HALAL TOURISM AND ITS MISCONCEPTIONS: REVISITING THE REJECTION OF NON-MUSLIM TOURISM DESTINATIONS

[1]Rakhman Priyatmoko, [2]Addin Maulana
The National Research and Innovation Agency
moko.budpar@gmail.com, addin.maulana@yahoo.co.id

Abstract

The term "halal tourism" is indeed recognized in Indonesia, nonetheless, its pros and cons are happening. Unlike any other non-Muslim countries such as Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Thailand, which tend to have less conflict between tourism stakeholders regarding the development of halal tourism, the rejection occurs in Indonesia as a country with a Muslim majority population. The rejection culminated in 2019 as a political year along with the presidential elections. The rejection of halal tourism occurs in tourism destinations such as Bali, Labuan Bajo, Toba, and Toraja known as the Muslim minority population area. Based on those issues, this study uses a qualitative approach to investigate the rejection reasons from the tourism stakeholders, to provide theoretical clarification on the stigma against halal tourism, and to analyze how halal tourism branding policy in tourism destinations. The result shows that the rejection of halal tourism by the tourism stakeholders was due to concerns that there would be a change in the destination's image. To prevent prolonged debate and possible social conflict, the Indonesian government can use another term that sounds more moderate and acceptable for tourism stakeholders in non-Muslim destinations. Moreover, tourism stakeholders in each destination should take over the use of halal branding, so that the tourism policies adopted are regional initiatives (bottom-up policies).

Keywords: *Halal Tourism, Rejection, Non-Muslim Destinations, Indonesia*

INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism has emerged as a new gold mine in the tourism industry (Chandra, 2014). Other terms used for Halal tourism are Islamic tourism (Battour et al., 2017), Muslim-friendly tourism (Abror et al., 2020), halal travel (Devi & Firmansyah, 2019), halal holiday (Wingett Fiona & Turnbull, 2013), Islamic travel, Sharia tourism, and halal transportation (El-Gohary, 2016). Halal tourism is expected to become a billion-dollar industry as travel companies pay more attention to the needs of Muslim tourists and countries with large Muslim populations, such as Asia and China, prosper (Chandra, 2014). The rapid growth of the Muslim population around the world makes halal

products a lucrative business opportunity (Ratnasari, 2020). Halal tourism is also seen as a good business opportunity in Muslim minority countries such as Taiwan, Vietnam, China, and South Korea (Battour & Ismail, 2016). Both Islamic and non-Islamic countries see this as an opportunity to develop Muslim-friendly tourism destinations (Artadita & Hisyam, 2021).

Indonesia, as the largest Muslim-majority country (Pew Research Center, 2011), has a great opportunity to develop halal tourism. In Indonesian tourism, the term "halal tourism" was introduced by the Ministry of Tourism (now the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy) with the term "sharia tourism". Despite being a topic discussed among various tourism stakeholders, including academics, government, and industry, stakeholders' perceptions of the halal tourism concept remain very diverse. Nonetheless, when Indonesia took first place in the 2019 Global Muslim Travel Index, the debate over the benefits and drawbacks of halal tourism raged on.

Several publications describe that halal tourism is also developing in Muslim minority countries such as Japan and South Korea (Samori et al., 2016; Aji et al., 2020), New Zealand (Yan et al., 2017), Taiwan (Said et al., 2020), and Thailand (Nurdiansyah, 2018; Suharko et al., 2018). In these countries, halal tourism development is going well, and there is less conflict between tourism stakeholders. Ironically, as a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia was particularly hard hit by the wave of halal tourism rejection. The rejection of Islamic-based tourism has occurred in Bali since 2015 when the Ministry of Tourism was still using the term "Sharia tourism" (Divianta, 2015). In comparison to what occurred in Indonesia, the positive development of halal tourism in non-Muslim countries is a contradictory phenomenon.

In 2019, there was a massive wave of halal tourism rejection. This is so-called political year marked by the 2019-2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. People who oppose halal tourism are from four non-Muslim destinations in Indonesia. The use of non-Muslim or Muslim minority terms is not to stigmatize tourism destinations based on the religion of its people, but rather to simplify the characteristics of a destination for the purpose of the study. Muslim destinations are regions or countries where Islam is the majority religion (Kessler, 2015). West Java, Indonesia, is an example of a destination where the majority of the people are Muslim. While Bali, also in Indonesia, is a destination where Hinduism is the predominant religion.

