

Comparing the Concept of Halal Tourism in Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia

(Membandingkan Konsep Wisata Halal di Indonesia, Thailand, dan Malaysia)

Imam Mawardi

Program Studi Ilmu Sosial, Universitas Airlangga
Jalan Dharmawangsa Dalam, Surabaya, 60286
Tel.: +62(31)5034015
Surel: unairmawardi@gmail.com

Rahma Sugihartati

Departemen Ilmu Informasi dan Perpustakaan, Universitas Airlangga
Jalan Dharmawangsa Dalam, Airlangga, Surabaya, 60286
Tel.: +62(31)5034015
Surel: rahma.sugihartati@fisip.unair.ac.id

Dian Yulie Reindrawati

Departemen Manajemen Perhotelan dan Pariwisata, Universitas Airlangga
Jalan Dharmawangsa Dalam Selatan, Surabaya 60286
Tel.: +62(31)5033869
Surel: dian.reindrawati@vokasi.unair.ac.id

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan perkembangan dan pemikiran wisata halal di beberapa negara Asia Tenggara. Penelitian dilakukan dengan menggunakan studi kepustakaan untuk mengkaji referensi-referensi sebelumnya, seperti buku, media jurnal, dan website. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa globalisasi industri wisata telah berkembang karena meningkatnya permintaan dari wisatawan muslim yang menyebabkan lahirnya wisata halal. Kondisi ini paling menonjol di negara-negara dengan populasi muslim yang besar. Namun, pariwisata banyak diminati dan dipraktikkan di negara-negara mayoritas muslim dan minoritas muslim. Tren wisata halal memberikan banyak manfaat bagi pertumbuhan ekonomi melalui konsumen yang sebagian besar beragama Islam. Di Indonesia, Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) sebagai pendukung wisata halal tidak memiliki legalitas formal atau kepastian hukum, tidak seperti JAKIM di Malaysia. Meskipun demikian, konsep wisata halal sendiri masih berbeda di setiap negara. Simpulannya, konsep wisata halal tidak hanya menekankan nilai-nilai religi, tetapi juga pada sektor ekonomi.

Kata kunci: globalisasi, wisata halal, wisatawan muslim



Abstract

This study aimed to illustrate the development and thoughts of halal tourism in several Southeast Asian countries. The study was conducted using library research to examine previous references, such as books, media journals, and websites. Results show that the globalization of the tourism industry has developed due to the rising demand from Muslim tourists which led to the birth of halal tourism. This condition is most prominent in the countries with large Muslim population. However, tourism is much in demand and practised in both Muslim majority and Muslim minority countries. Halal tourism trends provide many benefits for economic growth through consumers who are mostly Muslim. In Indonesia, Ulama Council as a supporter of halal tourism has no formal legality or legal certainty, unlike JAKIM in Malaysia. Nevertheless, the concept of halal tourism itself is still different in each country. In conclusion, the concept of halal tourism do not merely emphasise religious values, but also on the economic sector.

Keywords: Globalization, halal tourism, Muslim tourists

INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism is a tourism strategy to attract Muslim tourists. Tourism industry is always looking for attractive new segments, such as facilities, services, places and markets (Mastercard and Crescentrating 2018). However, there are still things that are very closely guarded related to the needs of Muslim tourists who are the world's biggest consumers. This is related to the fact that Muslim tourists always maintain religious obligations as a form of obedience. Tourism and religion are integral factors in the economy.

Halal tourism itself arises from the concept of religious tourism related to the behaviour, clothing and food consumed while travelling. One of them is the phenomenon of the world's Muslims who go on a spiritual journey (pilgrimage and pilgrimage) which becomes a motivation for Muslim tourists who are physically or materially able to do so at least once in their lives (Yan *et al.* 2017). The contribution of the tourism industry for the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is substantial (9%), which shows that tourism is much in demand by many countries. Besides, the growth of Muslim tourists is a new segment that has emerged in the travel sector, which also affects global tourism. *Pew Research* stated that the Muslim population could increase to 2.2 billion by 2030 (Office 2016).

