

IMPLEMENTATION OF HALAL TOURISM IN INCREASING INTEREST IN VISITING TOURISTS FROM WEST SUMATRA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is analyze the application of halal tourism in attracting tourist visits to West Sumatra. The method used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive approach. Data was collected through interviews, observation and documentation. To verify the validity of the data, source triangulation techniques were used, and data analysis was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The policy implementation model applied in this research refers to G. Shabbir Cheema and Dennis A. Rondinelli, who highlight factors such as environmental conditions, inter-institutional relationships, organizational resources in program implementation, as well as the characteristics and capabilities of implementing agents. Based on research findings, it shows that the implementation of halal tourism in West Sumatra is quite successful and able to increase tourist interest. However, there are still several challenges, such as inadequate accommodation, lack of available facilities, and permit procedures that are not yet optimal.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Halal tourism is a type of tourism designed in accordance with Islamic principles to meet the needs of Muslim tourists as well as other tourists who want a tourism experience that is in harmony with Islamic values (Carboni, Perelli, and Sistu (2017). Battour, Ismail, Battor, and Awais (2017) defines halal tourism as tourism or travel activities that tend to meet the requirements of sharia law. In this tourism, destinations and the tourism industry provide facilities and services that are in accordance with Islamic principles with the aim of ensuring that Muslim tourists can enjoy their trip comfortably and calm, in accordance with Islamic rules and shariah It is important to ensure that all aspects of Islamic tourism are in line with the overall recognized principles of Islam.

West Sumatra is one of the halal tourist destinations in Indonesia. This province is one of the ten best provinces for Indonesian tourists. This region has abundant tourist resources, including stunning natural beauty. From green mountains, beautiful lakes, to attractive beaches, all of this is an attraction in itself. The culinary attractions of West Sumatra, especially traditional Minangkabau cuisine, are very

famous in Indonesia and throughout the world. Apart from that, the people of West Sumatra are known for their friendly attitude and strong eastern culture. The Minangkabau people, in particular, are recognized as warm and friendly hosts. The friendliness of local residents can improve the tourist experience for visitors (Yogi, 2016).

Based on West Sumatra Province Regional Regulation Number 1 of the year 2020 concerning the implementation of halal tourism. Through regional regulations, local governments can increase visits by Muslim tourists and other tourists from within the country and abroad, encourage the growth of the halal tourism industry and provide clear guidelines for districts/cities in developing Halal Tourism. Halal tourism is explained in article 1 as "a set of additional services of amenities, attractions and accessibility aimed at and provided to fulfill the experiences, needs and desires of Muslim tourists and other tourists in need". The implementation of halal tourism can improve the positive image of the region, attract investment, and promote local culture that is in line with religious values, thereby providing significant economic and social benefits for local communities (Aini Masrurroh, 2022).

In the context of halal tourism, the implementation of policies produced to support the development of this sector can be influenced by various parties, from the government to other stakeholders, each of whom may have different views and interests regarding the direction of halal tourism policy. Implementation is a general process of administrative action that can be researched at a specific program level. The implementation process will only begin if the goals and objectives have been determined, the activity program has been arranged and funds have been prepared and distributed to achieve the targets according to Grindle (in Headar Akib, 2010: 2). By understanding the process and challenges of policy implementation, policy makers can make more targeted adjustments. This is expected to increase the effectiveness of policies in achieving inclusive and sustainable development goals.

Tourist visits refer to activities carried out by tourists in a tourist destination. Usually, individuals or groups who frequently visit tourist attractions are called visitors. Visitors are people who are in a location with the aim of enjoying and getting a pleasant experience from the visit. According to the World Travel Organization (WTO), a visitor is any person who travels to a place outside their daily environment for less than 12 consecutive months, with the main aim other than looking for work in the place visited (Arjana, 2016). Based on data on domestic tourist visits to tourist destinations in West Sumatra, a decline can be seen from 2020 to 2022. The number of domestic visitors to West Sumatra in 2020 to 2022 is presented in Table 1:

TYPE OF TOURISTS	NUMBER OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC TOURISTS		
	2020	2021	2022
MANCANEG	21.6	1.5	22.9
DOMESTIK	2.562.966	1.000.732	2.832.140
AMOUNT	2.584.626	1 002.270	2.855.135

Source : Badan Pusat Statistik Sumatera Barat, 2023

Table 1 shows that the number of domestic and foreign tourist visits continues to decline every year. Data shows a significant decline of 61% in 2021. This is due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has had a major impact on international and national travel. Many countries imposed travel restrictions, lockdowns, and other measures to control the spread of the virus, which significantly affected the tourism industry (Mardiyah & Nurwati, 2020).