The rejection of halal tourism in Bali was prompted by the statement of a candidate that Bali has a high potential for development as a halal tourism destination (Abdi, 2019). The rejection of halal tourism in Tana Toraja (South Sulawesi) was provoked by a statement from the deputy governor of South Sulawesi that it was necessary to build a halal tourism area in Tana Toraja (Shofihara, 2019). Hereafter, the rejection in Labuan Bajo (East Nusa Tenggara) was due to training activities that discussed halal tourism in Labuhan Bajo (Lewanmeru & Hermina, 2019). Lastly, the rejection in Toba (West Sumatra) was caused by the intention of the governor of North Sumatra to develop halal tourism in Lake Toba by controlling pig farms in the area (Warsito, 2019).

Although numerous studies on the concept, potential, and challenges of halal tourism have been conducted, few, if any study, addressed the rejection of halal tourism.

One of the studies on halal tourism rejection was conducted by Makhasi and Rahimmadhi (2020), who comprehensively investigated the reasons behind the rejection of halal tourism with a socio-political approach. One of the findings is that the rejection of halal tourism was raised by identity political sentiments related to the 2019 presidential election. This sentiment arose as a result of the conflict between majority and minority religions, as well as practical political aspirations, and eventually led to a stigma against halal tourism. Halal tourism is viewed as a form of Islamisation and hegemony by non-Muslim tourism stakeholders. Its implementation in Muslim minority areas is viewed as a threat or a violation of the majority of local communities' values of diversity, tolerance, religion, and culture (Makhasi & Rahimmadhi, 2020).

Thus, the study seeks to investigate the factors causing rejection from the perspective of tourism stakeholders, provide theoretical clarification on the stigma of halal tourism identified in previous research, and examine how halal tourism branding policy in tourism destinations affects tourism destinations. This study was built on the prior study conducted by Makhasi and Rahimmadhi (2020) but more focuses on the factors that lead to rejection from the point of view of tourism stakeholders, whereas Makhasi and Rahimmadhi concentrate on the political aspect. This study also attempts to theoretically explicate the stigma of halal tourism, which was not addressed in the previous study.

METHODS

This literature review used descriptive-qualitative data analysis. The data were obtained from journal articles defining halal tourism and news articles from online media discussing halal tourism rejection in some non-Muslim destinations in Indonesia. The destinations include Bali, Labuan Bajo (East Nusa Tenggara), Toba (North Sumatra), and Toraja (South Sulawesi). The propositions derived from the results of the literature review on previous research on halal tourism are presented and used to support the author's conceptual ideas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is divided into two themes. The first section explains how the terms halal label, halal image, and halal branding relate to halal tourism destinations. The second section of the study includes a definition of the concept and characteristics of halal tourism, which serves as an analytical framework for the study. This section focuses on four research from Battour and Ismail (2016), Ryan (2016), Mohsin et al. (2016), and (Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2018) that define the concept of halal tourism.

1.   **Halal Label, Halal Image, and Halal Branding of Tourism Destination**

Halal labels, which can be found on product packaging and in retail stores, indicate that the product has passed the halal test administered by the local Indonesian Ulema Council (Mahendri et al., 2020). In the halal industry, halal labels are commonly used for food and beverage products. Beyond food, Halal certification has expanded to include

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pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and services (including finance, investment, and business) (Mustika et al., 2021).

Although halal food and beverages are one of the products discussed in the context of halal tourism, the topic of halal labeling in this context refers to tourism destinations as a tourism product. There has been much debate on when a destination is labeled as a "halal tourism destination". The question is whether or not all of the tourism products in the destination are halal. It is difficult, if not impossible, to ensure that all tourism products in a destination are halal. This considers the various social characteristics of tourism destinations.

Khoiriati et al. (2018) conducted a thorough analysis in Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara) after the destination was awarded the world's best halal tourism destination (2015). An important finding from their study is that the use of Lombok halal tourism branding is primarily conceptualized from a demand standpoint to influence consumers' perceived image. The halal label was used solely for branding purposes during the research to create a positive image of the destination among Muslim tourists.

