacy about Halal Tourism must be improved, because by educating and socializing Halal Tourism may increase people's perceptions and minimize the rejection caused only by the existing "Islamization" of Tourism.[28] In fact, according to Aan Jaelani in his research entitled *Halal tourism industry in Indonesia: Potential and prospects,* stated that Halal tourism in Indonesia has been implemented by the community for a long time in the form of pilgrimage. Halal Tourism is considered as ritual with religious motivation. Halal tourism is not exclusive but inclusive for all travelers, both Muslims and non-Muslims. Given the huge potential for halal tourism, Indonesia can be used as a center of world halal tourism, because it has a lot of natural beauty and tourist destinations.[29]

Factors of Rejection on Halal Tourism in Indonesia

Based on data and fact that happened in Indonesia regarding the rejection on Halal Tourism, it can be concluded that there are some factors which affect the rejection. The researcher tries to identify using three main factors. The first is the factor of a negative perception of halal labeling. The fear of attaching halal label on a product, since the seller is worried that the product will not sold out.[30] The second factor is the unprepared human resources in applying the halal label on the tourism sector that is always side-by-side with pleasures, such as prostitution, alcohol, discotheques, etc.[31] This is what makes one think that Halal Tourism might be contrary to local wisdom, the culture, and the habits of tourists. The third factor is low socialization and education on Halal Tourism, so many people are not familiar with halal products in Halal Tourism. The terms of Halal Tourism is still not familiar among the people, except for halal food and beverage, and halal cosmetic.

Several factors mentioned above are clearly identified that the rejection of Halal Tourism does not mean that it is not a good thing, or if it is a negative concept, it does not mean that Halal Tourism is contrary with culture, or it forbids all habitual activities that have been implemented in the tourism sector so far. Halal tourism is a recreational activity that can be enjoyed by all local and foreign tourists, both Muslims and non-Muslims who can accommodate sharia and economic values in accordance with the culture and local wisdom.[32] Halal Tourism is implemented to fulfill the needs of Muslim travelers, both domestic and foreign travelers. It is also expected to take over the foreign tourist market which has a big potential in giving and increasing foreign exchange earnings. Halal tourism is not only a product for Muslims but also a product for non-Muslims majority countries as well. \Halal Tourism can be consumed and enjoyed by all tourists since with the "halal" label something can be valued as good, clean, harmless, and safe for consumption. As research conducted by Vloreen Nity Mathew et.al. entitled *Acceptance on Halal Food Among Non-Muslim Consumers* stated that halal represents cleanliness and quality of the foods consumed.[33]
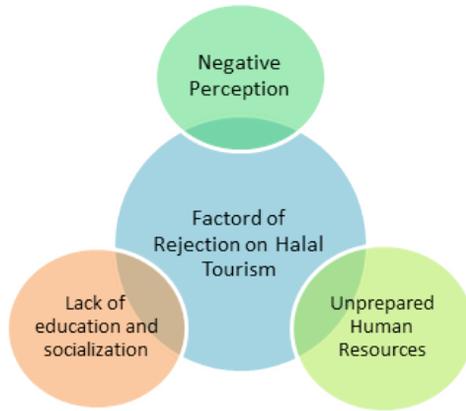
Diagram 4.3 Factors of Rejection on Halal Tourism

Developing Cultural Halal Tourism Literacy in Indonesia

Halal Tourism literacy is truly important as a response to rejection from some societies on the Halal Tourism concept in several regions of Indonesia with a non-Muslim majority population. In fact, at the same time, even before Indonesia applied the Halal Tourism concept, some non-Muslim majority countries already implemented the Halal Tourism concept, and it is considered as a good concept to attract the market of foreign Muslim travelers, especially from the bay area. The need of praying during traveling is one of the factors that Muslim travelers can visit as well as paying attention to halal foods and beverages when traveling. Therefore, we need socialization and education on Halal Tourism literacy extensively, so there will be no misunderstanding of the concept.

To raise awareness that Halal Tourism does not undermine local knowledge, to increase the belief that Halal Tourism is a good concept to be enjoyed by all people, and to change the mindset that Halal Tourism is harmless, and does not interfere with diversity. Moreover, Halal Tourism can even grows the values of positivism and improve the economy of local communities. The lack of Halal Tourism literacy becomes a fundamental factor and widely affecting the growth of Halal Tourism in Indonesia. It is also causing low Halal Tourism growth which can hamper the growth of foreign Muslim travelers. The lack of Halal Tourism literacy

also give a negative impact on increasing per-capita income. Therefore, a low Halal Tourism literacy can contribute to unemployment rate and inequality in the community around the destination.

To develop Halal Tourism literacy culture among Indonesian people is not something difficult, but it needs commitment and consistency in educating people to have a deeper understanding, not only the terms of 'halal' but also that halal is good, clean, safe, and comfortable. It means that the halal essence is not inclusive, but exclusive. Halal is respecting different religions and does not suppress the culture. Therefore, some steps need to be taken to develop Halal Tourism literacy culture, some of which are as follows:

First, is planning socialization strategy about Halal Tourism literacy by holding some events in a form of webinar, workshop, Competition, Halal Festival, Scientific Paper, Exhibition, Expo, etc. both offline and online. Indeed, literacy socialization must be done consistently and massively. Therefore, we need cooperation from all parties and collaboration with several agencies and institutions, as well as local communities, so that the understanding of Halal Tourism can be well-delivered in form of information, knowledge, innovative and creative ideas in developing the Tourism sector in Indonesia with great cultural diversity and the world beauty. Socialization can also be done in the form of multimedia and the like.

