

How are the characteristics of Indonesian Muslim Tourists on Muslim Friendly Services in non-Muslim destination

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Abstract: *The increasing number of Muslim world tourists creates a big opportunity for the halal tourism market. With the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has the potential to develop halal tourism services. Meanwhile, Muslim tourists more often visit non-Muslim-majority countries that do not understand the need for halal tourism. This research was conducted with the aim of identifying the dominant characteristics of Indonesian Muslim tourists when visiting non-Muslim majority countries. The research design is descriptive cross sectional and uses a purposive sampling technique. 268 samples were obtained from online questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive mapping. There are two findings in this study, the characteristics of preparation before travelling to non-Muslim countries and when they travel to non-Muslim countries. Managerial implications can be used as the basis for marketing strategies by tourism organizations in non-Muslim countries and tourism service providers to offer based on Muslim needs.*

Keywords: *Halal Tourism Attributes, Muslim Tourists, Halal Tourism, Tourism Marketing*

INTRODUCTION

The development of transportation and technology in the era of globalization has made access between countries easier to reach for both business and leisure needs. Tourists can use this sophisticated transportation to visit the desired place. Transport development is in line with the large number of world tourists, which reached 1.34 billion in 2017. Muslim tourists are one of the world's tourist groups multiplying in visits between countries. The increasing Muslim population affects the number of Muslim tourists worldwide. The Muslim population is expected to increase to 31.1 per cent, with a total of 3 billion in 2060 (Pew Research center, 2017). According to Global Muslim Tourism Index (GMTI), the number of Muslim tourists worldwide is estimated to reach 230 million by 2028 (Mastercard & Crescent rating, 2022). The increase in Muslim tourists has made the halal tourism market grow fast, estimated to reach USD 225 billion in 2028.

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population, around 209 million people or 87.2 per cent of the total population. The second

largest Muslim population country is India, with 176 million people, although it only covers 14.4 per cent of the total population (Desilver & Masci, 2017). With the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has the potential to develop halal tourism services.

Halal tourism offers tour packages specifically designed to meet the considerations and needs of Muslims. The components of halal tourism are halal food, halal transportation, halal hotels, halal logistics, Islamic finance, Islamic travel packages and halal spas (Razalli et al., 2012). A Muslim is not limited to travelling on Hajj or Umrah, a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Islam also supports travelling to fulfil other purposes such as recreation, socialization, increasing welfare, seeking knowledge, and appreciating God's creation (Oktadiana et al., 2016). The destination countries most frequently demanded by Muslim tourists are non-Muslim majority countries. The most commonly visited destinations for Muslim tourists in Asia are China, South Korea, Japan and Thailand. Meanwhile, the destination country most

frequently visited by Indonesians is Singapore. Based on data from the Singapore Tourism Bureau in 2012, the top tourist destinations for Indonesians are Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand (Singapore Tourism Board, 2014). Therefore, Indonesian Muslim tourists visit non-Muslim majority countries more often.

As interest in halal tourism increases and the number of Muslim tourists visiting non-Muslim countries, the tourism bureaus of non-Muslim countries and hotels should develop various tourism products and services that meet the requirements of Muslim tourists through religious teachings (Battour & Ismail, 2014). However, tourism providers sometimes do not understand the halal aspect and what is halal determined by Muslim teachings. Furthermore, there are limitations to halal-friendly tourism services because of the limited knowledge of tourism service providers in non-Muslim-majority countries. The needs of Muslim tourists when travelling begin with the social environment, prayer facilities, food and beverages, halal tourism information services and so on. However, each consumer has a different perception and religiosity.

The competitiveness of the halal tourism market is an opportunity for popular destination countries to innovate with new products that uphold Muslim needs. Non-Muslim countries must improve their services to become the top of mind for Muslim tourists. Product innovation and halal tourism services need to be developed to compete with competitors and provide a positive, unique experience for Muslim tourists. Non-Muslim countries need a solid and distinct image and reputation as well as products or services (Han et al., 2019). Based on the 2018 GMTI, the index value of non-Muslim countries has decreased since 2017. Several countries have experienced a drastic decline in the top 20 non-Muslim countries. This decline will occur if non-Muslim countries avoid improving halal tourism services. In addition, non-Muslim countries are not yet in the top 10 in providing halal-friendly services (Mastercard & Crescent rating, 2022). The ranking of the halal tourism index is only dominated by Muslim countries, which certainly offer halal needs.