Why is the halal image important for tourism destinations, particularly those targeting the Muslim market? According to Rachman (2020), halal branding has positive associations with the products provided, such as avoiding sin by consuming halal products. Hence, halal branding is an attractive factor in product sales. Han et al. (2019) discovered that halal-friendly attributes in non-Muslim destinations have a positive impact on the destination's overall image. In Taiwan and Lombok, the destination image has a positive impact on Muslim tourists' intention to visit (Aulia Ramadhani et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2018). However, "halal" branding is becoming increasingly popular among young Muslims in many countries. Therefore, to reach the largest potential Muslim market group, religious approaches such as halal branding must be considered (Hosain, 2021).

As a result, tourist managers in non-Muslim majority countries have begun to brand their destinations as "halal" to project a positive image of the destination. It can be inferred that the use of the term "halal", whether to express empirical facts or for promotional purposes (branding), is intended to create a positive image of the destination in Muslim tourists' perceptions. The term "halal" is most likely to be used as a branding tool by tourism managers targeting the Muslim tourist market in a non-Muslim tourism destination.

2.   Halal Tourism Concept

As stated in the previous section, halal tourism terminology is quite diverse. The term halal is derived from the Arabic words *halla, yahillu, hillan*, and *wahalalan*, which mean justified or permitted by Sharia law (Satriana & Faridah, 2018). The terminology of halal tourism is still being debated (Battour & Ismail, 2016). The concept of halal tourism in this study refers to the definition presented by Battour & Ismail (2016), Ryan (2016), Mohsin et al. (2016), and Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral (2018).

Battour and Ismail (2016) define halal tourism as a tourism object or action that allowed Muslims to utilize or participate in the tourism industry according to Islamic teachings. The emphasis is on the primary target market, which is Muslim tourists, and

tourism activities are permissible according to Islamic law. Although the main target is Muslim tourists, according to (Azam et al., 2019), non-Muslim tourists can still enjoy products and services in halal tourism. Battour and Ismail (2016) describe that the concept of halal tourism must also take into account the location of the tourism activities, which could take place either in Muslim or non-Muslim countries.

Mohsin et al. (2016) define halal tourism as the provision of a tourism product and service that meets the religious practices and food requirements of Muslim travelers following Islamic teachings. The emphasis is on meeting the needs of Muslim tourists, such as praying facilities and halal food. The next definition was proposed by Ryan (2016) that halal tourism is undertaken for recreational, leisure, and social purposes as many wish to travel. Similarly, Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral (2018) state that halal tourism refers to travel undertaken for recreational, entertainment, and social purposes. Even if the motivations are not always religious, there is a desire to act under Islamic teachings. Both definitions emphasize the purpose of travel, which includes more than just religious motives.

According to these definitions, there are five characteristics of halal tourism. These include the primary market, the nature of the product and activities, the location, the purpose of organizing halal tourism, and the motivation for travel. First, the main target of halal tourism is Muslim tourists. Second, all tourism products and activities are permitted under Islamic teachings. Third, the location of activities could take place in either Muslim or non-Muslim countries. Fourth, the purpose of halal tourism is to emphasize the importance of meeting the primary needs of Muslim tourists, such as halal food and places of worship, as well as other supporting basic needs, such as Sharia hotels. Fifth, travel motivation, in general, is not limited to religious motivations, but also includes other social motives.

The conceptual approach to halal tourism from previous studies was used as an analytical tool in this study to answer the research questions. In addition to the definition of halal tourism, the laws governing the delegation of authority in tourism-related matters in Indonesia were used as an analytical tool. The relationship between the objectives and the analytical tools used is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Analysis Framework

Research Objectives	Parameters/Indicators	References
1. To investigate the factors causing rejection from the perspective of tourism stakeholders	– Main target market of halal tourism	(Battour & Ismail, 2016; Mohsin et al., 2016)
	– Status of products and activities in halal tourism	(Battour & Ismail, 2016; Mohsin et al., 2016)
	– Location of halal tourism activities	(Battour & Ismail, 2016)
	– Purpose of halal tourism activities	(Mohsin et al., 2016)
2. To clarify the stigma of halal tourism identified in previous research	– Travel motivation in halal tourism	(Ryan, 2016; Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2018)
3. To analyze policies of halal tourism	– Delegation of authority for central and local government regarding tourism affairs	–(Government of

branding in tourism destinations.	– Authority of local government in the formulation of tourism policies	Indonesia, 2014) – (Government of Indonesia, 2011)
	– Local tourism policy	

