

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF HALAL TOURISM AND ITS CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS IN LAKE TOBA

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Abstract

The halal tourism program has the potential to positively impact tourist visits, both domestic and international. However, the community surrounding the Lake Toba tourist area has rejected the government's proposed halal tourism initiative. This study aims to explore the perceptions of the Lake Toba community regarding halal tourism, which have led to their resistance to its implementation. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, the research utilizes Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods combined with a snowball sampling technique. This technique enables continuous data collection through referrals from initial informants to other relevant stakeholders. Data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews with local residents, tourism practitioners, traditional leaders, government officials, and representatives from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of problem-solving strategies, community needs, and the dynamics of knowledge production and socio-religious change. The findings reveal a perceptual gap between the local community and the government's discourse on halal tourism. Many residents believe that halal tourism may undermine or even eliminate long-standing cultural traditions in the Lake Toba area.

Keywords: *Halal Tourism, Rejected, Perception*

INTRODUCTION

Judging from the development of the world of tourism, tourism is also a sector that has been able to survive the global crisis, and is a very promising sector for the development of the world economy. Since 1950, with the increasing number of world tourists, the world tourism industry has experienced positive developments. 25 million people, 278 million people in 1980, 528 million people in 1995, 1.1 billion people in 2014 (Surwandono et al., 2020). (Chanin et al., 2015) stated that tourism is a large-scale industry and is considered one of the industries that can drive economic growth.

(Madjid, 2016) The halal tourism industry in Indonesia as a national tax provider has enormous economic potential. Many provinces and tourist destinations have implemented halal tourism plans, and by continuing to increase the number of tourists in Indonesia, halal tourism has high development prospects. Indonesia's tourism industry ranks second, reaching US\$ 13,568 billion in 2016. Meanwhile, the tourism industry ranks fourth in 2015, generating foreign exchange earnings of 122.225 trillion US dollars, lower

than oil and gas (18.574 billion US dollars), palm oil (US\$16.427 billion), and coal (US\$14.717 billion). (Ferdiansyah, 2020) In 2019, the contribution of the tourism sector to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 4.8%. This value increased by 0.30 points compared to the previous year. Not only that, the tourism sector in Indonesia has also become a mainstay of the country's foreign exchange. At the close of the 2018 book, this sector was able to contribute the largest foreign exchange with a value of more than USD 19.2 billion (Pariwisata, 2015).

Menpar Arief Yahya stated, the development of the halal tourism industry in Indonesia is a priority for the Ministry of Tourism and has been planned by the Ministry of Tourism since 5 years ago. According to 2019 GMTI data, by 2030, the number of global Muslim tourists (Muslims) is expected to exceed 230 million. In addition, the growth of Indonesia's halal tourism market in 2018 reached 18%. The number of Muslim foreign tourists visiting Indonesia's priority halal tourist destinations reached 2.8 million, and the country's foreign exchange exceeded 40 trillion rupiah. Talking about achieving the target of 20 million foreign tourists in 2019, the Ministry of Tourism has set 25% of the 20 million foreign tourists or the equivalent of 5 million foreign tourists as Muslim foreign tourists (Subarkah, 2018).

The Ministry of Tourism is working with the National Islamic Council (DSN), the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), and the Company Certification Institute (LSU). Specific forms of cooperation are tourism development and promotion of cultural and religious values which will be further elaborated in the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy (Jaelani, 2017). In addition, human resource training, publicity and capacity building were also carried out. The government has also worked with the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) to provide halal accommodation and places to eat that can provide halal food menus, and is working with the Indonesian Travel and Tourism Association (ASITA) to create halal tour package tourist attractions for tourists. religious. Even though halal tourism is not limited to religious tourism .(Pariwisata, 2015).

However, the various discourses that have been formulated do not always proceed as expected. This is exemplified by the situation in the Lake Toba tourism area. When the Governor of North Sumatra, Edy Rahmayadi, initiated the launch of halal tourism in Lake Toba, the initiative was met with resistance from the local community, leading to intense public debate. For many residents around Lake Toba, the designation of the area as a halal

tourist destination is perceived as a threat to long-standing cultural traditions passed down through generations. One of the key traditions involves the consumption of pork, which is deeply embedded in various traditional ceremonies such as weddings, mourning rituals, and the ceremonial gifting of a stick (Mambere Tukkot) to elders. Among certain Batak sub-ethnic groups including Batak Toba, Batak Karo, Batak Dairi, Batak Simalungun, and others serving pork holds cultural significance and is regarded as a form of local wisdom.