Halal tourism has become a global trend and is one of the factors driving the economy and contributes significantly to the economy of liberalization, which also creates global cultural ties. Globalization marked by differences in life has led to the formation of new definitions of various tourism practices (Wardhana 2020a). Halal tourism is defined as any activity in tourism that is permitted according to Islamic teachings which are directly related to religion and doctrine (Islamic law, Islamic values, principles, beliefs and Islamic worship) (Battour and Ismail 2016). However, the development of globalization has promoted a new type of ideology which is the basis for the formation and change of tourism based on the process of self-identification and differentiating conventional tourism from halal tourism (Laughey 2007).

Halal tourism is part of the way tourists practice religion in various forms of tourism. In this case, tourists can still worship and avoid things that are prohibited in religious teachings. However, religion does not undergo a process of contextualization to make it inherent in society because the contextualizing culture in religion is a global culture with different sets of values. Differences in the outlook of religion in halal tourism focus on the symbols of modernity that emphasise authentic values and added material value. Market integration also causes halal tourism to

become a transaction process that calculates *costs* and *benefits* (Oktadiana, Pearce, and Chon 2016).

On the other hand, the halal tourism market also encourages the capitalist system to privatise religion which causes halal tourism can only be interpreted in a particular space so that it loses its power in influencing people's lives in social space (Wardhana 2020b). The presence of halal tourism becomes a dilemma in the tourist space because tourist behaviour and activities must follow the rules set by tourism actors. On the other hand, religion becomes a commodity for the benefit of individual and private business. Religious privatization not only confirms a shift in society but also broadly influences the process of socio-cultural reorganization (Mohsin, Ramli, and Alkhulayfi 2016).

Local culture as a traditional reference is most affected by halal tourism privatization. However, it must be recognised that local cultural values face enormous attacks amid globalization, privatization and capitalistic market pressures (Syam 2005). Religion experiences a shift in meaning in market dynamics. This segment is also a consideration in the relative nature of tourist travel so that several countries recognise the globalization of halal tourism differently (Henderson 2016).

This study compares the three countries as an illustration of the development of halal tourism that is rife both in the Muslim and non-Muslim countries. The three countries are Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. The existence of halal tourism in various countries raises one major problem, namely religious awareness for special (halal) tourism actors concerning the needs of Muslim tourists. This research also looks deeper into how tourists compromise their religious beliefs to enjoy tourism or even force them to enjoy the services that have been provided as a representation of halal tourism.

Halal tourism is part of global industry, whose definitions are interpreted in various ways by world thinkers; there is no definite definition of globalization. According to Featherstone, globalization is characterized by the growth of information technology developments and other inventions that enable humans to carry out their functions more quickly and easily (Amarini 2018). Religion has a great influence on many people such as Muslim tourists. In the tourism context, religion can influence the purpose and reference of halal tourism products. According to Battour, Ismail and Battor, the impact of religious beliefs on Muslim tourist behaviour comes from two sources. First, clear guidelines on behaviour or practices that are acceptable or allowed in religion (halal) and not obtained by religion (haram). Second, tourist behaviour is influenced by the fact that religion can shape the culture, attitudes and values of society (Battour, Ismail, and Battor 2011).

Muslim communities are encouraged to travel (*rihlah*) and not only limited to Hajj or umrah as pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. However, traveling or traveling in for other purposes such as recreation, socialization, seeking knowledge and learning to appreciate the beauty of God's creation (Yousaf and Xiucheng 2018). Globalization is a process whereby the world is not limited by the geographical boundaries of a country so that there are many relationships and interconnections that transcend the nation-state (community implementation) to shape the world system (Arimbi, Wulan, and Colombijn 2019).

Through the information, communication and technology revolution, globalization is driving many sectors of life in the modern world. The effect of globalization also affects the Muslim world because globalization provides many opportunities to spread the syriah, especially in the largest

country in the world (Ladiqi *et al.* 2018). The definition of halal tourism itself is very diverse such as Battor, Ismail, Khan, Callana alternately with the term Islamic tourism, Muslim friendly tourism and Sharia Tourism (Mohsin, Ramli, and Alkhulayfi 2016).

