Relationship between Halal Tourism and Gender: Empirical Studies in Pekalongan, Central Java

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Abstract:  
The paper aims to analyze the practice of gender position in halal tourism in the Pekalongan area. This study is categorized as field research with a qualitative approach. The study's primary data were collected through observations of tourist destinations/objects, including culinary tourism, historical-cultural tourism, religious tourism, and artificial/special interest tourism. In addition, interviews were also conducted with tourist attraction managers and tourists visiting destinations/tourist taxis in the region. Secondary data is collected through the study of books, journal articles, research reports, and others. The data collected were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of tourism in Pekalongan City has involved the participation of women in management. On the other hand, the manager also provides special tourist facilities for women, such as lactation rooms, toilet separation, and others. However, the quality and quantity need to be added and improved. In general, the implementation of tourism in Pekalongan has tried to fulfill gender equality in employment and the provision of facilities. Tourism that upholds gender equality follows the concept of halal tourism.

Keywords: Halal Tourism, Gender, Gender Equality, Women's Participation, Muslim Tourists.
INTRODUCTION

The Halal tourism is a tourism model that has been and is being developed in various countries in the world, such as Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, South Korea (Marlinda, 2021), Turkey, and Taiwan (Wardhani, Hara, & Dugus, 2021), and other countries (Henderson, 2016; Saputro et al., 2019). This model was developed because it has excellent economic prospects; as the halal lifestyle increases, the number of Muslim tourists grows (Thomson & Standard, 2018). As a country with a majority Muslim population, Indonesia has also developed, marked by the acquisition of international awards (Crescent Rating, 2020). Some regions in Indonesia also have prospects and feasibility of becoming halal tourism destinations, such as Cirebon (Crescent Rating, 2019; Jaelani, 2017), Solo (Saeroji, Wijaya, & Wardani, 2018), and Padang City (Surya, 2018).

In tourism development, researchers have agreed that gender cannot be ignored. Tourism is closely related to gender equality or even inequality (Cole, 2018; Phuc, 2022; Sinclair, 1997; Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995). Alarcón & Cole (2019) believe that tourism that ignores gender equality is like ignoring the concept of sustainable development (SDGs). The results of research in East and Southeast Asian countries, West and Central Asian countries, and South Asian countries, show that tourism has a significant positive impact on gender equality (Zhang & Zhang, 2020).

Two crucial things in tourism related to women and gender are the involvement of women in the implementation of tourism and the hospitality of tourist destinations to women. In work in the tourism industry, women are often placed in certain positions, such as administration, food, and beverage, which are considered to be compatible with domestic work. At the same time, jobs for men are more varied and dominating, such as decision-makers, skilled workers, technical competence, and being ability to become leaders. However, in reality, the administrative work considered to be in harmony is also carried out by more agile men. The subordinate role of women in the public sector is due to biological constraints, such as menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding (Hanim, 2020). Practically, this creates a negative stereotype that women are secondary workers, unskilled, physically weak, do not have technical competence, and are
unable to carry out their duties as leaders. More than that, women are often considered harmful, such as being less intelligent and emotional; women are often considered wasteful, relaxed, timid, chatty, not assertive, like to gossip, and others. This is contrary to the concept of gender equality in employment (Fakih, 1996). In Bali, women appear as entrepreneurs in tourism, not just workers, like most studies (Yanthy, 2016). In Spain, women are represented but not optimally (Freund & Hernandez-maskivker, 2021). Different conditions are shown in rural-based tourism, where the development does not pay attention to gender (Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995). Gender is defined as a relationship pattern or relationship between men and women based on socio-cultural characteristics, mentality, values and behavior, and other non-biological factors that develop in a society and culture (Cole, 2018).