For this reason, keeping pigs in the yard or just letting them go has become a common sight in some areas of the Batak tribe. Governor of North Sumatra Edy Rahmayadi himself has clarified that there is no intention to eliminate culture or belittle certain religions (Sianturi, 2022). According to him, the polemic that occurred was more due to a misinterpretation of the intention of declaring halal tourism for the Lake Toba tourist area. But on the other hand, this problem is also inseparable from the problem of multiculturalism which is very closely attached to the Indonesian nation (Hemafitria, 2019). Moreover, in North Sumatra, there are several ethnicities and races, such as Batak, Malay, Nias, Chinese, Indian, and other ethnicities. Based on the explanation above, of course, there are many problems that can be raised and analyzed in depth. However, this research will focus on the polemic issues that arise in the community around the Lake Toba tourist area regarding the declaration of halal tourism in the Lake Toba tourist area.

Based on the problem outlined above, this study focuses on identifying the underlying causes of community rejection toward the declaration of halal tourism initiated by the Governor of North Sumatra, Edy Rahmayadi. Although the halal tourism program carries positive potential—particularly in attracting foreign tourists and offering economic benefits for local communities and regions—the implementation in the Lake Toba area has encountered resistance. The challenges faced are not merely technical or related to tourism promotion strategies, but rather stem from sociocultural objections raised by the local community. This resistance has given rise to a political communication problem that remains unresolved. Effective political communication, in this context, should serve to bridge all elements within the political system, enabling the diverse aspirations and interests of stakeholders to be translated into well-informed, inclusive policies.

The novelty of this research lies in its use of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method, which enables the researcher to conduct deeper exploration and actively participate in identifying the specific causes of community rejection, including direct

engagement with traditional stakeholders in the Lake Toba area. Additionally, this study examines the collaborative implementation efforts among the government, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), traditional leaders, the local community, and business actors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Halal Tourism

The literature on community perceptions and attitudes towards tourism has developed significantly, reaching a level of theoretical maturity and sophistication in empirical measure (Mody et al., 2023). It is widely acknowledged that community perceptions play a crucial role in determining the success or failure of a destination, serving as an important indicator for sustainable development in that area (Rasoolimanesh & Seyfi, 2020).

The idea of halal in the context of tourism is proof that, being a comprehensive religion, Islamic teachings are incorporated into every facet of life (Samori et al., 2014). Muslims fundamentally believe that Islam has a holistic and all-encompassing idea and that by putting its many values into practice, it can address all of their wants and issues. (Junaidi, 2020) The concept of "halal" encompasses various aspects of life, including interpersonal relationships, ethical behavior, commerce, services, and investments, guided by Islamic principles and regulations. (Samori et al., 2014), includes the necessity to travel, provided that it does not contravene Islamic law.

(Mardian & Armen, 2024) argues that the concept of Islamic tourism includes all Muslim tours where religion is an important consideration, although this is not the main motivation. Similarities can be drawn from these two definitions, namely Islamic tourism is travel carried out in accordance with Islamic law or Islamic religious regulations. Compared to the two concepts previously mentioned, halal tourism has a different meaning. (Nugroho et al., 2024) Halal tourism is rooted in the concept of "halal". The word is halal is of Arabic origin and means "allow" or "permit". In Islam, the concept of halal is not only related to food/beverage products but also to all aspects of Muslim life, both men and women. This concept requires Muslims to only consume products that are allowed/allowed according to religious teachings, including food/beverage products, banking and finance, tourism, cosmetics, jobs, and others (El-Gohary, 2016).

Synchronization of Religion and Tourist Attractions

The varied relationship between tourism and religion can be conceptualized as a continuum based on the degree of intensity of inherent religious motivation, as Smith stated

in Jaelani's research as a search for something (Jaelani, 2017). One extreme example of this is a holy pilgrimage, which is a journey motivated by faith, religion, and spiritual fulfillment. On the other side, other tourists may use travel to pursue personal interests or spiritual needs. The shape and intensity of religious tourism, which is driven by the presence or absence of religion or, conversely, culture based on needs or knowledge, differs on these two sides. Smith noted that while some pilgrims may have gone on a spiritual journey, others may have been pilgrimage tourists (Jaelani, 2017).

Indonesia as a country with a diversity of religions and cultures has a historical heritage and traditions that cannot be separated from the religious aspects and religious practices of society. Cultural and religious heritage with a diversity of races, ethnicities, languages and customs has the potential to develop tourism. In particular, Muslims as the majority of Indonesia's population certainly have uniqueness that characterizes the nation with existing tourist destinations, such as palaces, mosques, heirlooms, tombs, to culinary delights (Jaelani, 2017).