Likewise, Mohsin mentioned that there is a difference between halal tourism and Islamic tourism. However, both of them continue to follow tourism that adheres to Islamic teachings in relation to Halal principles (Wardhana 2020a). Halal tourism has been recognized by many countries as an emerging segment in tourism and opportunities related to economic benefits for countries that accept its presence (Ainin *et al.* 2020)

METHOD

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach with descriptive library research method. According to Creswell, the aims of qualitative research generally include information about the main phenomena explored in the study. Literature-based research is research that places literature as an object of study (Creswell *et al.* 2007). This approach is in accordance with the halal tourism conditions that are becoming a trend and developing in several Southeast Asian countries.

Previous research conducted by Ulum proved that halal tourism in Lombok is only a government discourse for the political interests of the authorities in order to control capital in the regions. However, Ulum also mentioned that religious plurality in NTB could not be ignored because partiality in certain communities will lead to social conflicts (Ulum 2020). Research by Winarti also mentioned that cultural understanding is closely related to halal tourism in Indonesia. Halal tourism is likely to have positive and negative impacts on Non-Muslim tourists. The negative impacts of halal tourism include the possible loss of Non-Muslim tourists. However, on the plus side, halal tourism products can be developed as a cultural heritage (Winarti 2017).

Halal tourism market is a concern for the government because of the large number of Muslim tourists visiting the country, so Thai tourism tends to pay more attention to Muslim markets and tourists than Muslim values themselves (Sriprasert, Chainin, and Rahman 2014). In a study by Malaysian researcher Joan C. Henderson, it was mentioned that Malaysian people often find problems between religious relations and tourism (Sulaiman *et al.* 2018).

Literature research is a series of activities that deal directly with text or numeric data (not with the field, events, people, or other objects) where the data obtained comes from the literature (Zed 2008). The data used in this study are secondary data aimed at obtaining theoretical data by studying and reading literature relating to research problems in the form of books, journals, media, websites and written documents (Wardhana 2021). There are several steps in library research carried out in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Global Market for Halal Tourism

Muslim population which spreads across various countries is both a highly promising and potential market prospect. According to *Pew Research*, the number of global Muslim populations is growing stably and rapidly throughout the world because Islam is the most widely held religion in the World. Followers of Islam are estimated to increase by 70%, from 1.8 billion in 2015 to nearly 3 billion in 2060 (Centre). Muslim communities are concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region where there are 60% of the world's Muslim population (Oktadiana, Pearce, and Chon 2016).

Meanwhile, another 20% are in the Middle East and North Africa where the Muslim population reaches 93%, followed by Europe as much as 3%, and North America as much as 1% (Henderson 2016). Muslim global tourists are a growing trend in Muslim societies. The development of this trend began for those who live in urban areas. According to Akhtar, Muslim tourists who travel frequently are those who are highly educated and often travel with family. They are scattered in various countries that can respect religion and provide for their needs as Muslims (Akhtar 2012).

Seven factors continue to shape the growth of the halal tourism market quickly. First, the rapidly growing Muslim population is the largest religious group in the world. By 2050, the Muslim population will reach 2.8 billion, or one in three people worldwide. The majority of Muslims will be in the Asia Pacific region. Second, there is substantial growth or disposable expenditure in the sizeable Muslim population, namely Indonesia and Malaysia. Other developments include the rise of Muslim professional classes in Western Europe and North America and an increase in Muslim women in major cities throughout the world. All of this will lead to more substantial economic impacts from and for large Muslim consumers.

Third, increased access to travel information, in which social media plays an important role that can quickly present information relevant to Muslim needs in each destination. Number four is the availability of Muslim-friendly travel services and facilities. These factors include encouraging the design of new experience strategies to differentiate products and services for Muslim tourists—fifth, younger population. The Muslim population is also the youngest segment among all other major religious groups with an average age of 24 years in 2015. This shapes the future of tourism and hospitality with unique service needs. Six, the Ramadhan trip. There is still a strong trend in which tourists seek the experience of Ramadan. The last factor is the travel business. Most Muslims who represent the economies of Malaysia and Indonesia are expected to grow rapidly to meet business travel opportunities (Mastercard and Crescentrating 2018).

