Perceptions and Attitudes of the Pandeglang Regency Community towards the Halal Tourism Concept

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the perceptions and attitudes of the people of Pandeglang Regency regarding the concept of halal tourism. It is important to know their perceptions and attitudes as a basis for policy for local governments who wish to implement the concept of halal tourism. This research data was obtained through interviews and documentation. Interviews were conducted in a structured manner with an open question model. The research subjects were determined using purposive sampling, involving a number of groups such as ulama, academics, community leaders, government elements and tourism actors. The collected data was analyzed descriptively-qualitatively. The research results show that tourist attractions in Pandeglang Regency have the potential to become halal tourist destinations. The local community also agrees with the implementation of halal tourism, for the reasons that halal tourism is considered to be in line with Pandeglang's identity as a santri city, halal tourism is believed to increase comfort for tourists, and halal tourism is believed to encourage economic potential for local residents. This agreement is followed by their support and readiness to contribute directly to efforts to implement halal tourism according to their respective capacities.

Keywords: Perception, Atitude, Halal Tourism

Introduction

Halal tourism is simply defined as tourism that is in line with sharia principles. Halal tourism guarantees the availability of basic needs for Muslims to continue carrying out their worship and activities in accordance with sharia law while in the tourist destination.

Currently, halal tourism is being pursued by various countries in the world. It has become a global trend for several reasons, including first, the large number of the world's Muslim population, as a potential demand to become a target for tourist visits. Second, the large amount of spending by the world's Muslim population in the tourism sector, which has become a concern for various countries to attract Muslim tourists to visit their countries. And third, the large number of Muslim tourists worldwide. Master Card and Crescent Rating studies show that in 2014 there were around 108 million Muslim tourists who traveled to various tourist destinations in the world. In 2026 this figure is expected to increase to 260 million tourists with total expenditure estimated at U\$ 180 trillion¹.

In Indonesia itself, the halal tourism segment began to be developed by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism since 2015 and is one of the ministry's priority programs. The halal tourism market experienced growth of up to 18% in 2018 with the number of foreign Muslim tourists reaching 2.8 million and foreign exchange earnings of IDR 40 trillion.

The development of halal tourism in Indonesia has received international appreciation. In 2019, Indonesia was ranked first in the world's halal tourist destination according to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI). In 2022 Indonesia won second place in the same category, and in May 2024 Indonesia was named "Top Muslim Frendly Destination of the Year 2024" in the Mastercard Crescent Rating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) which took place in Singapore.

However, the variety of achievements has not been directly proportional to the evenness of the implementation of halal tourism in the country. There are still many areas that have not implemented halal tourism even though the potential for halal tourism in these areas is very strong. Pandeglang Regency in Banten province is one of them. This area is known to be rich in tourist destinations, both natural, religious and artificial. The nickname of the city of Islamic boarding school students attached to Pandeglang is also considered to be the initial potential for realizing halal tourism. Since 2021, the local Regent, Irna Narulita has stated her commitment to implementing halal tourism in her area. This was conveyed when he responded

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¹ Mastercard-Crescentrating, Global Muslim Travel Index 2019, https://gmti.crescentrating.com

to the proposal of the daughter of the Vice President at that time, Siti Makrifah Maruf Amin regarding halal tourism in Pandeglang.²

The Regent's readiness to implement halal tourism must be in line with the community's readiness. Researchers believe that community readiness before a program is rolled out should not go unnoticed. Ideally, the local community first has insight and a positive attitude towards the program so that its implementation runs smoothly.

So far, studies regarding the perceptions and attitudes of the Pandeglang community towards halal tourism have not been carried out. Previous research has focused on studying the causes of weak management of the tourism sector in Pandeglang Regency, as stated by Surachman,³ which includes weak public awareness of the importance of the tourism sector, a lack of tourism awareness groups (pokdarwis), weak socialization of the Islamic boarding school doctrine, weak tourism promotion, and a minimal regional government budget for the tourism sector. A similar conclusion was conveyed by Hani Muflihah in her study which highlighted the weak management of the tourism sector in Pandeglang Regency. Meanwhile, Andre Reva Utama in his study discusses the weak management of the tourism sector in Banten Province, which is considered to be still far from halal tourism standards.⁴.