For the safety and comfort of female tourists, there are destinations/cities in the world that are friendly to women, including Madrid and Barcelona-Spain, Singapore, Dublin-Ireland, Vienna-Austria, and Zurich-Switzerland (travel wego.com, 2019). The world's most dangerous cities for women are Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, Porto Alegre-Brazil, Kyzyl-Russia, and Ecatepec-Mexico (travel wego.com, 2019). Eight indicators measure the "Danger Index for Women," including 1) Level of safety when walking alone at night; 2). The homicide rate of women; 3). Sexual violence outside of a partner; 4). Sexual violence with a partner; 5). Legal discrimination against women; 6). Global gender gap; 7). Gender inequality index; 8). Violence against women's attitudes (Gallup, 2022). In Indonesia, several tourist destinations are considered to have friendly conditions for women, such as the cities of Yogyakarta, Bukittinggi, Lombok, Malang, and Bangka (Tiarasari, 2022).

Studies on halal tourism related to gender issues are still limited. Among the few studies is the work of Abbasian (2021) which states that halal tourism upholds gender equality. Gender policies have also been carried out at sharia hotels in Yogyakarta as part of halal tourism (Priyatmoko, 2020). This paper tries to contribute to these limitations by looking at the practice in the Pekalongan area, where the area is known as a religious community where Muslims are the majority population. Religious indicators can be seen in the number of Muslims who are the majority, busy and routine religious activities, the presence of many
places of worship such as mosques and prayer rooms, as well as other aspects related to Islamic religion (Haryati, Gunaryo, & Thohir, 2020; Makshum, 2017). As a tourist attraction, the Pekalongan Batik Museum was visited by 7,011 tourists, with 4,808 general tourists and 2,202 students (Kominfo Team, 2022). In 2018, hotels in Pekalongan City were visited by 507 male and 190 female guests (Central Java Province Youth and Sports Tourism and Youth Office, 2019). The implementation of tourism in Pekalongan City involves 1,938 workers (Central Java Culture and Tourism Office, 2017).

**METHOD**

His research was done in the Pekalongan area, known as a religious (Islamic) local community, which is categorized as field research. The primary data of the study were collected through observation and in-depth interviews. Researchers carried out observations at tourist destinations/objects spread across the city area by referring to the types of tourism available (see table 1). Among the aspects seen is the comparison of the number of workers between men and women, the separation of facilities for male and female tourists, and the availability of special facilities for female tourists (lactation rooms).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Destinations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Tourism</td>
<td>Makam Habib Ahmad al-Athas Sapuro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical-Cultural Tourism</td>
<td>Museum Batik Pekalongan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping tourism</td>
<td>Pasar Grosir Batik Setono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature-Made Tourism</td>
<td>Wisata Air New Pasir Kencana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest Tourism</td>
<td>Kampung Batik Pesindon</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Types and Attractions*

Research sources are determined according to research needs with the purposive sampling method because they are categorized as case studies (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004, p. 205). Interviews were conducted with one government representative (Tourism Office), five tourism managers/workers, and ten tourists/visitors. Tourists/visitors who are interviewed are tourists visiting the destination/tourist object.
Secondary data is obtained through the study of research themes published in journal articles, books, research reports, websites, and other sources that support the theme. The collected data were analyzed descriptively qualitatively by focusing on the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Islam, Gender and Halal Tourism

Even though they grew up in different countries, Islam and gender have no meaningful tension. The concept of gender developed in western and Islamic countries from the Middle East region. Islam upholds the dignity of women in various aspects of life, such as political, economic, and social. According to M. Quraish Shihab (2004: 269), Islamic teachings give great attention and respect to women. So, both are in a good correlation in various aspects of human life and Islamic societies (Esposito, 2017; Pritchard, Morgan, & Atejevic, 2007; Robinso, 2006; Schröter, 2013).

Islam, as a teaching, not only contains about worship but also relates to socio-economic. In the context of this *muamalah*, it consists of many aspects of life, such as political, economic, criminal, social, cultural, and others. In modern economic development, the term halal industry is known, where the halal label has become an industrial interest. This industry is not only cultivated by Islamic countries but also non-Islamic countries, where non-Islamic countries are also producers of halal products, such as Australia as supplier of halal meat (Kabir, 2015).