Market trends, as Berger pointed out, involve processes and patterns of social interaction in mutually influencing relationships. Society as an external-objective reality will guide individuals in conducting market activities, such as what may be traded, how the buying and selling process, and where buying and selling transactions take place. This usually comes from culture, including regulation and religion (Berger 2011). The halal tourism market segment has a very significant influence on tourism growth, especially in the Asia Pacific, Middle East and Southeast Asia as the largest Muslim population in the world. On the other hand, the lack of knowledge of the needs and motivation of Muslim tourist makes industry actors pay more attention to the growth of the halal business market instead. Such market includes halal food, Islamic finance, halal travel, modest fashion, halal media and recreation, halal pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. These businesses are driving the growth of the Islamic economy, especially in the United Arab Emirates and Malaysia, while Saudi Arabia and Indonesia are ranked tenth (Reuters and Standard 2018).

Halal tourism is a new phenomenon that arises from the growth of the halal industry. When 'halal' goods began to contribute to the progress of the tourism industry, many countries (both Muslim and non-Muslim) sought to capture the tourist market by providing tourism products, facilities and infrastructure that suited the market needs. The presence of halal tourism in the world of the tourism industry reaps a lot of responses and studies about understanding halal tourism itself. The concept of halal comes from Arabic, which means 'something that is permitted or permitted' is not only applied to food but all aspects of life. Khalil explained that the idea of integrating the concept of halal in the field of tourism was carried out by hoteliers after the success of the popularity of Islamic law in the banking and investment sectors (Rasul 2019). Halal tourism

is becoming popular in the tourism industry, and countries should not miss opportunities to exploit markets. Halal tourism is not only related to Islamic countries, but it is also crucial for non-Muslim countries (El-Gohary 2016).

Zamani-Farahani and Henderson considered Islamic tourism and halal tourism the same concept and defined it as tourism for Muslims who prefer to keep practising their culture (Battour and Ismail 2016). On the other hand, Jafari and Scott emphasised the term halal tourism as meeting the needs of tourists but ignoring the religion of tourists. In contrast, Islamic tourism is more likely to meet Shariah law requirements (Jafari and Scott 2014). Halal tourism is a subpart of religious tourism conducted by Muslim tourists (Mohsin, Ramli, and Alkhulayfi 2016).

World Travel Market 2007 defines halal tourism as a type of religious tourism that pays attention to activities that are permissible in Islamic religious teachings such as behaviour, clothing, and food (Nurrachmi 2017). Carboni defined halal tourism as an Islamic tour that involves Muslims who are interested in maintaining their religious habits when travelling (Carboni and Janati 2016). Shakiry also claims that the concept of Islamic tourism is not limited to religious tourism, but all forms of tourism that do not conflict with Islamic values (El-Gohary 2016).

Based on the literature published by halal tourism actors, there are several principles of halal tourism or the main requirements in halal tourism. The principles include not serving alcohol; no night clubs or discotheques; serving halal food; does not serve pork or similar products; assign male staff to single male tourists and female staff to single women and families; displays images of religious leaders in the room; providing entertainment in the form of conservative television channels; provide worship space; has Muslim staffs wearing Islamic clothing; provide the Koran and prayer rugs in each room along with the direction of Qibla prayer; separate prayer places; separate swimming pool based on sex; founder of Islamic tourism and hotels (Wardhana 2020b). As for the activities of Muslim tourists must adhere to the Islamic teachings and keep away from prohibited things. This is what Muslim tourists want wherever they travel. Therefore, the many terms of halal tourism, Islamic tourism, religious tourism, Muslim friendly tourism are a reflection of the desires and desires of the tourism industry.