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, qualitative methods were used with a descriptive approach. According to Bagdan and Taylor, quoted by Moleong (2009), qualitative research is a type of research that produces descriptive data which includes written and verbal expressions about the behavior and expressions of the individuals being observed. Informants were determined using purposive sampling, namely human resources, young experts at the West Sumatra Tourism Service, tourists and religious leaders. Three methods of data collection were carried out through three methods, namely observation, interviews and documentation. Then the data collection is evaluated through reduction, presentation and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the indicators of Cheema and Rondinelli's Policy Implementation Theory (1983), researchers describe the challenges and efforts of halal tourism in increasing interest in tourist visits as follows:

Environmental conditions

Environmental factors have a significant effect on policy implementation. This environment includes socio-cultural aspects as well as participation from program recipients, as stated by Subarsono (2005:101). Based on the results of research findings in the field, basic principles adat basandi syarak and syarak basandi God's book ensuring there is synergy between local traditions and sharia demands, as well as integrating cultural values in the tourism sector. The cultural events to promote halal tourism are lively Ramadhan activities such as qasidah competitions and the launch of the 'Islamic Guest' program at the Grand Mosque and gulo serak from Solok to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Thus, halal tourism not only strengthens local cultural identity, but also attracts tourists who value diversity and local wisdom, creating authentic and meaningful experiences.

This matter in line with Cheema and Rondinelli's theory of policy implementation, which states that one of the key factors that influences how well policies are implemented is the environment. This environment includes the socio-cultural, economic, political and cultural conditions in which policies are implemented. Factors such as community support, economic stability, and local political dynamics can influence the extent to which policies can be implemented effectively. A supportive environment, such as inter-agency coordination and community participation, will facilitate the implementation process, while a less conducive environment, such as conflicts of interest or political instability, can be a major obstacle to policy implementation.

Inter-organizational relationships

To run the program, help is often needed and coordination with other institutions. Therefore, collaboration and coordination between agencies is the key to the success of a program. Harmonious relationships between organizations can strengthen their ability to face challenges and achieve common goals more effectively.

Based on the results of research findings in the field, the legal basis underlying the development of halal tourism in West Sumatra is Regional Regulations (Perda), which regulate the implementation of halal tourism. On this basis, the Tourism Office carries out various programs and activities aimed at improving the quality of halal tourism. Apart from that, the Tourism Office also coordinates with the West Sumatra Ministry of Religion and collaborates with non-government organizations such as

BUMN. It is hoped that this collaboration can encourage the development of more advanced and integrated halal tourism.

The Tourism Department is committed to building strong relationships with tourism industry players, including hotels and travel agents. Through this partnership, the tourism office hopes to create positive synergies in promoting halal tourism destinations. The Tourism Department is also trying to provide the necessary training and information so that industry players can meet halal tourism standards. So it can be concluded that the results of the indicators of inter-organizational relations are in line with the theory of policy implementation by Cheema and Rondinelli (1983).

Organizational resources for program implementation

In order for policies to be implemented well, human and non-human resources are very necessary. Based on the results of research findings in the field, the Tourism Office is constrained by funding and inadequate human resources in developing halal tourism, but the tourism office can allocate a budget for halal tourism programs by prioritizing the development of supporting infrastructure and halal certification. The involvement of both the central government and the private sector is crucial in encouraging the development of halal tourism. The central government plays a role in providing regulations and incentives for industry, while the private sector, such as hotels, restaurants and travel agencies, provides Muslim-friendly services, including halal menus and prayer facilities. Before the implementation of the halal tourism regulation, interest in visiting Muslim tourists in West Sumatra was unstable, but did not show a significant increase due to the lack of clear regulations. After the regional regulation on halal tourism was implemented, interest in Muslim tourists began to increase. With a strong legal basis, regional governments intensively carry out outreach and guidance to tourism industry players, so that businesses that do not have halal certification begin to be left behind. Tourists feel more confident about West Sumatra's seriousness in providing halal services and facilities, which has a positive impact on the number of visits. This increase also strengthens West Sumatra's image as a safe and trusted halal tourism destination, attracting more domestic and international tourists.

This is in line with research conducted by Lubis, E. F, Zubaidah, E., & Ramailis, N. W. (2022) that failure in policy implementation is often caused by a lack of adequate and competent staff in their field. Therefore, the strategy to increase the number of tourist visits to West Sumatra as a halal tourism destination must be directed at increasing the tourism competitiveness index. The main indicators include infrastructure development, promotional efforts, and improving the quality of human resources, especially in increasing the capacity of the tourism industry sector.