As explained earlier that tourism has a relationship with gender, then halal tourism is also related to it. Thus, gender has a special place in this tourism concept. For example, female tourists receive special services with privacy according to the needs of Muslim tourists. Female-only swimming pools, female-only toilets, special services from sharia hotel staff, SPA services according to gender, and others (Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2011; Oktadiana, Pearce, & Chon, 2016). So, halal tourism pays special attention to Muslim tourists as a mandate from Islamic teachings.

B. Empirical Experience on Gender Policy in The Regions

Pekalongan City is an area in Central Java Province on the northern
coastline (Pantura) with administrative status as a city. Several writers, such as Haryati (2017), Ismanto (2022), and Susminingsih (2017), have described Pekalongan City as an area known as a religious area. Among the things that can be presented are that the majority of the population is Muslim, there are quite a several Islamic-based educational institutions, lively religious activities, and religious celebrations, such as the ulema haul and religious festivals, which are also busy. So, it is no exaggeration if this area is called the city of students. Sapuro’s tomb and religious recitation activities every Friday Kliwon at the religious leader Habib Luthfi become an attraction for tourists from within and outside the region.

Pekalongan City has fairly great attention to tourism because this sector contributes to Regional Original Income (PAD). Development documents have stated tourism policies (RPJPD, RPJPMD, and RIPPARDA). Owned tourist destinations have been visited by tourists, both men, and women. The number of female tourists is quite significant. Several tourist destinations and attractions are also owned, such as natural tourism in the form of beaches, historical-cultural tourism in the form of museums, special interest tours in the form of batik making and batik canting in batik villages, batik learning tours in and its derivatives such as at the Setono wholesale market, religious tourism in the form of tombs. Sapuro and religious activities (Dinporapar Pekalongan Regency, 2020; Handayani & Regina, 2019; Ismanto, 2022). Pekalongan City also has unique culinary tourism, food, and drinks, such as Megono Rice, Garang Asem, Kebuli Rice, Pindang Tetel, Tahlil Coffee, and other types and forms of tourism products (Pekalongan City Promotion Agency, 2020). So, Pekalongan City has interesting tourist objects and attractions, so it is visited by domestic and foreign tourists (Handayani & Regina, 2019).

Pekalongan City Government is committed to tourism development. Currently, a significant water attraction has been built to the north of the city and has been visited by many tourists. On the other hand, attention to tourism objects is also given. The results of previous studies show that Pekalongan City tourism has met the criteria for halal tourism from various theories and approaches (Ismanto, 2022; Ismanto & Madusari, 2020; Nurwilda, 2020). Halal tourism components, such as attractions,
access, amenities, and others, have met the requirements for organizing halal tourism, such as GMTI, IMTI, and DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 108/X/2016 regarding the implementation of sharia-based tourism (Nurwilda, 2020). So, the city of Pekalongan, known to be religious, already has tourism that follows Islamic teachings.

The Pekalongan City Government is committed to realizing gender equality by obtaining the Parahita Ekapraya (APE) Award for the Main Category from the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) in 2020 (Suara Merdeka, 2021). The measure of the success of gender empowerment can be seen in three aspects, namely, the representation of women in parliament, women as professionals, and the contribution of women's income to total regional income. One form of empowerment, the Pekalongan City Government, empowers women affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in their area to produce a thousand masks (Suara Merdeka, 2021). Gender mainstreaming efforts are also carried out in various agencies, such as the Pekalongan City KPKNL and IAIN Pekalongan.