Halal Tourism in Several Southeast Asian Countries

In 2016, the Asia-Pacific region led the growth of tourist arrivals around the world by 9%, followed by Africa by 8%, and America by 3%. The number of tourists coming to Asia rose by 23.1% million; from 269.7 million in 2015 to 292.8 million in 2016. The region is expected to receive an additional 535 million tourists by the end of 2030 (Glaesser *et al.* 2017). The 2019 global Muslim travel index places Indonesia and Malaysia as the primary destination for Muslim tourists. Indonesia and Malaysia are also ranked second in the GMTI (Global Muslim Travel Index 2018). Meanwhile, the five main destinations of non-OIC (Organization of Islamic Corporation) countries are Singapore, Thailand, United Kingdom, Japan and Taiwan. The GMTI Mastercard-Crescentrating annual report in 2019 recorded growth in the entire Muslim travel market. In 2018, there are 140 million international Muslim visitors who are projected to reach 230 million in 2026.

Mastercard-Crescentrating digital Muslim travel reports in 2018 that Muslim tourists are expected to spend USD 180 billion in 2026 for online travel purchases (Mastercard and Crescentrating 2019). Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, where the majority of people are Muslim, make this region a major destination for Muslim tourists. This is different from Thailand, which is a country with a majority Buddhist population. However, it remains a Muslim tourist destination because it can present the needs of Muslim tourists. The halal tourism industry

is exciting to study, especially in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, which together present the concept of halal tourism for Muslim tourists while maintaining religious values in their tours or activities (Ainin *et al.* 2020).

Halal Tourism in the Perspective of Indonesia Government

Indonesia is the largest archipelago with has 88% Muslim population. Indonesia has more than 17,000 islands, 300 tribes, 746 languages and dialects, and more than 800,000 mosques. This condition makes Indonesia a country that has enormous potential in developing halal tourism because basically, Indonesian culture already practices the halal lifestyle (Palupi *et al.* 2017). With a multicultural culture, Indonesia has the opportunity to develop halal tourist destinations. However, this situation can become a problem if halal tourism creates a new culture in Indonesian society which incidentally is tolerant of the values of other religions.

Indonesia has developed ten halal tourist destinations, namely Aceh, Riau and the Riau Islands, West Sumatra, Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, South Sulawesi, and Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara). With the potential of its products, Indonesia can become a halal tourism destination in the world (Crescentrating, 2019). However, the presence of halal tourism in Indonesia through several regions which are destinations for Muslim tourists has not been able to describe what this tourism practice is like. This is evidenced by the majority of Indonesia's Muslim population who are not interested in the concept of halal tourism because there is no clear concept.

Moreover, the activities presented by halal tourism providers for Indonesian Muslim tourists have existed in people's daily lives or have become their own culture. Thus, the Muslim community in Indonesia does not understand the concept of halal tourism. Moreover, the Indonesian state, with the Pancasila ideology, always maintains that differences are part of national unity. Therefore, halal tourism is even more attractive if it is offered to foreign Muslim tourists because Indonesia can meet the needs and provide conveniences such as places of worship and halal food (Shafaei and Mohamed 2015).

The Indonesian government began developing the halal tourism industry in 2013 through the 2013 Indonesia Halal Expo (INDHEX) and the Global Halal Forum which launched a new product in the tourism industry in the form of Halal Tourism (Tieman 2015). This idea is motivated by the fact that Indonesia has the largest population of Muslims in the world. This fact was obtained from research conducted by the *Pew Research Center*, a research institute based in Washington DC, the United States, engaged in demographic research, media content analysis, and social science research in 2012. The research was titled "The Global Religious Landscape" (Hackett *et al.* 2014).

The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism defined halal tourism as an activity that is supported by facilities and services provided by the community, business people, regional or central government with Sharia values (Kementerian Pariwisata 2012). Furthermore, in 2016 the National Sharia Council (or DSN) of the Indonesian Ulema Council (or MUI) issued a fatwa governing the administration of tourism to develop the halal tourism sector in Indonesia. This fatwa regulates comprehensively about halal tourism activities. The fatwa includes provisions of agreements made, provisions of hotels, tourist destinations, spas, massages, travel agents, to provisions of tour guides. The presence of the DSN-MUI fatwa encourages the halal tourism industry to become exclusive tourism. In fact, halal tourism is a form of maximum service to all tourists, both Muslim and non-Muslim, and not bound by ethnicity, race, and others.