This research aims to identify the

characteristics of Muslim tourists when visiting non-Muslim majority countries. Hopefully, this research will be useful for tourism providers to develop a marketing strategy and halal tourism services. Indonesia is the correct country to do this research because it has the world's largest Muslim population.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Halal Tourism

The word Halal (حلال) comes from Arabic, which means: permissible, acceptable, or permissible (El-Gohary, 2016). The meaning of the word Halal is not only related to food or food products but covers all aspects of the life of a Muslim (male or female). In this case, the concept of Halal is necessary for every Muslim to have permissible and acceptable products from a religious point of view. Halbase (2015) defines halal tourism as: "offering tour packages specifically designed to meet the considerations and needs of Muslims (El-Gohary, 2016). Thus, the components of halal tourism are halal food, halal transportation, halal hotels, halal logistics, Islamic finance, Islamic travel packages and halal spas (Razalli et al., 2012).

An empirical study by Olya & Al-ansi (2018) articulated the concepts of halal and haram in the context of tourism. It showed that Muslim tourists perceive different types of risks regarding the consumption of halal products and services related to their post-purchase behaviour (Hosseini & Al-ansi, 2018). Characteristics of Muslim tourists have unique needs and behaviors due to implementing Islamic Values in daily activities. Therefore, it is necessary to develop halal-friendly tourist attributes while traveling (Febtian et al., 2021). The hospitality industry encompasses a wide variety of areas, such as accommodation, food, airports, transportation and attractions creating challenges and difficulties for non-Muslim destination managers and policymakers seeking to understand how to initiate effective targeting and progress in this market.

Non-Muslim Country

The non-Muslim countries referred to in this study are countries with a majority non-Muslim population. The criterion for a non-

majority Muslim country is that the Muslim population is less than 50 percent of the country's total population. With a large Muslim population in a country, tourism providers will better understand halal products and services. For example, countries with a Muslim majority are Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Brunei Darussalam, Turkey, and others. Meanwhile, non-majority Muslim countries, for example, the United States, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China, and others.

Destination Image

Destination image can be defined as an individual's overall perception or total impression of a place. The tourism and marketing literature shows that destination image influences not only the destination selection process and the subjective perceptions of tourists but also the evaluation of subsequent trips and their future intentions (Jalilvand et al., 2012). Destination image can be divided into two based on consumer attitudes: affective destination image and overall destination image.

Affectiveness is part of the individual decision-making process that helps to create components of customer satisfaction and loyalty that lead to pleasant or positive feelings about products and services (Richard L. Oliver, 2014). In other words, being affective consists of a series of emotions that shape and achieve positive acceptance of a particular item under hedonic consumption. Rasoolimanesh et al., 2022 states that tourists' motivation to travel is influenced by affective components such as excitement, enthusiasm, or aversion which determine the perception of the destination (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2022).

An overall destination image is a form of perceptual/ cognitive and affective evaluation of a place. Perceptual or cognitive evaluation refers to beliefs and knowledge about an object, while affective refers to feelings (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Gartner & Hunt (1987) stated that people's perceptions of various attributes in a destination would interact to form a composite or overall image (Gartner & Hunt, 2016) e.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research is conclusive-descriptive research that determines, evaluates, and chooses the best course of action so that the results can help decision-makers (Malhotra, 2019). The nature of this research is descriptive research because it describes the characteristics of Indonesian Muslim tourists when visiting non-Muslim countries. The type of data collection used in this study was multiple cross-sectional. There were two or more sample respondents, and information from each sample was obtained only once.

The required data in this study are the behavioral characteristics and perceptions of Indonesian Muslim tourists towards halal tourism services in non-majority Muslim destinations. The primary data obtained through a questionnaire. The research questionnaire was filled out by the respondents or self-administered.

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data for this research were obtained from a survey using an online questionnaire via Google form to get more and wider range of respondents. Distributing questionnaires online is used to reach respondents as the population is the Muslim community in Indonesia. Respondents filled out the questionnaire independently or called a self-administered questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed to Indonesian Muslim communities who had visited non-Muslim countries aged 18-69 years in the last 6 months with a minimum sample of 238. These criteria were determined to analyze the behavior and perceptions of Indonesian Muslim tourists when traveling to non-Muslim countries for halal tourism services. The non-Muslim countries referred to are countries with a Muslim population of less than 50% of the total population, such as Singapore (14.3%), South Korea (<1%), Japan (<1%), Thailand (4.3%), United States (0.9%), United Kingdom (4.4%) etc. The sampling technique used is online sampling with panel recruited online sampling category.