Characteristics and capabilities of implementing agents

The characteristics and capacities of implementing agents include the bureaucratic structure, applicable norms, and interaction patterns within them, all of which play a role in influencing the implementation of a program. Based on research findings in the field, the government or related parties encourage the involvement of all parties, including business actors, in halal tourism programs. Business actors are expected to benefit from this program, with better alternative solutions to develop their business. The main goal is to increase the number of Muslim tourists in the halal tourism sector, without leaving existing business actors behind. This is in line with the theory of policy implementation by Cheema and Rondinelli (1983).

Challenges and efforts faced in increasing tourist interest in visiting West Sumatra

Challenges faced in increasing interest in tourist visits

First, accommodation is inadequate. The lack of adequate accommodation is one of the main challenges in attracting tourists from the Middle East. Many of them have a preference to stay in luxury hotels with high-class service standards, such as 5-star hotels that offer premium facilities and a high level of comfort. However, the choice of 5 star hotel accommodation available in halal tourist destinations is still very limited. Currently, the available hotels are dominated by 4 star hotels. This makes it difficult for tourists from the Middle East to find accommodation that meets their expectations, which in turn Ultimately it can reduce their interest in visiting.

Second, the lack of availability of facilities. The lack of availability of halal tourism facilities is one of the challenges that needs to be overcome to improve the tourist experience. The water supply problem really disturbs the comfort of visitors, especially Muslim tourists who need clean water for worship. Apart from that, the location of the parking lot which is too far away is also difficult, especially for tourists who carry a lot of things. The lack of availability of halal tourism facilities is one of the challenges that needs to be overcome to improve the tourist experience. These obstacles show the importance of improving infrastructure and services to create a more comfortable and adequate halal tourism experience. Another challenge lies in the transportation aspect, where tourists from the Middle East prefer direct flights to their destination. Currently, available direct flights are limited to the Padang-Kuala Lumpur route, which reduces the appeal for those wishing to explore other locations.

Third, the permit procedure service is not yet optimal. There are still obstacles among the community, including community leaders such as village heads, to the existence of halal tourism which has the potential to benefit the region. This hesitant attitude often stems from a lack of understanding about the benefits of halal tourism and the economic potential that can be generated. As a result, the licensing process becomes more complicated and time consuming, which in turn hinders the development of the tourism sector in the area. This uncertainty creates obstacles for investors and industry players who want to contribute to tourism growth, as well as preventing local communities from getting economic benefits that should be optimized through tourism development that is oriented to sharia values.

Efforts are being made to increase interest in tourist visits

In order to increase interest in tourist visits, the tourism office needs to improve facilities and services because one of the important aspects in increasing halal tourism visits is the provision of facilities and services that meet sharia standards. Thus, the tourism office must try to find effective ways to improve facilities and services in achieving a goal. The following are some of the efforts made to increase interest in visiting tourists, as follows:

First, improve existing accommodation. The tourism department has increased the number and quality of accommodation, especially star hotels that meet international standards. Apart from that, we are also collaborating with travel agents to open direct flight routes from the Middle East to tourist destinations. Collaboration between the government and the tourism industry, as well as implementing policies that support investment in this sector, is also very important to accelerate the development of adequate tourism infrastructure and facilities.

Second, improve facilities and infrastructure. Efforts to increase tourist comfort can be made by installing water storage tanks in tourist areas to ensure water availability even if supply disruptions occur. Apart from that, adding closer parking locations and providing shuttle transportation services

from parking areas to main tourist locations are also strategic steps to overcome accessibility problems, so that tourists can enjoy their trips more comfortably and easily.

Third, carry out outreach related to understanding increasing halal tourism visits. An open approach in socializing the concept of halal tourism to the public and important figures is a strategic step to increase understanding of its benefits. And providing outreach to tourism actors is carried out to explain that halal tourism does not only focus on food and drinks, but also includes various other aspects, such as quality service, adequate facilities, and the comfort provided to Muslim tourists.

This effort not only aims to strengthen economic contribution, but also to show how halal tourism can introduce local culture to international tourists without eliminating existing traditional values. With collaboration and broader understanding, the development of halal tourism can be carried out in a more inclusive and sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of halal tourism in West Sumatra has gone quite well in increasing interest in tourist visits, supported by the traditional principles of *basandi syarak* and *syarak basandi kitabullah* which integrate local traditions with sharia. Effective collaboration between government organizations, the private sector and non-government organizations, as well as clear regulations, help strengthen synergy in this sector. Despite facing challenges related to accommodation and facilities, the lack of availability of facilities and service permit procedures is less than optimal. Strategic steps and increasing socialization are the keys to the success and sustainability of halal tourism in West Sumatra

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