C. Implementation of Gender Equality for Tourists in Regional Halal Tourism

Halal tourism is a tourism concept in general that carries out its implementation by Islamic teachings (El-Gohary, 2016; Timothy, Mohsin, & Ryan, 2019; Vargas-sánchez & Moral-moral, 2018). These Islamic teachings are applied to the components of halal tourism, such as attractions, access, amenities, communication, environment, supporting facilities, and others (Ismanto, 2022). The following are some examples of how gender equality is highlighted in the implementation of halal tourism. They include the separation of tourism services for male and female tourists, equality in work participation for tourists, and the equality of women's involvement by negating differences in religion and belief. The concept of halal tourism is open to all parties, both Muslims and non-Muslims. They can be involved, both as tourism business actors and as tourists. Tourists can access halal tourism because this concept is not exclusive but inclusive (Rahmah Lil 'Alamin). On the other hand, non-Muslims can also be involved as business actors, provided they can provide services that follow sharia so that Muslim tourists can consume
Halal tourism pays tribute to the position of women in service. He performs separation in providing tourist facilities for women, such as swimming pools, separation of toilet facilities for men and women, male staff serving male hotel guests, and female hotel staff serving female guests. In some resorts, there is a separation between swimming pools, beaches, and tourist activities between men and women (Battour, Hakimian, Ismail, & Bogan, 2018). However, in other areas, this gender segregation can be at the request of tourists (Rahman, Moghavvemi, Thirumoorthi, & Rahman, 2020). So, halal tourism upholds the dignity of women as tourists in terms of facility services.

The competence and capabilities of people are considered in halal tourism work. Halal tourism does not limit gender; all parties can work according to their respective expertise. What needs to be considered is that women’s dignity is placed in a humane position. In Indonesia, employment has been regulated by Law no. 13 of the 2003 Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia so that labor arrangements in the halal tourism sector can follow these rules. On the other hand, Islamic law and Islamic ethics can contribute to its regulation.

The results of the observations of researchers in destinations and tourist attractions in the Pekalongan City area, the implementation of tourism in the area is open to the public, not limited to only Muslims. Tourism exclusivity is formed because it is related to the religious tourism in the form of religious rituals. Government-run tourism objects are general, such as batik museums, beaches, mangrove parks, culinary tours, and other tourist objects. Tourism is in the form of open festival events, such as Syawalalan celebrations with giant lopis, long amulet parades, archipelago batik week, balloon festivals, and others. So, the implementation of tourism in the city of Pekalongan for the general public is not limited to certain ethnic groups, religions, and ethnicities.

In every tourist attraction, there have also been women’s participation in work. The role of women in tourism work is adjusted to their abilities and competencies. This means that women’s rights and opportunities for employment in tourism are not ignored. For example, workers in shopping tourism at the wholesale center of Setono are dominated by women, and women also dominate culinary workers in
various restaurants and restaurants. In several other tourist attractions, women have also been involved. So, women's participation in tourism in Pekalongan City has been realized in terms of existence.

Men's and women's separate tourist amenities are now available. For instance, restrooms, breastfeeding rooms, and places of worship should be kept separate; nonetheless, the quantity and quality need to be increased and enhanced. If there are many visitors, smoking is prohibited, and for pregnant women and young people, for instance, a different approach for purchasing tickets is necessary. From this description, it may be inferred that there is a minimum amount of separation between facilities for male and female tourists. If you refer to the grading in the GMTI model (CrescentRating, 2020), then its existence is at the level of need to have (realized), not yet at the level of good to have (well realized), let alone nice to have (very well realized).

D. Discussion

Halal tourism, as a new concept in the tourism industry, was formed to meet Muslim tourists' needs. Among the needs of Muslim tourists are places of worship, halal food and drinks, and the maintenance of Islamic morality. Among the manifestations of Islamic morality is maintaining the privacy of Muslim tourists, especially Muslim women, such as separate services for places of worship, toilets, swimming pools, SPA services, hotel staff services, and others. In theory and practice, halal tourism does not discriminate in its implementation. Halal tourism highly upholds the dignity of female Muslim tourists. Thus, this study further confirms previous research that upholds the dignity of women in the realm of gender and tourism (Sinclair, 1997; Swain, 1995; Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995). In particular, this study corroborates the research of Abbasian (2021), which states the importance of gender in halal tourism.

CONCLUSION

Halal tourism upholds conceptual gender equality. Respect for women’s rights manifests in various components, such as attractions, access, and amenities. Gender equality in the implementation of halal tourism in areas known to be religious has been realized. Islam, as a source of the concept of halal tourism, has taught women’s rights in the
public sphere. However, the quality and quantity need to be added and improved. The form of equality is in the opportunity and work participation as well as the realization of facilities for female tourists to become female-friendly tourism. For this reason, local governments and business actors should fulfill them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Semarang.