Therefore, this research will examine community perceptions and attitudes regarding the implementation of halal tourism in Pandeglang Regency. It is important to know the perceptions and attitudes of the community as valuable input, especially for the regional government of Pandeglang Regency if they plan to implement the concept of halal tourism in the region in the future.

Method

This research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono,⁵ descriptive research aims to provide or describe a situation or phenomenon that is currently occurring by using scientific procedures to answer actual problems based on certain concepts

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² https://www.bantennews.co.id/didukung-putri-wapres-pemkab-pandeglang-bakal-buat-wisata-halal/

³ Analisis Dampak Kurang Sadar Wisata dan Doktrin Kota Santri Terhadap Perkembangan Pariwisata di Kabupaten Pandeglang Banten, Jurnal Manajemen STIE Muhammadiyah Palopo Vol 7 No 1 Juni 2021, page 48-60 http://dx.doi.org/10.35906/jm001.v7i1.727

⁴ Andre Reva Utama, *Analisis Persepsi Masyarakat Banten terhadap Wisata Halal*, skripsi UIN Jakarta, 2021, page 92 https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/56734

⁵ Metode Penelitian dan Pengembangan Research and Development. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018, page 56

and views. This approach is considered very appropriate to use to examine and discuss the object of study in depth and detail in order to answer the objectives to be achieved.

Field studies are carried out through interviews and documentation. Interviews were conducted with academics, ulama, government elements, accommodation owners and tourist attraction managers, using a purposive sampling system. According to Sugiyono, purposive sampling is taking samples using certain considerations according to the desired criteria. The informants interviewed were asked to provide views, assessments and suggestions regarding plans to implement halal tourism in Pandeglang Regency.

The data obtained was analyzed descriptively using Miles and Huberman's theory,⁷ which includes presenting data, selecting and sorting data, then drawing conclusions.

Result and Discussion

Perception is a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions to give meaning to the environment.⁸ A similar definition was conveyed by Rico Saputra⁹ that perception is the process by which individuals select, organize and interpret information input to create a picture of life. Meanwhile, Maryati¹⁰ defines it as a process of someone's activity in giving opinions, impressions, assessments, feeling and interpreting something based on information obtained from other sources.

Thus, perception is a cognitive process experienced by a person in interpreting and understanding information about their environment through the five senses, whether sight, hearing, smell, feeling or appreciation.

Meanwhile, attitudes are evaluative statements or considerations, either favorable or unfavorable, regarding objects, people or events. Or it can also be interpreted as a tendency to respond to something consistently to support or not support it, by paying attention to certain objects. ¹¹ For this reason, a person can show an attitude towards an event after he has knowledge that forms beliefs and opinions.

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⁶ Sugiyono: Metode Penelitian dan Pengembangan Research and Development, page 57

⁷ Miles, M. B., Huberman, A., Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook. Sage, 1994

⁸ Rusdan, , Persepsi dan Sikap Masyarakat Lingkar Gunung Rinjani terhadap Industri Pariwisata (Suatu Upaya Menyongsong Rinjani sebagai Geopark Dunia), Laporan Penelitian, Univ Mataram, 2014

⁹ Analisis Pengaruh Motivasi, Persepsi Sikap Konsumen Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Mobil Daihatsu Xenia di Sidoarjo. Jurnal Strategi Pemasaran Vol. 1 No.1, 2013, page 1-12 https://publication.petra.ac.id/index.php/manajemen-pemasaran/issue/view/42

¹⁰ Persepsi Terhadap Wisata Halal Di Kota Padang. Maqdis: Jurnal Kajian Ekonomi Islam, Vol 4 No 2, 2019, page 117-129 http://dx.doi.org/10.15548/maqdis.v4i2.514

¹¹ Rusdan, Persepsi dan Sikap Masyarakat... Laporan Penelitian, Univ Mataram, 2014

Halal Tourism Concept

Halal tourism is a term used to refer to the concept of tourism that is in accordance with the ethics and rules of the Islamic religion, carried out in order to provide tourism needs for followers of the Islamic religion that are in accordance with their personal religious habits when traveling. Jafari and Scott ¹²; Battour dan Ismail¹³; Battour and Ismail define halal tourism as tourism or travel activities that tend to meet the requirements of sharia law.