Halal tourism in Indonesia uses two main approaches. The first approach is an approach that still believes that halal entrepreneurs are religious tourism. Specifically, Indonesian society has a uniqueness that is the hallmark of the nation. Indonesia has many destinations, such as mosques, and its people like to go grave pilgrimages and culinary tours. In its development, there was a polarization of Islamic religious practices which became known as religious tourism. This term developed further into Sharia tourism. With the development of the global economy, this form of tourism has been transformed into halal tourism (Jaelani 2017).

According to Thomson Reuters, religious tourism contributed USD 22.7 billion, or only about 1/8 of the total halal tourism revenue of U \$ 169 billion in 2016. The second approach emphasises that halal entrepreneurs are the same as tourism in general; it is just that halal tourism provides additional services for Muslim tourists. Halal tourism can include natural tourism, cultural tourism, or artificial tourism in the frame of family tourism (Djakfar 2017).

Such an approach is a halal tourism strategy that can provide added value for a country's tourism. Several regions in Indonesia have taken this approach and successfully won various awards for halal tourism in the world. In 2016, Indonesia succeeded in winning 12 awards from 16 categories that were contested at the 2016 World Halal Tourism Award in Dubai, namely Best Airline for Garuda Indonesia Halal Traveler; World's Best Airport for Halal Traveler obtained by Sultan Iskandar Muda International Airport, Aceh Indonesia; World's Best Family-Friendly Hotel by Rhadana Hotel Kuta, Bali, Indonesia; World's Most Luxurious Family Hotel at Trans Luxury Hotel Bandung Indonesia; World's Best Beach Resort obtained by Novotel Lombok Resort & Villas, Lombok, NTB; World's Best Halal Tour Operator by Ero tour, West Sumatra Indonesia; World's Best Halal Tourism Website Indonesia; World's Best Halal Honeymoon Destination in Sembalun Village Region, Lombok, NTB, Indonesia; World's Best Hajj and Umrah Operators with ESQ Tours and Travel, Jakarta, Indonesia; World's Halal Culinary Destination by West Sumatra, Indonesia; World's Best Halal Cultural Destination in Aceh, Indonesia (Firdausi *et al.* 2017). In fact, Indonesia is supported by various components that can promote Indonesian tourism in the global market, especially in the halal tourism segment. However, there needs to be a clear commitment from industry players and regulations regarding halal tourism to encourage the development of halal tourism models in Indonesia.

Halal Tourism Recognition in Malaysia

Malaysia is a country that recognises many religions. Most of the population is Muslim, i.e. 61.3% of the Malaysian population in 2013 (Yan *et al.* 2017). Malaysian culture itself consists of three cultures, namely Malay, Chinese, and Indian, with a total population of 29,566,417 people. The official religion of the state of Malaysia is Islam. However, other religions are welcomed because of the large number of Buddhists, Hindus, and Christians in this country (Shafaei and Mohamed 2015). Malaysia was ranked first in the global Islamic economy in 2015 and 2016 with indicators for halal travel based on ecosystem health. Malaysia is also named as the number one country in the Muslim-friendly destination category by the MasterCard-Crescent Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) in 2016 (Mastercard and Crescentrating, 2018).