The first and second research objectives are based on the characteristics of halal tourism. Meanwhile, the third objective was investigated by employing a regulatory approach to the distribution of authority in tourism management between the central and local governments. The regulations are Law Number 23 of 2014 on Local Government and Government Regulation Number 50 of 2011 on Master Plan for National Tourism Development. In addition to the major analytical tools, other references from various related journal articles will be used to support the author's argument.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
1. Halal Tourism and Change in Tourism Destination Image

One reason for the rejection of halal tourism is the fear of stakeholders that the concept of halal tourism will change the image of the destination, this is primarily a concern by the Bali tourism authority. According to a local official, the image of Bali as a cultural tourism destination is supported by local regulations. When the image is lost, so are the tourists, so halal tourism is not relevant in Bali (Mardiastuti, 2019). In a highly tourism-competitive market, the image of a destination is critical (Yilmaz et al., in Molina et al., 2010). As a result, changing the destination image has the potential to change market segments.

Aside from natural attractions like beaches, culture is an important tourism attraction based on Balinese Hindu heritage, which includes temples, dances, and handicrafts (Chin et al., 2017). This cultural-based tourist attraction is the second-largest pull factor for tourists coming to Bali after natural-based attractions (Subadra et al., 2019). In the social context, Balinese people are also permissive toward tourists' behavior. For example, it is common to see bars selling alcoholic beverages and female tourists on the beach wearing revealing clothing (bikinis) or half-naked. The halal label for Bali will change the image of the island, which will be detrimental to local stakeholders. For foreign tourists, particularly those from Western countries, the change in destination image may reduce their desire to visit Bali because previously allowed activities have become prohibited or strictly restricted.

The question is whether the use of halal tourism branding will change the image of the destination. The answer remains debatable. However, the concept of halal tourism has no intention of changing the primary image of the destination. Halal branding of a destination promotes it as a Muslim-friendly tourism destination. As a result, the image of a tourism destination may expand to a specific niche market, in this case, Muslim tourists. The target market for halal tourism, as aforementioned is very specific: Muslim tourists (Battour & Ismail, 2016). Nevertheless, non-Muslim tourists can also consume halal tourism products. According to Mohsin et al. (2016), the critical point is that the emphasis

of halal tourism is not on the attraction but on the service. The services include the availability of prayer facilities and the ease of obtaining halal food.

As Ryan (2016) and Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral (2018) explain that in the context of halal tourism, the preferences of Muslim tourists regarding tourist attractions are not limited to those based on the Islamic religion. Therefore, cultural and natural-based tourism attraction found in Bali has the potential to be a Muslim tourist preference. Potential Balinese tourists certainly understand what they will see and find, including what is allowed and what is not to be seen, done, or consumed. However, especially for Muslims, there must be assurances that their needs will be met while at the destination.

Why do halal-based product services require special attention in non-Muslim destinations? Several studies indicate the importance of image for a tourism destination. Aulia Ramadhani et al. (2020) and Liu et al. (2018), for example, state that destination image has a positive influence on Muslim tourists' intention to visit. Other studies have found a correlation between halal attributes in tourist destinations and tourist attitudes. According to Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral (2018), halal-friendly tourism attributes can be important motivators for Muslim tourists when choosing a destination. Research in Thailand shows halal tourism attributes such as halal hotels have a positive impact on Muslim tourist visits and can become a competitive advantage for a destination (Mansouri, 2014). According to Battour (2017), non-Muslim tourists benefit from halal tourism products in terms of trip quality and value. Han et al., (2019) stated that the availability of halal products, such as halal food, in South Korea (non-Muslim destinations), will generate benefits because it will strengthen the image of the destination as a halal destination, which will eventually increase revisit intention and recommendation.

Furthermore, when traveling to Muslim minority countries, Muslim tourists are most concerned with issues related to Islamic-based products and services such as praying facilities, halal food, restrooms, language, communication, activities, culture, and the friendliness of local people (Said et al., 2020). In consequence, to attract this segment of tourists, destination authorities must first understand their preferences (Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2020). Halal tourism branding does not imply that all tourism products are halal, but rather that halal products and services are available so that Muslim tourists visiting meet their needs.