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) through the Fatwa of the National Sharia Council (DSN) Number 108 of 2016 states that halal tourism is tourism that complies with sharia principles. This tourism has the principle of avoiding idolatry, immorality, evil, waste and evil, and aims to create benefits and benefits, both from a material and spiritual perspective. ¹⁴ Meanwhile, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy defines it as a set of additional services that include amenities, attractions and accessibility, which are aimed at and provided to fulfill the experiences, needs and desires of Muslim tourists, provided by the business world, society and government. ¹⁵

Thus, the concept of halal tourism guarantees the availability of the basic needs of Muslims to continue carrying out their worship and activities in accordance with sharia law while at the destination tourist destination. These basic needs were formulated by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism with eight indicators of halal tourism, namely halal food and drink services, quality worship facilities, clean toilets with adequate water, free from Islamophobia, providing value for social benefits, Ramadan programs, unique experiences for Muslim tourists, free from non-halal activities, and the provision of recreation areas with privacy.¹⁶

A tourist attraction can be said to carry halal tourism if it fulfills three types of additional services (extended services), namely need to have, good to have and nice to have. Need to have means services and facilities that must be had, such as worship facilities, adequate toilets, halal culinary services, and no Islamophobia. Good to have means an atmosphere that gives a

¹² Jafari, J., & Scott, N., Muslim world and its tourisms. In Annals of Tourism Research, 2014, page 1–19, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2013.08.011

¹³ Battour, M, dan Ismail, MN, Halal Tourism: Concepts, Practises, Challenges and Future. Tourism Management Perspective, Vol 19 July 2016, page 150-154, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2015.12.008

¹⁴ https://dsnmui.or.id/kategori/fatwa/page/6/

¹⁵ https://kemenparekraf.go.id/

¹⁶ https://kemenparekraf.go.id/

different impression to Muslim tourists. Nice to have means that halal tourism is able to compete with other countries.

Halal Tourism Potential in Pandeglang Regency

Pandeglang Regency is one of eight districts/cities in the Banten Province region. Geographically, Pandeglang Regency is located in the west of the island of Java, adjacent to Serang Regency to the north, Lebak Regency to the east, and the Indonesian Ocean to the west and south.

Pandeglang Regency is known as an area rich in tourist destinations. According to records from the local Culture and Tourism Department, in Pandeglang there are currently 66 beach tourist spots, 6 spring tourist spots, 18 waterfall tourist spots, 3 historical tourist spots, 10 artificial bathing spots, 32 islands, 6 mountain tourist spots, 61 cultural heritage tourist spots, 12 historical building tourist spots and 91 religious tourist spots. The number of tourist visits to Pandeglang district in 2023 reach 2,145,839 local tourists and 2,938 foreign tourists.

Table 1 Tourist Locations in Pandeglang Regency

No	Types of Tourist Location	Amount
1	Beach Tourits Spots	66
2	Spring Tourist Spots	6
3	Waterfall Tourist Spots	18
4	Historical Tourist Spots	3
5	Artificial Bathing Spots	10
6	Islands	32
7	Mountain Tourist Spots	6
8	Cultural Heritage Tourist Spots	61
9	Historical Building Tourist Spots	12
10	Religious Tourist Spots	91

Source: Authors Analysis

However, it is considered that the high tourism potential in Pandeglang Regency has not been optimized properly. In 2023, Regional Original Income (PAD) from the tourism sector will only reach IDR 1.1 billion.¹⁷ According to Surachman,¹⁸ this occurs due to several factors such as weak public awareness of tourism, a lack of tourism awareness groups, weak socialization of the "santri" doctrine, weak tourism promotion, and a minimal regional government budget for the tourism sector.

¹⁷ Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Pandeglang, 2024, www.pandeglangkab.bps.go.id/id

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Halal tourism is not yet an official program of the Pandeglang Regency Regional Government. According to Neneng Nuraeni, Head of the Pandeglang Regency Culture and Tourism Service, halal tourism is just an ideal that is still being discussed and has not been implemented in official policy. Pandeglang Regency Regional Regulation Document (Perda) Number 1 of 2023 concerning the 2023-2025 Tourism Development Master Plan does not yet mention the concept of halal tourism explicitly.

According to researchers, projecting halal tourism in Pandeglang Regency is the right solution to encourage optimization of the tourism sector in this area which is nicknamed the city of santri. The researchers' initial guess is that the eight indicators of halal tourism and the three types of additional services as described above will be easy to realize in Pandeglang, considering the huge tourism potential in this area.