In 2010 Malaysia became a global halal food destination that manufactures halal products and services in terms of food products, trade, logistics, banking systems and halal certification (Samori and Sabtu 2014). Malaysia pioneered the comprehensive standards for halal food products, namely MS 1500: 2004 (Malaysian Standard: Halal Food-Production, Preparation and Storage-General Guidelines Amendment 2009) and has several laws governing products and services lawful. The description of halal trade is contained in the 2011 law, namely JAKIM and

JAIN/MAIN (Malaysian Department of Islamic Development) which regulates government agencies, universities, industry players and non-governmental organizations (Samori and Rahman 2013). JAKIM was established under the prime minister of the Department of Islamic Affairs division and aims to inspect and instil halal awareness for food producers, distributors, importers, food services, restaurants and hotels.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) nominates Malaysia among 38 other countries as the top emerging tourism in the world. Malaysia has an excellent opportunity to develop as an Islamic tour for a sustainable economy with a religious zeal. Tourism is the dominant industry in Malaysia. Halal tourism activities aim to achieve physical, social and spiritual goals. Physical goals lead to a healthy life and do not also forget to allow actors of tourism and tourists can still carry out religious obligations properly. Islam also encourages its followers to maintain a friendship with fellow Muslims by visiting each other (Bhuiyan *et al.* 2011). The ASEAN Market provides the most substantial contribution in terms of tourist arrivals with 19.1%, representing 74.3% of the total tourist arrivals to Malaysia (Putit *et al.* 2014). Malaysia is serious about developing halal tourism because of its very promising economic potential. The country has consistently provided support and incentives to the tourism industry, including those who have helped to explore new and untapped destinations to create attractive Malaysian tourism destinations. Halal tourism in Malaysia aims to be a place for Muslim tourists around the world rather than conventional tourism. The existence of halal tourism provides options for Muslim tourists when travelling without having to worry about Islamic values (Isa, Chin, and Mohammad 2018).

The Interest of Thailand Government Toward Halal Tourism

The world's Muslim community lives in several parts of the world. Around 60% of the world's population lives in Asia and 20%, including in the Middle East and North Africa. However, the Middle East and North Africa regions have the highest percentage compared to other Muslim majority countries, making it a trend for the halal tourism market. The demand for halal products significantly goes hand in hand with the Muslim population in an area (Nurdiansyah 2018).

Thailand is a country that has experienced a rapid increase in tourists. From 13.8 million visitors in 2006, the number of tourists increased to 32.5 million in 2016. The exciting thing is the increase in Muslim tourists who are mostly from the Middle East and Asia. This increase was recorded from 2.63 million in 2006 to 6.03 million in 2016 (Yan *et al.* 2017). Thailand, with a majority Buddhist population, has emerged as a strong competitor in the halal tourism industry even though it is not a Muslim-majority country such as its neighbours, Indonesia and Malaysia. Thai identity is a mixture of Buddhist culture and Monarchy. Even so, Thai culture has managed to adapt and accept changes due to globalization. Thailand is an example of a non-Muslim country that uses halal tourism as a means of social and cultural integration for the economic development of a Muslim minority population. Halal tourism is part of the products consumed by Muslim-majority countries. Even so, halal tourism actors do not have to be from countries with a Muslim majority population, but can also come from Muslim minority countries.

Thailand is a country that produces halal tourism for Muslim tourists visiting the country. To attract Muslim tourists, Thailand provides facilities such as mosques, accommodation, food and drinks that are in line with Muslim culture. Many halal restaurants ensure they have official halal certificates to increase the confidence of Muslim tourists (Wannasupchue *et al.* 2019). Although halal certification is different in each country, the certification has the same purpose. Halal certification in Thailand is issued by the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand (CICOT). The committee was formed by Shariah experts, Islamic rules experts, food scientists, and the

government responsible for determining and announcing Thai halal standards to the Provincial Islamic Committee. Thailand's halal standards are always updated and adjusted to the rules of Islamic World Standards. The halal standardization process in Thailand is divided into three parts, namely, application preparation, audit programs, and certification approval (Wannasupchue *et al.* 2019).

The areas that are often visited by Muslim tourists are in the provinces of Songkhla, Santun, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. In the area, there are many halal restaurants, hotels and souvenirs (Lanui and Bunnag 2017). That is one of the strategies of halal tourism in Thailand. Furthermore, the Thai tourism authority has published periodic guidebooks for Muslim tourists who can support the promotion of halal tourism through activities such as the Arabian Travel Mart in Dubai. Another is by setting up label or sign of halal in every restaurant and tourist object, as well as providing mosque and place to do salat or pray in Islam (Sriprasert, Chainin, and Rahman 2014).