2. The Stigma of Halal Tourism: Collision to Traditions and Local Culture

The stigma of halal tourism was discussed by Makhasi and Rahimmadhi (2020). People see halal tourism as an Islamization against the values of diversity, tolerance, and the local religion or culture. It became a concern of the tourism stakeholders from Labuan Bajo, Toba, and Toraja. One of the stakeholders stated that "...and let us together strongly refuse halal tourism in Tana Toraja, do not wake the long sleep of the ancestors of the Toraja people, to be angry because they are disturbed by the torn apart of culture and customs" (Makassar Indeks, 2019). In this context, halal tourism is viewed as a powerful entity that threatens the customs and culture practiced by local communities for generations. This assumption is understandable but not entirely correct because there is

an imbalance in understanding the concept. People emphasize from an "Islamic point of view" rather than from a "tourism point of view".

The Toraja people embraced the traditional religion of Aluk Todolo before they encountered Christianity in 1915 (Handayani et al., 2020). There is the possibility of religious conflict because the principle of halal tourism, which emerged from Islamic teaching, differs from the beliefs of the local majority. Even though most of the people are Christians, they still practice the funeral ceremony called Rambu Solo which is one of the unique cultural tourist attractions. The funeral aims to deliver the spirit to immortality, and the luxurious ritual will allow the spirit to enter heaven in advance. In addition, the bereaved family will get voluntary gifts from mourners in the form of consumption materials, money, pigs, and buffalo (Handayani et al., 2020).

Similar to Tana Toraja, most of the Toba-Batak people in North Sumatra Province are also categorized as non-Muslim populations (Aspinall et al., 2011). Because of the prohibition on slaughtering pigs in the Lake Toba area, many members of society have signed a petition opposing halal tourism (Redaksi WE Online, 2019). People fear that if halal tourism is introduced in Toba, they will no longer be able to freely raise pigs and consume pork. Whereas, Pigs are important to the Toba and Toraja people and are frequently used as symbols in traditional ceremonies.

So, how is halal tourism viewed in the local community culture? Several Indonesian tourism destinations use local customs and culture as the main draw, which serves as a competitive advantage. The culture and its various characteristics do not always adhere to Islamic teachings. However, the concept of halal tourism does not seek to eliminate customs or local culture. One of the characteristics of halal tourism is that all activities must be permissible according to Islamic teachings. Islamic law binds believers but not non-believers or other religions. That is, activities that do not comply with Sharia should not be carried out by Muslims, but this does not preclude people of other faiths from doing so.

Concerns about the preservation of local culture are understandable among stakeholders. They see Islam as a religion that strictly limits the activities of believers, dictating which ones are permitted and which are not. The implementation of halal tourism does not, in theory, aim to eradicate local culture or wisdom. One of the distinguishing features of halal tourism is its desire to expand services and meet the needs of Muslim tourists (Mohsin et al., 2016). Also, the purpose of travel is not limited to religious aspects (Ryan, 2016; Vargas Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2018). Many non-Muslim countries recognize that halal tourism is not religiously motivated by Islamic tourism. Halal tourism is simply a strategy to meet the needs of Muslim tourists while not disrupting local values or traditions, allowing the Muslim market's potential to be accommodated in a business context (Aji et al., 2020).

Sharia allows Muslim tourists to visit tourism attractions based on other religions for leisure or excursion, including places of worship, under certain conditions: the visit must not endanger faith, piety, or principles; it must not be involved in religious holiday celebrations; it must not be involved in ritual processions; it must not be afraid of being exposed to *syubhat* (confusion of faith); and, of course, it must be permitted by the

authority. (Bahammam, 2012, pp. 205–208). Destination managers are responsible for providing as much information as possible to Muslim tourists, however, the decision rests with each tourist.

3. The Use of Halal Labels in Tourism Destinations in Indonesia

This section discusses the policies for using halal branding in a tourism destination. The division of authority between the central and local government is regulated by Law Number 23 of 2014 on Local Government. The principle of regional autonomy in the law has not been amended much since Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Local Government. The law is based on the principle of granting the region as much autonomy as possible, in which the region is given the authority to manage and regulate all government affairs other than those stipulated by the central government in the law (Muhadi, 2022 in Thamrin, 2019).