Pandeglang Regency Community Perception of Halal Tourism

Halal tourism with the concept as described above, has been responded positively by the people of Pandeglang Regency. They generally claim to know the term halal tourism, either from print media, electronic media, or through verbal information. They also expressed their agreement with various expressions such as agree, strongly agree, agree, or support. Researchers did not find a response to rejection, either express or implied.

Their agreement was based on various reasons, including as stated by Nandang Kosim - Chair of the Syekh Mansur Islamic College (STAISMAN) Pandeglang - first, the potential for the halal tourism market is large and very promising. Second, the suitability of the halal tourism concept with the religious values and local wisdom that exist in the Pandeglang community. Third, the concept of halal tourism can encourage increased regional income, create jobs and develop local business. And fourth, halal tourism can increase the positive image of Pandeglang as an inclusive tourist destination.

Iim Khairunnisa, an academic at the Sheikh Mansur Pandeglang College of Teacher Training and Education (STKIP) and Deden Inayatullah, an academic at Mathlaul Anwar University, Banten, believe that implementing halal tourism will be a solution for orderly management of the tourism sector in Pandeglang Regency. It is known that tourist attractions in Pandeglang are often considered dirty, full of rubbish and lots of illegal levies.¹⁹

¹⁹ Surahman, Analisis Dampak Kurang Sadar Wisata ..., Jurnal Manajemen STIE Muhammadiyah Palopo Vol 7 No 1 Juni 2021, page 48-60, http://dx.doi.org/10.35906/jm001.v7i1.727

From among the ulama, Uung M Shobari, secretary of the Community Economic Empowerment Commission at the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) Pandeglang Regency, made the identity of the santri city which has long been attached to Pandeglang, as the main reason why halal tourism is appropriate to be implemented in Pandeglang. Meanwhile, Opa Mustofa Chutbi, head of an Islamic boarding school in Kadubanen, believes that halal tourism can dispel the opinion of some Pandeglang people that the tourism sector is synonymous with drinking, baring, dating and even adultery. Maesaroh, head of the ar Raudhah Islamic College in Banjar District, also believes that the negative views of Pandeglang residents towards the tourism sector so far will disappear instantly if the concept of halal tourism is implemented.

The same perception about halal tourism was conveyed by the managers of natural tourist attractions at the Cikoromoy, Cipanas, Cikole and Gunung Torong baths. They believe that halal tourism can provide more comfort for Muslim tourists while in tourist areas. The managers of the four tourist locations are ready to strive for eight halal tourism indicators in their respective locations, in order to fulfill the criteria of need to have, good to have and nice to have as explained above.

Their readiness is in line with field facts found by researchers, that the existing facilities at a number of tourist locations have been assessed in accordance with halal tourism criteria. For example, prayer places equipped with prayer mats and mukenas, ablution places and clean water are generally available in tourist areas in Pandeglang. At the DM Tirta Persada Mandalawangi baths and CAS Water Park Cikole, these facilities look quite adequate.

In order to minimize the behavior of dating or adultery, a number of hotel managers have implemented special provisions such as asking guests of different sex couples staying at the hotel to show a marriage certificate, refusing underage guest couples or guests in school uniforms unless accompanied by parents, teachers or official companions. This provision exists at the Pandeglang Raya Hotel and S Rizki Hotel which are located in the center of Pandeglang city, although its implementation is carried out flexibly.

Regarding the availability of halal food or drinks at tourist locations, tourism managers ensure that so far cafes in their area have never served non-halal food or drinks. Even if there ever was one, said Suryaman, the manager of the Cikoromoy natural baths, it was brought by tourists from outside the tourist area and when they were discovered, the tourism manager immediately took control.

The criteria for halal tourism that is still addressed differently by tourism managers in Pandeglang is the matter of providing recreation areas with privacy, for example separate swimming pools for men and women. Tourism managers understand that this separation can better ensure the safety and comfort of visitors, while minimizing undesirable things such as sexual harassment and other violations. However, some of them estimate that this will be difficult to implement considering that swimming pool visitors generally come in groups - both families and communities - and they usually want to swim together.