The polarization of Muslim culture and religious practices attracts tourists to visit the country which has come to be known as religious tourism. The term religious tourism developed along with economic developments in the development of global Islam, then changed to the term sharia tourism and in recent years the term has shifted again to become halal travel (Winarti, 2017). These two terms (sharia and halal tourism) which will be used together in the following article because they have substance dimensions of the same religion or legal terms as part of the five types of Islamic law (mandatory, sunnah, permissible, makruh and unlawful) are principally derived from sharia terms. (Jafari & Scott, 2014)

Halal Tourism Needs Criteria

With the increasing population, tourism in Indonesia is a daily need for society, and with the development of technology, it can make it easier for tourists to obtain information about tourism. With this a very positive impact is evident in the increasing number of domestic and foreign tourists which will certainly have a very good impact on the tourism industry.

The Standing Committee on Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC, 2016) refers to halal tourism as Muslim Friendly Tourims (MFT) and defines it as “*Muslim trevelers who do not wish to*

compromise their basic faith-based needs while traveling for a purpose, which is permissible”, or it also be defined as “halal conscious travelers, traveling for any purposes, which is halal (permissible)”.

COMCEC states that the conceptual framework of the MFT consists of three components: Key faith-based needs of Muslim tourists. COMCEC defines at least six needs based on the beliefs of Muslim tourists. These needs include halal food, prayer facilities, services during Ramadan, water available in toilets, no non-halal activities, entertainment services and personal facilities.

1. Motivation and reasons for Muslim tourists to travel (demand side key themes). According to the motives and reasons for traveling, Muslim tourists divide trips into four types, namely religious tourism, leisure tourism, business travel and health tourism.
2. Reception and travel facilities and services (supply side key themes). This section concerns the provision of services and facilities that meet the basic needs of Muslim tourists based on the motives or reasons why Muslim tourists go to tourist attractions. These facilities include transportation services, accommodation, tourist facilities, travel agents and human resources.

The implementation of halal tourist destinations is based on the following criteria: Territory, Tourist attraction, Public facilities, Tourism facilities, Accessibility and Government support

METHODS

This type of research is explorative qualitative research with a research approach using the Participatory action research (PAR) method, which is a process that aims to learn how to solve problems and meet the real needs of the community, as well as produce knowledge and socio-religious changes that occur in the Lake Toba area community.

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach was chosen in this study because of its participatory and transformative nature. PAR allows for active involvement of local communities in every stage of the research, from problem identification to decision-making on proposed solutions. This approach is very relevant in the context of Lake Toba which has strong cultural and traditional diversity, because PAR respects and prioritizes the perspectives of local communities. In addition, PAR is oriented towards social change, so that the results of the research not only provide an understanding of the problems but also encourage positive sustainable transformation. In the context of halal tourism issues, PAR

also provides flexibility to adjust methods according to field dynamics, so that it can create recommendations that are inclusive and accepted by all parties. This approach also empowers local communities by providing them with the knowledge and skills to manage future challenges.

Data regarding the perceptions of the people of Lake Toba were obtained by observation, field interviews and then using data triangulation techniques from the data that had been collected and then forming groups with Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with the community in the form of: Data Collection Techniques: Observation: Observing daily life and community interactions, Interviews: Involving traditional leaders, tourism actors, government, and local communities using snowball sampling techniques, FGD: Group discussions to validate findings and design joint solutions.

Data Analysis: Using triangulation to ensure data validity and generate collaborative insights.

1. Interviews with people who live in the Lake Toba Area
2. Interviews with community owners of tourist destinations in the Lake Toba area
3. Interviews with traditional stakeholders in the Lake Toba area
4. Interview with related government agencies
5. Interview with Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Perception of the People of Lake Toba Rejecting Halal Tourism

As a form of rejection of the tourism discourse with the halal label, even activists and the people of the Lake Toba area have carried out the Lake Toba Pig Festival which was held in 2019 ago in Muara, North Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra. The festival, which is enlivened by a selfie contest with pigs, a pig calling contest, a pig running contest, and a pork culinary competition, will attract attention amid the growing issue of 'halal tourism' in Indonesia.

The discourse became a polemic because Lake Toba is considered one of the priority tourist destinations with a non-Muslim majority population in Indonesia. Joar, who is also the owner of a tourist destination in the area of Lake Toba, rejects the halal discourse on Lake Toba because the tourist spot, Joar, considers it friendly to Muslim tourists.