Descriptive analysis in this study is used to describe demographics, profiles and expenses when traveling to see the dominant characteristics of Indonesian Muslim tourists. The frequency distribution was used to get a count of the number of respondents with different values of one variable and to express the amount in percentage form (Malhotra, 2019). The frequency distribution consists of two categories. The first is a measure of location, namely statistics that describe the location of a data set that describes the sample population. The second category measures of variability is a type of statistic that shows the distribution of data. The frequency distribution used in this study is the mean, mode, sum, standard error, standard deviation, variance, kurtosis and skewness.

Mapping analysis of the characteristics of Indonesian Muslim tourists separates the types of behavior based on time, namely before traveling and when traveling to non-Muslim countries. This type of behavior was obtained from the 2 highest answers to the demographic and usage questionnaire questions of the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

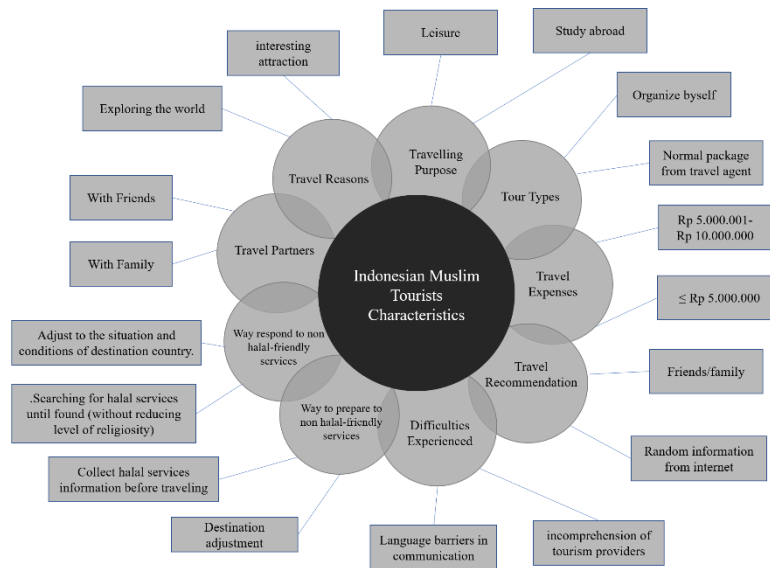
Data collection in this study was carried out by distributing online questionnaires. 295 respondents did not pass the screening as they had not traveled abroad in the last six months. Therefore, this affects the difference in the number of respondents. From 563 respondents there are 268 respondents passed the screening and completed the questionnaire. The number of respondents was considered to have met the requirement sample that had been planned previously, namely 238 respondents.

The most of respondents had experience visiting Singapore (34.3%). Demographic analysis was conducted to determine the profile of the respondents who obtained from the questionnaire. The dominant demographics of respondents are aged 18-28 years (85.4%), domiciled in Surabaya (39.6%), Female (64.6%), Student/student (61.2%), Bachelor's degree (43.7%), single (85.4%), income per month IDR 1,500,001 - IDR 3,500,000 (29.1%), expenses per month IDR 1,500,001 - IDR 3,500,000 (36.6%).

The majority of Indonesian Muslim tourists are the millennial generation who are still

unmarried and have student status. Tourism service providers can intensify promotions and travel packages on social media due to the high use of social media by millennials. Marketing using social media has the benefits such as targeted, personalize, interactive, quick, on-time, cost-effective, and the ability to engage and social share (Pranindya et al., 2019). In addition, the travel packages offered need to be targeted at an affordable price for students. Tourism service providers can also make promotions to attract more Indonesian Muslim women tourist's visitor, such as providing budget hotels that separate men and women. Non-Muslim country tourism organizations can also provide cultural festival events that provide playgrounds or attractions during the student holiday season, namely June-August, to increase interest in visiting students.

Mapping analysis of consumer characteristics in this study was conducted to determine the type of behavior of Indonesian Muslim tourists when visiting non-Muslim countries. The type of behavior of Indonesian Muslim tourists is divided into two stages, behavior before traveling and during travel (Figure 1). Consumer behavior is a form of study or study of a person, group and organization in terms of choosing, buying, using and evaluating products or services to meet their needs (Ar-Robi & Wibawa, 2019). In general, Indonesian Muslim tourists have an itinerary prepared before departure. There are travel destinations, types of tours, travel costs and tourism service references at the pre-trip stage. When traveling, there are tourist attractions (reasons for travel), travel partners, ways to overcome the unavailability of halal services, how to prepare for the unavailability of halal services and the difficulties experienced. In this analysis, the behavior that is mapped is the dominant behavior of Indonesian Muslim tourists. The results of this analysis can be used for tourism bureaus in non-Muslim countries to develop halal products and services. Developed halal products and services can increase the number of Muslim tourists and



Picture 1 Mapping analysis of Indonesian Muslim Tourist Characteristics

create the image of a halal-friendly destination.