Pandeglang Regency Community Attitude towards Halal Tourism

After the informants expressed their approval for halal tourism, they also submitted a number of suggestions so that the implementation of halal tourism would run well. According to them, local governments must work together with tourist attraction managers and other related parties in creating halal tourism supporting facilities. Ahsan Iradat, an academic from STAISMAN Pandeglang, gave an example of this collaboration with the government's readiness to provide infrastructure and a clear strategic plan, investors and business actors preparing tourist attractions, community members helping to maintain the cleanliness and preservation of the environment around tourist sites. The active participation of all parties, according to Hani Muflihah,²⁰ is believed to result in significant developments for the development of halal tourism in Pandeglang.

An important step that needs to be taken by the Regional Government is outreach to the public about halal tourism itself. This socialization aims to provide a complete understanding in the community regarding what and how the concept of halal tourism is, so that there are no more public misunderstandings about tourism as previously mentioned. This socialization must involve religious figures considering that religious figures have had an important role in the lives of the Pandeglang people. Religious figures are a reference for society in various life issues, both social, cultural and political choices. Important regional government policies are also often taken after consultation with religious leaders.

Nandang Kosim detailed eight points that need to be collaborated between the Regional Government and tourist attraction managers in developing halal tourism in Pandeglang Regency. First, prepare adequate infrastructure, such as clean and comfortable prayer facilities at tourist locations. Second, prepare regulations, namely a clear and structured framework for developing and managing tourist destinations in accordance with Islamic Sharia principles. This

²⁰ Analysis of Halal Tourism Development Potential in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, Indonesia, Ecopreneur: Journal of Islamic Economics and Business, Vol 5 Number 2, 2024, page 120-124

regulation aims to ensure the safety and satisfaction of Muslim tourists, as well as increasing the attractiveness of these tourist destinations on the global market. Third, provide halal food by increasing the number of restaurants or cafes that are halal certified. Fourth, provide appropriate accommodation, such as hotels, accommodation or home stays that implement work procedures according to halal standards. Fifth, develop halal tourism products that suit the interests of Muslim tourists, such as religious tourism, natural tourism and cultural tourism. Sixth, promote halal tourism, both at the local, national and international levels. Seventh, improving the quality of Human Resources, in the form of training for tourism actors so that they have adequate capacity to provide professional services. Eighth, carry out cooperation and partnerships with various parties in the context of developing halal tourism.

In particular, Opa Mustafa and Uung M Shobari underlined the importance of the capacity of managers as the spearhead of the success of halal tourism programs. Meanwhile, Deden Inayatullah emphasized the readiness of infrastructure and supporting capacity, including the existence of accommodation, which is considered to be very few in Pandeglang. According to BPS Pandeglang records, in 2024 in the entire Pandeglang Regency area there will only be 10-star hotels and 89 non-star accommodation.²¹ This fact is in line with the observations of Ahsan Iradat who lives near the Batu Quran pilgrimage tourist area, who often sees visitors sleeping in mosques or vehicles due to the lack of accommodation in the area.

The informants are also ready to participate directly in promoting halal tourism through electronic media, or their social roles in daily life according to their respective capacities. Academics are ready to educate students on campus about the importance of a halal lifestyle in everyday life. Religious leaders are ready to deliver lectures on halal themes. Uung M Shobari even admitted that he had been educating the public about the concept of halal tourism since 2018 through the Kampung Santri community which he founded. Through this community, Uung together with teachers, students and the people of Bojong sub-district are building an ecosystem of community empowerment patterns that includes the economic, agricultural and halal tourism education sectors.

Among the tourist attraction managers, Gilang, the manager of the Mount Torong baths, is ready to protect the tourist area he manages so that it is free from visitor behavior such as dating, bringing alcohol, or other negative behavior. Marjan, the Cipanas bathhouse

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²¹ www.pandeglangkab.bps.go.id/id

security officer, is ready to adjust the existing tourist regulations so that they are in line with the concept of halal tourism.

Conclusion

The explanation above shows that the people of Pandeglang have good perceptions and attitudes about halal tourism. Not only did they express their approval, they also expressed their readiness to contribute directly to the success of implementing halal tourism in their region. They also expressed the hope that supporting facilities for halal tourism would be equipped, so that in the future its existence would not just be a halal label but would truly meet the criteria for a halal tourism ecosystem.

This kind of positive perception and attitude from the community is the initial capital for the Pandeglang Regency Government to realize the implementation of halal tourism. The local government needs to immediately follow up on this support concretely through collaborative collaborative efforts between the local government, tourist attraction managers and the community, in order to realize the concept of halal tourism in Pandeglang Regency which has long been aspired to.

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