“Lake Toba is an icon or characteristic of a non-Muslim tourist destination and its sustainability must also be maintained. There is no need to use halal discourses. On average, all hotels or other inns in the Lake Toba area are in demand by Muslim tourists. It's called a holiday, tourists are not prohibited from praying, the call to prayer at the magnificent Parapat mosque has never been protested by the Batak people, in essence, if you think about it, Lake Toba is very friendly to Muslim visitors,” he said when interviewed,” Saturday (wawancara Joar, 2022)

Ambok, the owner of a tourist destination in the Parapat area, also stated that Lake Toba is friendly to Muslim tourists

“If you want to talk about the halal label, it gives the impression that there are differences between religions. How come there are so many Batak people who respect non-Muslims, for example respecting people who are fasting, don't want to openly eat in public, don't want to butcher pork in public places? in public, a lot really” (ambok Interview, 2022).

This research also found tourism destination actors on Lake Toba who firmly rejected the halal discourse. As Manahan said,

“Lake Toba is a place where the majority of non-Muslim tourists are, if you want to be labeled halal, it can turn into a place for Muslim tourists. Let Lake Toba be with all its ancestral culture. No need to change it here and there. Lake Toba is quite good and there are lots of visitors” (Interview Manahan, 2022)

Furthermore, Maratua Raja Sidabutar, a traditional leader and also a tuk-tuk environmental activist, said: (Wawancara maratua, 2022)

“Tourism is not a matter of religion, tourism is about our pleasure, there are many other more important things that the government can discuss, you don't need the lyrics of the tour, the majority of the entire community around Lake Toba is not a tourist destination but as a farmer”.

He even added more *“please discuss and develop this sector, not to mention the big companies that are starting to damage and disrupt the economic sustainability of the people of Toba Lake”*

Based on the statements from the interviews, the researcher obtained the results of the analysis that there is a perspective that is incompatible with the concept of Cultural Economics theory put forward by Pierre Bourdieu ("The Forms of Capital", 1986) which

focuses on the relationship between culture and the economy, and how the two mutually shape and influence each other. one another (bourdieu, 1986). In this context, Lake Toba is an area with a strong cultural identity, especially related to Batak culture, the majority of which are non-Muslim. Batak culture, with its deep-rooted customs and traditions, is one of the main attractions for tourists, both Muslim and non-Muslim. This opinion can be supported by Bruno S. Frey in his book "*Cultural Economics: The Arts, the Heritage and the Economic Contribution*" (Frey, 2019).

The application of the label "halal tourism" has the potential to disrupt this cultural balance because it can be interpreted as an attempt to align the destination with dominant norms outside the local culture. As expressed by stakeholders in Lake Toba, the discourse of "halal tourism" can be considered an external influence that damages the authenticity of existing Batak culture and demands major changes in long-standing cultural practices.

The Distinction of the Halal Tourism Concept of the Lake Toba Community

This rejection stems from a statement by the Governor of North Sumatra Edy Rahmayadi expressing a discourse on how to develop halal tourism facilities on Lake Toba. The hope is that tourists who have already been to Lake Toba will return to Lake Toba. Seeing that the discourse on halal tourism on Lake Toba is being debated, he has clarified this. he stated that there were those who "dramatized" his statement so that the information that spread was wrong.

According to Edy, people who come to tourist attractions are not considered religious, but specifically for Muslims, they need halal food. Edy explained, it does not mean that all restaurants on Lake Toba have to be halal. In his view, this view was wrong. "*This is a person who likes to dramatize. Blame it. This is what is wrong,*" said Edy as reported by Detik. "*This is a coincidence that Muslims are talking about, so that is what is being questioned.*". (Detik.com, 2020)

The differences in perceptions that are created between the people of Toba Lake and the local government and also the community are increasingly complicated and become an important discussion.