Muslim tourists have become a huge market potential for the tourism industry. The Pew Research Center (2015) states that the world's Muslim population in 2010 amounted to 1,599,700,000 or 23.2% of the world's population, the second largest after Christians. With such a large number, Muslim tourists have the potential to become targets for tourist visits.

Another similarity that is owned by halal tourism is more focused on Muslim tourists and any country both Muslim and non-Muslim majority can develop this destination as an increase in economic growth. Indonesia, Malaysia is a Muslim majority country that has a halal certificate as a standard in food and beverage products (Battor and Ismail 2016). Similarly, Thailand, which is predominantly Buddhist, also has a halal certificate standard in food and drink for Muslim tourists who began using it in 2015 (Asnawi, Sukoco, and Fanani 2018).

Understanding halal principles not only as a religious ritual but as a new paradigm related to global issues such as environmental awareness, food security, animal welfare and sustainability is also very important in ensuring halal certificates (Asnawi, Sukoco, and Fanani 2018). Indonesia has just issued a regulation on the implementation of halal guarantee product number 31 year 2019, which is implemented by the halal guarantee organizer (BPJH) based on the fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) non-governmental organization (Perbawasari *et al.* 2019).

The fatwa commission has a strategic function, consisting of various Islamic scholars with each ideological thinker. In addition to the commission and other organizational units, MUI forms two organizational units or institutions that perform the certification function and provide halal fatwas for products and services related to halal tourism. The two institutions are the food, medicine and cosmetic assessment institutions (LPPOM MUI) and the National Sharia Council (DSN MUI) (Kamaruddin and Wan, 2017).

The implementation of Indonesia's halal tourism is done using label in halal product and tourism site with friendly description because the term halal or sharia is considered to be exclusive, this was revealed by the chairman of the Bali Sharia economic community (MES). The idea of halal or Syrian tourism was rejected, could not be implemented because the majority of the people were non-diversity-Muslim (Syarif 2019). Thailand with a majority Buddhist community is not easy to connect Islam with the country in Thailand. In terms of halal certification, Thailand is more advanced than Indonesia. Halal certification in Thailand is handled by the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT). An institution that houses all Islam in Thailand. This institution

is recognized by the State. Halal standard Institut of Thailand is an institution under CICOT that handles the issue of halal certificates in 2007. CICOT collaborated with the tourism ministry to support the provision of halal food for Muslim tourists visiting Thailand (Wannasupchue *et al.* 2019). The initiative was supported by the Thai government and on 5 June 2015 Thailand as a destination for Halal entrepreneurs as a travel Mart Plus available such as halal trip and pro Muslim (Wardhana 2020b).

CONCLUSION

Seeing the phenomenon of halal tourism that occurs in several countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, researchers conclude that halal tourism does not only apply in countries that have a majority Muslim population. On the contrary, halal tourism is even more developed in the majority of non-Muslim countries through certification branding as a form of identity. Meanwhile, halal tourism raised in Muslim-majority countries becomes a problem because of the heterogeneous community culture, where they are accustomed to diversity as a form of mutual respect. Halal tourism can be more interesting if it is adapted to other existing community cultures. For example, Indonesia, as a Muslim-majority country, has a different understanding of Muslims, making it challenging to find suitable forms of tourism for Muslim communities. Indonesia only uses places of worship and food as indicators without the existence of a halal tourism destination supported by all parties.

Moreover, MUI, as a supporter of halal tourism, has no formal legality or legal certainty, unlike its Malaysia counterpart. Malaysian JAKIM department has the authority to regulate the halal tourism industry. Halal tourism is a form of economic globalization for the Muslim tourist market and can improve people's welfare. On the other hand, religion has become a commodity for tourism industry players to gain profit. Therefore, awareness of each tourist about halal tourism is needed in order to be able to distinguish spiritual areas which cannot be replaced by material needs in any form.

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