In the context of regional autonomy, tourism policy separates government affairs between the central and local. Based on Law Number 23 of 2014 on Local Government, tourism is included in the concurrent and subsidiary affairs of local governments (Wibowo et al., 2018). According to its authority, the region has the right to direct tourism development policies as one of its subsidiary sectors. However, by adhering to the Central Government's norms, standards, procedures, and criteria (Government of Indonesia, 2014), in this case, it is Law Number 10 of 2009 on Tourism.

At the national level, the central government has the authority to develop and stipulate a master plan for tourism development, while local governments at the provincial or district/city level have the authority to implement and enforce such a plan (Government of Indonesia, 2009). Local governments must develop tourism policies that are aligned with potential resources, competencies, and geographical aspects based on regional interests as the authority in the tourism sector shifts from the center to the regions (Wibowo et al., 2018). In this case, tourism development must also take into account the religious and cultural values of the local community. Furthermore, it should strike a balance between efforts to develop attraction management to improve the quality and competitiveness of tourism attractions and conservation efforts to ensure the sustainability of its resources (Government of Indonesia, 2011). According to the explanation, local governments have the right to determine the direction of their tourism development policies while still coordinating with the central government. It is because the local government is more familiar with the potential of natural and cultural tourism in their region and can decide which of these potentials can add value and benefit the local community.

Although the national tourism development direction has been determined, the theme of the tourism products offered is still under the authority of the local government where the attraction and resources are located. Including the decision to use halal tourism branding for a destination or not, it is preferable to leave it entirely to the regional tourism authorities. The use of halal brands or labels for tourism destinations, particularly among Muslim minorities, should be done with extreme caution, taking into account a variety of factors, including the culture and character of the local community. Tourism officials at

both the national and regional levels must be not unaware of the fact that the use of the term "halal" in non-Muslim majority destinations is sensitive and often leads to misunderstandings.

The development of halal tourism should consider several factors. To begin with, while a Muslim-majority country, does not automatically make Indonesia a Muslim-friendly tourism destination. It is a multicultural country with a non-Muslim majority in some areas. The large Muslim population is an important social capital, but it cannot guarantee that a destination will properly implement halal tourism because it must still pay attention to the main halal tourism criteria. Second, despite the fact that there are several areas in Indonesia where the majority of the population is non-Muslim, they have long tolerated Muslims in daily life. The use of terms that are contrary to popular belief and may have negative connotations should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. Third, because of its large Muslim population, Indonesia is a potential target market for non-Muslim countries actively promoting halal tourism. It is critical to realize that the provision of halal tourism services in non-Muslim destinations in Indonesia is one of the efforts to encourage Indonesian Muslims to prefer domestic tourism destinations, rather than traveling and spending money abroad.

CONCLUSION

Muslim minority tourism destinations in Indonesia can theoretically develop Halal tourism, but the decision will depend on each regional tourism authority. Moreover, tourism stakeholders in each destination should take over the use of halal branding, so that the tourism policies adopted are regional initiatives (bottom-up policies). In practice, halal tourism is a manifestation of the commitment of tourism stakeholders to being a good host. The availability of halal tourism products and services demonstrates the readiness of the destination to welcome both domestic and international Muslim tourists. This commitment is required to boost the confidence of Muslim tourists, who have different needs than regular tourists.

To avoid social conflict, the Indonesian government must socialize the concept of halal tourism, which is more acceptable to the diverse Indonesian tourism stakeholders, with a focus on meeting the needs of Muslim tourists. The term "halal tourism" can also be replaced with terms that sound more moderate, such as "Muslim-friendly tourism" or "family-friendly tourism". Halal labels are more appropriate when used by the tourism industry rather than tourism destinations. Hence, tourism destinations must encourage the development of the halal tourism industry in the region, which includes hotels, restaurants, and other supporting industries. When a destination is indirectly supported by an industry that adheres to halal tourism criteria, the destination will transform into a halal tourism destination.

At least two implications can be drawn from this study. First, it provides input on the importance of improving coordination between the central and local governments in discussing halal tourism in non-Muslim destinations. Second, this study can raise awareness among tourism industry players that halal tourism has the potential to thrive in

non-Muslim areas of Indonesia. This research has limitations since it solely depends on secondary data from scholarly publications and internet news articles. Interviews or surveys of communities and tourism stakeholders in Bali, Labuan Bajo, Toba, and Toraja are highly recommended for further research.

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