One of the Muslim visitors to Lake Toba, Ahmad Sofyan, conveyed:

"It's quite difficult to find a place to eat or a place to stop over in the area of the tuk-tuk area maybe, because in this area there are no halal signs that are in accordance with

MUI standards and what makes us doubt it is actually because there are so many selling liquor and other unclean food”(Interview sofyan,2022)

Then, Samsul Arif, one of the visitors who has visited Lake Toba quite often. *“ if I really feel it is difficult to make choices for needs in this Lake Toba area. I always stay at the same hotel because even though the front of the hotel just says "provides Muslim facilities" I feel safe enough “.* (Interview arif, 2022)

This is in accordance with what was conveyed by Saparuddin Siregar, as the administrator of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) in the main Sumatra Province and also an economic observer and academician in North Sumatra Province, believes that the purpose of developing halal tourism is basically to attract tourists not only from one religion but also all religions, therefore, it is important that the tourism concept is integrated for all people, as the convenience of Muslim worship is an important consideration in any standard tourism offer. This means that both Muslim and non-Muslim tourists will be able to enjoy these conveniences without having to share them with other people, thus potentially increasing the number of visitors. Then he argued that : (Interview saparuddin, 2022)

“For example, I often pay attention to tourists who are on vacation, just want some kind of additional facilities that are good for Muslims, such as halal food and restaurants, hotels with prayer mats and Qibla directions, to Muslim-friendly toilets with clean water spraying facilities.”.

He added that:

“Halal tourism is not related to talking about Islamization, even if someone thinks that way, then that person belongs to the Islamophobic group”.

Based on the data found, researchers are of the opinion that this halal tourism label is very much needed to answer concerns and even cause Muslim tourists not to choose to vacation at Lake Toba tourist destinations in order to support an increase in visitor numbers.

In the Declaration of Halal Tourism, it turns out that there are differences of opinion between the people in the Lake Toba area and the halal concept which is planned to be implemented by the local government so that this is a factor causing the rejection of halal tourism on Lake Toba. Where, the stigma of thinking of the people of Lake Toba considers that if a change is made to "halal tourism" it is feared that it will cause a shift and even the loss of the ancestral culture of the people of Lake Toba which has been carried out by

the people around Lake Toba since generations. Whereas what is meant by halal tourism is not tourism for Muslims which prohibits the culture or habits of the people of Lake Toba (in the illegal category) to be carried out or held in the Lake Toba area but the addition of good tourist destination facilities for Muslim tourists in the Lake Toba area.

When viewed from the perspective of Externalities and Public Goods Theory, applying the "halal tourism" label to Lake Toba also creates social costs that are not considered in the policy. Negative externalities occur when a policy produces side effects that are detrimental to third parties who are not directly involved in economic transactions, in this case the local community, which is predominantly non-Muslim. (Condorelli, 2016)

This policy could create religious separation in the tourism sector, which was previously inclusive and did not differentiate between tourists based on their religious background. With the halal label, accessibility to these tourist destinations can be hampered for non-Muslim tourists who feel uncomfortable with the religious label applied to a destination. This not only reduces the number of tourists coming, but also has the potential to cause social tension between different religious groups.

On the other hand, in the context of public goods, according to, tourism should be a public good that can be accessed by everyone without discrimination, providing benefits to all local communities and visitors from various backgrounds. The application of the halal label can be considered as an obstacle to the principles of diversity and fairness in access to tourist destinations. Policies like this, which limit tourists' freedom in choosing tourist destinations, have the potential to harm the social diversity that exists in Lake Toba and reduce the collective benefits that should be received by all parties.

The Problem Of Refusing Halal Tourism

Based on results observation research that has been carried out in the surrounding area tourist lake Toba so can be categorized that There is a number of problematic related with moderation becoming a religion base rejection halal tourism is carried out Good from government and also tribal communities customary in the lake area Toba among them is :

1. There is concern about becoming a minority community in the Lake Toba area

Destination planned halal tourism will has an impact on the number comer new so that will threaten business society that has There is. Concern public This consequence not enough exists massive socialization by the government. So that public evaluate that

Lake Toba halal tourism will be caused negative for public around Lake Toba. Worry will become public minorities in the Lake Toba area, especially public Tano Batak custom, to be serious and impactful issues wide. Conflict related use land, depreciation land customs, and development tourism is not notice needs and rights public custom is a number of factors that cause worry This.

Development tourism in the Lake Toba area also generates worries for public custom. Although development tourist expected can increase well-being society, however practice often No notice needs and rights public custom. Use land productive For development tourism, without consider need public custom, yes threaten life them and sources Power nature that they are have. Apart from that, there is worries that development tourism is not based community can remove identity local and causal conflict inter-clan.

For overcome worry this is necessary effort together from government, society and institutions education. Government need notice rights public custom and provide adequate mechanism For protect forest customs and sources Power nature. Indigenous communities also need it active in advocate rights them and participate in taking decisions that impact the region they. Educational institutions are also necessary increase understanding public custom about importance sustainability environment and rights they. With cooperation between all party, expected Lake Toba area can become a harmonious and inclusive place, where society custom can life with peace and respect difference, while maintain sustainability forest customs and sources Power natural they.