The majority of Indonesian Muslim tourists have travel destinations for recreation and study. The type of tour that is often used by Indonesian Muslim tourists is arranging their own trips without travel agents and normal packages from travel agents. The Indonesian Muslim community generally pays Rp. 5,000,001-Rp. 10,000,000 to go abroad and some pay less than Rp. 5,000,000. They get information on tourism services or travel agents from friends or family or random information from the internet. Tourism bureau marketers can improve tourism service information from the official website, in order to make it easier for tourists to find reliable information.

The majority of Indonesian Muslim tourists travel because of interesting tourist attractions and have a desire to explore the world. Indonesian people prefer to travel with friends and some with family. When traveling to non-Muslim countries, there is a high possibility of unavailability of Halal services which are the basis needs of Muslim. The majority of Indonesian Muslim tourists overcome this by adjusting to the situations and conditions of the destination country or accepting what is. In addition, some Indonesian Muslim tourists overcome it by seeking halal services until they find it. For example, a Muslim needs a place to pray when he is in a tourist area, they prefer to find a proper place to pray regardless of the distance and time traveled, according to individual needs and level of religiosity. The majority of Indonesian Muslim tourists find it

difficult to communicate when looking for halal services due to language differences. Tourist information centers in non-Muslim countries should be able to provide information on halal tourism services in various languages. In addition, some other Muslim tourists have difficulty finding halal services due to the lack of understanding of local residents or service providers with halal services. This can also be increased again, especially for tourism service providers such as accommodation, food and beverage providers, as well as transportation.

Managerial Implications

Based on results study from tourism organizations, non-Muslim countries can provide Muslim corners at tourist attractions or several points in cities that are full of tourists. This Muslim corner is no large in size but a proper prayer room with ablution facilities and some food and drinks that are halal guaranteed.

Food and drinks are in the form of snacks that can be provided in the form of vending machines. The location of the Muslim corner doesn't need too much; it only needs to be at a city point that is busy with tourist attractions. There are several things that are not liked in non-Muslim countries for Muslim tourists, namely difficulty communicating because of language differences. Local residents sometimes don't really understand international languages, so this type of tour without a local tour guide becomes a barrier for Indonesian Muslim tourists. So it would be very good if the tourism bureaus of non-Muslim countries could

concentrate information on halal services and products in the form of brochures, tourist information centers, guidebooks, location maps and official websites from the government. Halal tourism information provided consists of places of worship, places for halal food and drinks in various languages, especially English. In addition, the tourism bureau of non-Muslim countries can also provide food preference cards at each restaurant in two languages, namely the local language and English. This food preference card can sort out what ingredients are in food and communicate with local service providers. Muslim tourists need information before traveling to non-Muslim countries, so tourism bureaus must add information to their websites. This finding is in line with Baber & Baber (2022), which state that tourism organizations must use social media, which can attract visitors based on the information provided and can increase travel intentions.

CONCLUSION

The main There are two stages, behavior before and during a trip to a non-Muslim country. There are travel destinations, types of tours, travel costs and tourism service references at the pre-trip stage. While traveling, there are tourist attractions (reasons for travel), travel partners, ways to overcome the unavailability of halal services, how to prepare for the unavailability of halal services and the difficulties experienced. The dominant behavior of Indonesian Muslim tourists is having a purpose for recreation by arranging their own trips, spending around IDR 5,000,001- IDR 10,000,000 and getting service references from friends and family. When traveling, Indonesian Muslim tourists predominantly travel because of interesting tourist attractions and enjoy traveling with friends, the difficulty experienced is the difference in language in non-Muslim countries. Indonesian Muslim tourists prefer to adjust to conditions in non-Muslim countries in overcoming the unavailability of halal services and tend to seek information on halal services before traveling.

Respondents in this study were limited to the characteristic of Indonesian Muslim tourists who had visited non-Muslim countries. This study had not differentiated the perceptions of respondents who visited different non-muslim

countries. Therefore, the results represent the behavioral characteristics of Indonesian Muslim tourists in general. This study assumes that all respondents have the same religiosity when traveling.

In addition, future research must validate the mapping analysis with expert judgment to avoid respondent bias. The focus group discussion and exploratory research can be used to identify the meaning of Muslim tourist behavior.

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