The second is creating and developing digital-based education about Halal Tourism. The combination of natural beauty, cultural diversity, religious diversity, and wealth of resources with the Halal Tourism concept can increase prestige and reputation that is balanced with the background of the Muslim majority population in Indonesia, even though it is not a religious nor a sharia state, but a Pancasila state. Raising awareness by digital education is truly helping the people in understanding Halal Tourism concept entirely so that it can change the negative mindset about Halal Tourism.

The third is to strengthen religious community-based education. Indeed, there is no doubt that Halal Tourism destinations are implemented in some areas that have a Muslim majority population, such as West Nusa Tenggara, Aceh, West Sumatera Province. Evidence of

encouragement and support from local government is the issuance of regulations to strengthen the implementation of Halal Tourism in form of Governor and Local Regulations. This means that a mapping of destinations in implementing Halal Tourism in Indonesia can be an example to be followed up in other areas which can accept the Halal Tourism concept. Therefore, before developing the Halal Tourism concept, we need education and SWOT analysis of local cultural values, community characteristics, and natural resources that can support the concept.

The fourth step is to hold technical guidance regularly for tourism actors in Indonesia. It is necessary to accelerate the Halal Tourism literacy acceleration program in many ways, namely with technical guidance to encourage the acceleration of Halal Tourism destinations development in Indonesia by referring to the assessment of Indonesia Muslim Travel Index (IMTI) using several indicators, accessibility, communication, environment, and service. Technical guidance aims to formulate the Halal Tourism literacy movement as a whole. This movement is started by giving knowledge, insight, concept, strategy, policy, regulation to tourism actors, and then continued with implementation in the field by forming the Halal Tourism literacy movement.

The fifth is to implement the Halal Tourism concept in every institution by forming strategic alliances with various stakeholders, mainly the academics, businessmen, local government, religious leaders, traditional figures, and Tourism Association, etc. Strategic alliances are necessary in order to encourage and support the Halal Tourism concept. Halal Tourism needs special attention since literacy means there is knowledge to enlighten the people in understanding Halal Tourism. We need an understanding paradigm that literacy is not only reading and writing but also thinking skills in understanding scientific resources that are accurate and reliable, either in digital, visual, and printed forms. Therefore, Halal Tourism literacy is extremely important in order to be able to give a quick response to the rejection of Halal Tourism from a small part of communities.

Several moves mentioned above are the first steps to be able to create and develop the Halal Tourism concept in responding to the rejection which happened due to a different understanding since 'halal' terms have

a sensitivity among inter-religious communities. In fact, "halal" terms for Muslims contain all the good things, of course, it can be interpreted differently for non-Muslims, which is also very reasonable because the word 'halal' can be politicized so that its meaning can change (good meaning becomes bad meaning). The terms which contain Islamization values are often taken to the relevant debates related to religious moderation. The term also has a very high sensitivity. Therefore, it is necessary to have dialogue and discussion related to the Halal Tourism literacy, so it does not leave problems both from the meaning and message implied in the Halal Tourism concept. Therefore, it is not misinterpreted and can be understood comprehensively. If the people are well-educated and have a comprehensive understanding, as well as aware of the importance of halal label, Indonesia will be a role model of halal world and huge potential in increasing national economy, since "halal" is not merely the needs of Muslims, but it is a global trend that is universal not only among Muslims but also within non-Muslim societies.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of rejection of Halal Tourism in Indonesia due to lack of literacy in Halal Tourism is understood as a form of Islamization of tourism, namely changing tourism objects according to Islamic sharia. Halal Tourism is not turning a tourist attraction into a halal one. Halal means the provision of food served in restaurants, the availability of places of worship, and hotels that can have halal standards, also related to health and hygiene issues. Halal tourism is different from the Islamization of tourism because Halal tourism is actually widely used by countries that are predominantly non-Muslim. Halal tourism is a global need and has great potential to bring in foreign exchange for the country. Halal tourism is a tourism concept that becomes an additional service (extended services) in the tourism industry in Indonesia to be able to respond to the world tourist market share. The concept of Halal Tourism is a universal concept that can be accepted by all religious, community, cultural and government circles. An incomprehensive understanding of Halal Tourism makes the substance of Halal Tourism in Indonesia

considered negative and can even deny local wisdom and culture of the surrounding community or referred to as a form of Islamization of tourism. In fact, Halal Tourism is implemented in the form of providing the needs of Muslim tourists with the availability of halal food and drinks, mosques, prayer rooms, ablution places, Qibla direction, prayer rugs, Al-Quran, and others. Halal tourism is not a form of Islamization of tourism, but rather becomes the choice of domestic and foreign tourists in meeting the needs of worship and as a new market in developing global tourism. Therefore, to overcome the incomplete understanding, a literacy socialization strategy is needed by holding several events, digital-based education, religious community-based education, conducting technical guidance for tourism actors in Indonesia and forming strategic alliances with all parties related to Halal Tourism. so that it can provide a comprehensive understanding of Halal Tourism.

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