2. People Don't Understand What is Halal Tourism

For overcome misunderstanding this and improve understanding public about halal tourism, required effort more education and promotion wide. This includes provide clear and accurate information about What That halal tourism, how? method make something place tour to be halal, and important halal tourism in fulfil needs and hopes Muslim tourists. With so, society will more understand and appreciate draft this, as well support development halal tourism in Indonesia.

Halal tourism is activity traveling For expand knowledge and have fun while still operate Islamic religious orders, as well prioritize element halal from a number of related aspects with activity tour (Ma'rifah et al., 2020). From understanding the can concluded that in destination Halal tourism is required a number of facility For still can operate obligation as Muslims. This is what is necessary filled with society around Lake

Toba so can fulfil condition as destination halal tourism. In research that has been done done, found that a number of from the people of Lake Toba do not know understanding destination halal tourism so give rise to rejection. The community around Lake Toba feels that halal tourism will get rid of resident original local as well as their customs sure. Halal tourism will damage existing customs exist, make public around Lake Toba as minorities and eliminate eye livelihood they.

3. Society Feels Lake Toba tourism is suitable for Muslim communities

From the research conducted, the community Lake Toba natives feel Lake Toba has worthy For public Muslims. Out of sight public local services, services and facilities like food, hotels, transportation and recreation have been Is there any or not contradictory with draft tourism is halal and already in accordance with draft halal tourism. Like statement Godang Lambok (Owner Lodging) when interviewed:

" Basically Actually the facilities we provide Can just for the Muslim community, why ? because we have completed it with food that doesn't mixed with the haram, clean water we have provided it. We don't even want to worship Once prohibit. Only if must get rid of habit visitors others who are not Islamic such as they order drink alcohol or food pig or other haram things, that's right The same just narrow down our income. In fact, it should be removed means Muslims or government Want to our culture is also lost "

This matter become contradictory When we do checking problem Because No in accordance with the reality of Lake Toba. Existing services and facilities Still need get a number of repair For fulfil standard halal tourism. As stated by (ningrum & septiyandi, 2021) state that halal tourism places sharia as base in provision products and services tourism, such as hotels, resorts, restaurants and travel to consumer.

4. Halal Tourism Never Socialized Direct With the Lake Toba Community

For overcome difficulty this is necessary effort more education and promotion wide to public local. This includes provide clear and accurate information about What That halal tourism, how? method make something place tour to be halal, and important halal tourism in fulfil needs and hopes Muslim tourists. With so, society will more understand and appreciate draft this, as well support development halal tourism in the Lake Toba area.

From several understanding that has been explained, halal tourism can realized in

a way concrete with there are two things, namely people who travel while want to still operate principles halal in Islam and the perpetrators business and maker policies that provide desire traveler the. (Surur, 2020). For develop halal tourism in Indonesia, especially Lake Toba, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy formed the Halal Tourism Development Acceleration Team (TP3H). This team formed For help map, develop and deliver guidelines areas that have potency For develop halal tourism.

From research conducted on Lake Toba, it was found condition that public No accept information socialization halal tourism massive from The Government of North Sumatra and Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. Perception public around Lake Toba regarding halal tourism has become very bad Because can evict business society, as well existing customs and culture There is. Like statement Johnson Silaban (Pagururan Traditional Youth Leader):

“We are the people Pangururan This I 've been working and doing it for a long time life from trading in the Lake Toba area, as far as I remember I, we Not yet Once though get information What That halal tourism, what we know is that halal tourism is specifically right for people religious Muslims. If so government force application of this halal label precisely I worry will trigger divisions among us The general public who do not have a high education. Like The last thing we, the community, also did rejection present his Sir governor (Edy Rahmayadi) in several area you want visited ”

Things like statement this is what happened base polemic rejection public native to Lake Toba halal tourism. The polemic that occurred, in fact No direct demand government For become communicators, esp to public around Lake Toba. Government assessed must own role active so that dialogue appears between society and government, as well minimize happen reaction continued rejection continues from public around Lake Toba. Communication process can taking place two - way and continuously so that expected can solve problem in a way proportional without involve dimensions emotion between party.

