

Halal Tourism Communication in the Perception of Visitors in Takengon City

Nurbani, Sabilla Tri Ananda*

Communication Department, University of Sumatera Utara, 20155, Indonesia

*Corresponding author's email: sabilla.ananda@usu.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Tourism Communication
Halal Tourism
Takengon City

Halal tourism is a new way to promote one particular tourist destination, one of which is Takengon City in Aceh. By using qualitative research methods and data collection techniques through observation and interviews, this study aims to answer how halal tourism communicates in the perception of visitors in Takengon City. By interviewing 5 main informants who are visitors, and 3 triangulation informants who are traders at Takengon City tourism objects, it can be concluded that, for visitors to halal tourism communication carried out by the government, both verbal and nonverbal can increase comfort in traveling, because they can carry out worship according to Islamic law while enjoying the natural beauty of Takengon City. As for triangulation informants, halal tourism communication is considered to hinder Takengon City tourism from being known internationally.

1. Introduction

Based on data from the Ministry of Tourism (2019), Aceh is one of the sharia standardization of halal tourist destinations in Indonesia. Sharia tourism or better known as halal tourism itself is considered a new way to develop tourism while upholding Islamic culture which is the majority religion in Indonesia. The potential for halal tourism in Aceh Province is very promising with Islamic law that is firmly entrenched and supported by beautiful natural scenery. One of the cities in Aceh that has also implemented halal tourism is Takengon City.

As one of the regions in the province of Aceh, Takengon City has natural beauty that has great potential to become a popular tourist spot if managed optimally. Based on the results of pre-research observations, there are still many aspects that have not been managed properly related to tourism in Takengon City. For example, at Lake Laut Tawar, there are canoes to support the tourist experience which just lie unattended, even though the canoe awas provided by investors who are interested in developing tourism potential in Takengon City.

Another thing that characterizes tourist attractions in Takengon City is continuing to apply Islamic law or what is more popularly known as halal tourism. This can be seen by the warning signs prohibiting unmarried couples from being alone together, and the easy access to Islamic religious worship facilities in Takengon. Based on the background mentioned above, this research aims to answer how halal tourism communication in the perception of visitors in Takengon City.

2. Method

This study uses qualitative methods with data collection techniques through observation and interviews. Researchers interviewed 5 main informants who were visitors or tourists in Takengon City and used triangulated informants who were traders in Takengon City tourist destinations. This study will use the data analysis model proposed by Huberman and Miles. There are 3 stages of analysis carried out. First, data reduction, is a selection process, focusing attention through simplifying, abstracting and transforming data that emerges from written records in the field. Furthermore, the

presentation of data that is often used in qualitative research is narrative in nature. This is meant to understand what happened, plan further work based on what is understood. Finally, drawing conclusions and verification. For qualitative research, a conclusion is a finding that is presented in the form of a description and description of an object that was not clear but after research, the object changes to be clearer (Pujileksono, 2016).

3. Result and Discussion

Based on the results of observations carried out by researchers, halal tourism communication in Takengon City itself is carried out verbally and nonverbally; both through regional regulations and through banners posted in various tourist spots calling for a ban on unmarried couples being alone together. Based on previous research by Maudhunati (2021), the Takengon City government carries out promotions through communication on social media such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter and holds events as selling points to attract the attention of tourists while introducing sharia tourism to the general public.

Halal tourism communication nonverbally can be seen from the availability of facilities to carry out Islamic religious worship which are available in various favorite tourist spots, for example, the prayer room which is available at the Puncak Pantan Terong tourist attraction and various mosques which are available in various places in Takengon City.

Based on the results of interviews with key informants, similar answers were found regarding visitors' perceptions of halal tourism communications in Takengon City. All visitors who became the main informants were happy with the implementation of regulations following Islamic teachings, such as the prohibition against being alone with unmarried couples which were conveyed through banners at various tourist attractions in Takengon City. The community and visitors apply regulations related to halal tourism properly and agree with these regulations for the maintenance of strong Islamic values in Takengon City.

In contrast to the perceptions of the main informants, triangulation informants who are traders in Takengon City tourist destinations think that strict regulations regarding halal tourism in Takengon City will hinder Takengon City from becoming a tourist destination at the international level. Because, according to them, regulations regarding halal tourism will make foreign tourists uncomfortable, because it is not in accordance with their culture. There are concerns from traders that foreign tourists are less interested in the existence of these halal tourism regulations. Because, foreign tourists are used to traveling with the opposite gender who are not their halal partners, the habit of consuming alcoholic beverages and wearing revealing clothes. In fact, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency (2022), tourists who visit aceh province throughout 2022 are 42 people with the majority of tourist destinations Sabang.

Halal certificates are a benchmark for Muslim tourists that the food and drinks consumed have good guarantees regarding the ingredients, their management, and presentation. Traders at tourist attractions in Takengon City guarantee that the food they sell uses ingredients that have been certified halal by the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI).

Regarding foreign tourists and halal tourism, the main informants had a different perception. Halal tourist visitors or key informants agreed not to make a big deal out of the lack of interest from foreign tourists. They still agree with Islamic sharia regulations in the tourist attractions of Takengon City. Visitors also think that the communication made by the government regarding halal tourism is appropriate, for example in terms of making verbal prohibitions at tourist destination not to be alone with the opposite gender who is not a halal partner. Main informants agreed that Takengon City has good potential to be developed in the future using the sharia concept. Because this place has a considerable attraction, especially in its natural beauty, weather and facilities provided to support halal tourism.

The informant stated that one of the shortcomings of halal tourism communication in Takengon City is the difficulty of accessing information in new media, either through the official website or official social media from the government. The visitors who became informants hoped that the Takengon City government would pay more attention to access to information related to halal tourism in Takengon City to make it easier for visitors to find information about tourist attractions in Takengon City through new media. For unofficial accounts, researchers found an account with the username

@pantanterongagrowisatagayo on Instagram. However, the account with 1,679 followers was unknown to the main informant in this study.

4. Conclusion

Based on the data obtained in the field and the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that halal tourism communication in the perception of visitors in Takengon City is considered appropriate and makes local visitors feel comfortable because they can apply Islamic verses and carry out worship while traveling. Meanwhile, according to the triangulation informant, halal tourism communication carried out by the government could hinder Takengon City's tourist destinations from being better known internationally.

5. References

- Maudhunati, Sururi (2021). Analysis of Potentials and Strategies for Developing Sharia Tourism in Improving the Regional Economy (Study on Puncak Al-Kahfi Pantan Terong Aceh Tengah Tourism Object). Essay. Ar-Raniry State Islamic University Banda Aceh.
- Pujileksono, S. (2015). Qualitative Communication Research Methods. Intrans Publishing.
- Sugiyono. (2022). Qualitative Research Methods. PT. Alfabet.