In order to propose a conceptual model that integrates social capital theory and knowledge management construct, with the aim of advancing knowledge in this field. Specifically, the government together with the tourism ministry should ideally be able to identify four important dimensions (structural, relational, organizational nature, and knowledge) that influence knowledge transfer efficiency. (Raisi et al., 2024). Additionally, this research contributes to bridging the gap in the academic literature

regarding the underutilization of management concept knowledge in the tourism sector. This emphasizes the importance of considering knowledge transfer at the destination level to enhance innovation and competitiveness in the tourism industry. (Cooper, 2015)

5. Rejection Halal Tourism is Very Closely Related With Sentiment Political Identity

From aspect politics and economics, emergence discourse Halal tourism is not Can separated from Indonesia's position as a country with resident Muslim largest in the world. In a position the, sector Indonesian tourism has opportunities interesting traveler Muslims, fine from abroad or from domestic.

Lake Toba itself Not yet including to in the destination list halal tourism in Indonesia, however has enter become projections that will became "New Bali" or destination standard tourism international with collaborated with draft halal tourism (Rizqi and Kaukabilla, 2021). Projection This is based on Lake Toba which has riches beautiful and unique nature. Beauty natural That stretched across seven district, that is Simalungun, Toba, North Tapanuli, Humbang Hasundutan, Dairi, Karo and Samosir. Every regency own various destination beautiful tour. Therefore that, Lake Toba is destination quite touristy Lots sought after by tourists (Djakfar, 2017)

With plan destination halal tourism that has been designed by the government, there are a number of rejection consequence from plan the. With background behind public around Lake Toba, which is dominated by Christianity, is certainly very different behind with term halal tourism that has association tightly with the Islamic religion. Usage the term halal becomes something sensitive term for public around Lake Toba in particular Toba Batak community. In other words, terms the prone to trigger misunderstanding between people religious and can exploited by interests political certain if implemented in the region Lake Toba tour.

Like as described Lintar Rajagukguk (Owner Restaurant) says :

"The term halal tourism right for Islam only, how? do we have a different religion ?. we're at the lake Toba have been together for a long time side by side with across other religions. But if must actually labeled halal will the more making us a foreign Society evaluate policy"

Like his thing The Governor of North Sumatra (Gubernur Sumatera Utara) Edy Rahmayadi will be the one planned planned will form an Acceleration Team Success

Lake Toba Area Tourism. Expected team This later will more focus development of Danau Toba. However from a number of desired point implemented, yes One things that reap polemic. Governor of North Sumatra mewa canakan halal tourism and sharia tourism in the Lake Toba area.

Which then inviting criticism and spotlight sharp is plan arrangement animal legged four (pigs) so as not to any cut on the spot general. Many people judge that Governor Su currently banging religious politics with traditions and culture that feed it manifestation wisdom local.

Governor of North Sumatra actually can considered become someone who understands will position majority residents in the Lake Toba area are Batak tribe. And almost every Batak traditional ritual is like wedding, custom death Saurmatua, enter House new For just give A little example No Once just right from meat pig. By short, bits and pieces meat pig in ceremony custom the Batak tribe has very important functions and symbols. And, tradition That Already persist. Even believed Already started since hundreds year ago. Well, as long as This No Once There is frictions caused by tradition cut meat pig That. Community and immigrants life side by side in a way get along well. This matter actually worried is plan Governor of North Sumatra That rather will start bother Kehar Monisan long- standing society This Already formed with strong.

Not only in traditional rituals, meat pigs are also dominant used as material standard main in culinary traditional Batak. Call just saksang, naniar sik, namargota, natinanggo, and others. Types culinary That has become a common mandatory WA menu found in homes Eat typical Batak. If setup cutting animal legged four truly will done, I worry House Eat Typical Batak around the Lake Toba area will experience loss from side income.

Lots of it the public 's opinion that form realization from policy the actually there are two errors big in the form of : (interview Lamhot, 2023)

- a. Party government currently do intervention to existence customs and culture the Batak tribe already bleeding meat especially in the Lake Toba area.
- b. Government currently close track income resident dependent locale from business House Eat or restaurant with a culinary menu typical Batak.

Expression explained later Again with sentence :

"Should Governor of North Sumatra more sensitive question This. Isn't it one task main a leader is ensure well-being the population ? During This Lots sons and daughters area

origin North Tapanuli, Tobasa, Samosir, Humbahas or Simalungun who wanders in and studies abroad the area already succeed. Try exploring. Not a little from those whose parents open business House Eat typical Batak or raising pork (marmahan loan). From there source main financing education they during This ". (interview Sijangjang, 2023)

6. People Don't Know Yet Profit Halal Tourism From a Financial Perspective

The growth of the halal tourism market is very good opportunity for Lake Toba. This is because Lake Toba has potency very big tourism with beauty very rich and diverse nature. The halal tourism program is actually very positive if implemented, esp To use interesting traveler foreign. Lake Toba has Power pull tourism and can give donation sufficient foreign exchange big If can developed with Good. In terms of this, of course There is various possible benefits obtained for enhancement economy especially in the surrounding community area tour (Faza & Ariantie, 2019)

Halal tourism offers various profits, incl from facet financially, who hasn't fully understood by the community, including in the Lake Toba area. Profit financial from Halal tourism is not only limited to upgrades income from traveler abroad, but also can give benefit economy for public local through enhancement halal and quality awareness service.

One of profit financial from halal tourism is enhancement motivation Work staff, especially staff the kitchen is the majority Muslim identity. This matter can increase quality service and satisfaction customers, ultimately can increase income from traveler abroad. Apart from that, development facility halal tourism is possible interesting investment from various parties, including local and international investors, who aim for utilise large halal market potential.

However, for maximizing profit financial from halal tourism, necessary more effort wide For increase awareness and understanding public about draft This. This includes education about importance halal tourism in fulfil needs and hopes Muslim tourists, as well How halal tourism can give benefit economy for public local.

Apart from that, governments and institutions related need Work The same for develop supportive policies and programs development halal tourism. With so, society locally, including in the Lake Toba area, is necessary given chance For understand and utilize potency halal tourism. With more understanding good and proper support,

community local can utilise profit financial from halal tourism, which is not only aim For fulfil need traveler abroad, but also for increase well-being public local.

7. Society is still very fanatic Against Religion

When the Governor of North Sumatra, Edy Rahmayadi, started to launch halal tourism for Lake Toba, there was resistance from the local community, giving rise to quite a sharp polemic. For the community around Lake Toba, efforts to declare Lake Toba as a halal tourist destination are considered to be disrupting traditions inherited from generation to generation. The tradition in question is related to consuming pork, which is usually done at every traditional ceremony or wedding party, during mourning, and when giving sticks (mambere tukkot) to elderly people.

The Governor of North Sumatra, Edy Rahmayadi himself, has clarified that there is no intention to eliminate culture or downplay certain religions (Sianturi 2019). According to him, the polemic that occurred was more due to a misunderstanding of the intention of declaring halal tourism for the Lake Toba tourist area. But on the other hand, this problem cannot be separated from the problem of multiculturalism which is very closely attached to the nation Indonesia (Hemafitria, 2019). Moreover, in North Sumatra there are several ethnicities and races, such as Batak, Malay, Nias, Chinese, Indian and other ethnicities.

Moreover, many of the people of Lake Toba only follow the rumors that are spreading related to religious issues without knowing whether the information is valid or not. As in an interview with one of the souvenir traders in the Toba area, Samosir (interview jauhari, 2023),

"If Mr. Edy as Governor forces our culture to shift, our descendants will definitely not be willing," he said.

Furthermore:

"Actually, I'm still not sure whether it is true that he (the Governor) is really going to impose this halal tourism which will have a bad impact and disrupt the ingrained customs and customs of our region. Indeed, many people say that halal tourism can increase people's interest in visiting, but many Batak Toba people and traditional practitioners tell us quite the opposite. "We, like the people, are also confused about which one is correct" (Translate Batak Language).

"I ask through them and all those present at the Dialogue to socialize it to all congregations or people of various religious sects in Toba and to socialize the Toba

government's development movement of planting twice harvesting twice, promoting mutual cooperation, maintaining the cleanliness of the environment and the attitude of the Batak Naraja."

On the other hand with background behind public around Lake Toba are Christians, become sentimental thing when There is discourse with involve other religious terms. As sticky term with religion, halal tourism becomes something sensitive term for Toba Batak community. Usage the halal term vulnerable trigger misunderstanding between people religious and exploited by interests political if implemented in the Lake Toba area.

CONCLUSION

The resistance toward halal tourism development in the Lake Toba region largely arises from concerns that it may threaten or displace long-standing local cultural traditions. This opposition is rooted in a misunderstanding of halal tourism, which is not intended to prohibit indigenous practices but rather to enhance tourism facilities in ways that accommodate Muslim visitors. Therefore, a culturally inclusive and dialogic approach is essential in implementing halal tourism. Strategic steps include identifying locations with halal potential, providing training and certification for local businesses, promoting halal tourism through digital platforms, collaborating with Islamic institutions to ensure compliance, improving infrastructure to support religious needs, and conducting continuous education and socialization for all stakeholders. Properly managed, halal tourism can serve as a model for inclusive, value-based tourism that respects local heritage while expanding market reach and supporting regional economic development.

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