Halal Tourism Policy and Image for Muslim Travelers in Indonesia and Malaysia

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Abstract. Malaysia has a fairly prestigious track record, often ranking first in the GMTI every year. Meanwhile, Indonesia is still considered slow in developing halal tourism. This study aims to determine how halal tourism policies and images are applied in Malaysia and Indonesia by using qualitative data analysis techniques. The results of this study explain that Malaysia's success in developing halal tourism cannot be separated from the very high support from the government and stakeholders by making policies on halal tourism, thus providing a positive image and being accepted by all parties. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the government has not officially issued a policy on halal tourism. The image of halal tourism in Indonesia is diverse, such as halal tourism getting a positive response and on the other hand there are those who are quite allergic to it. The Indonesian government is expected to be more serious in implementing halal tourism in Indonesia.

Keywords: Policy, Image, Halal Tourism, Muslim Traveler

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of halal tourism has recently become a new segmentation in the world of tourism so that it has begun to be developed in several countries. Halal tourism is a part of the tourism industry aimed at Muslim tourists by fulfilling the provisions and Islamic shari'a [1]. Based on the Mastercard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel (GMTI) 2022 report, as many as 160 million international Muslim tourists have traveled before the Covid-19 pandemic hit. After the Covid-19 pandemic gradually improves GMTI projects 140 million international Muslim tourists to travel in 2023 both in countries within the scope of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and non-OIC countries. In research conducted by GMTI in 2022, it is known that the countries with the best halal tourism in the world include Malaysia which occupies the first position, followed by Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia in the second position, and Uzbekistan in the ninth position among OIC member countries. Meanwhile, halal tourist destinations outside the most popular OIC member countries include Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and Thailand [2].

Malaysia is one of the member countries of the Organization of The Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and a member of ASEAN that has the best Muslim-friendly tourism in the world recognized by Dinar Standard (a company that tracks Muslim lifestyles in markets from the United States) and Crescentrating (a halal travel specialist company based in Singapore) since 2011. Malaysia has about 67.4 percent of the Muslim population of its 28.3 million citizens and Islam is the official religion of the country [3]. With this potential, Malaysia has

successfully developed halal tourism and recorded quite prestige achievements by being ranked first in the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) every year, and finally in 2022. A multicultural country with Islam being the official religion while other religions remain well welcomed by its inhabitants. Malaysia implements regulations that are in accordance with Islamic law and are accepted by muslim and non-muslim citizens. Malaysia has set high halal standards in restaurants and hotels since 2010, to satisfy Muslim Travelers by encouraging hotels and restaurants to obtain halal certificates.

Unlike Malaysia, based on the 2022 edition of The Muslim 500, Indonesia has 86.7 percent of the Muslim population which is equivalent to 231.06 million people [4] and is the country with the highest Muslim population in the world. The nickname as a country with the most Muslim population in the world, in fact, has not been able to be used optimally by Indonesia. Indonesia is considered to be still slow in developing halal tourism so that the halal tourism market is taken by neighboring countries with a minority Muslim population [5]. In the development of halal tourism, there are two influencing factors, namely policies or regulations [6][7] and the image or image of halal tourism. Regarding halal tourism image variables until now, no researcher has conducted research related to these variables, but the image variables related to halal tourism that have been studied are destination images or images of tourist attractions [8] [9]. This attracted researchers to conduct research related to the image of halal tourism.

This study aims to find out how the policy and image of halal tourism in its application in Malaysia and in Indonesia as a consideration for the government and stakeholders in advancing Indonesian halal tourism in the international arena.

2   Literature Review

2.1 Halal Tourism

Halal tourism is a part of the tourism industry aimed at Muslim tourists by fulfilling the provisions and Islamic shari'a (Battour & Ismail, 2015). According to El-Gohary, halal tourism is a tourism that offers tour packages that are in line with sharia law. El-Gohary said that halal tourism may be related to halal hotels, halal food, halal logistics, Islamic financial activities, and activities and products based on the concept of sharia [10]. In measuring Halal Tourism Islam there are four dimensions that can be used[11] namely:
1.   Islamic facilities refer to worship facilities
2.   Halalness refers to halal facilities such as halal food
3.   General Islamic morality which refers to general rules in Islam such as dress codes, prohibitions on prostitution and censorship related to sex scenes on TV
4.   Free alcohol drinks and gambling are related to the rules regarding alcoholic beverages and the prohibition of gambling.

2.2 Halal Tourism Policy

Carl J Federick [12] says policy is a series of actions or activities proposed by a person, group or government in a certain environment where there are difficulties and opportunities for the implementation of a proposed policy in order to achieve a certain goal. In relation to tourism, policies include related to tourism politics initiated by the government, for example

policies related to tourism marketing, guarantees on security, standardization of tourism products and services, certification of human resource competencies and so on [13].

2.3 Image of Halal Tourism

According to Rosady Ruslan, image is a set of beliefs, ideas and impressions of a person towards a certain object [14]. The image can be either a positive or a negative response. Image in a positive response such as support, participation, active role, and other positive actions. While the image in the negative response can be in the form of rejection, hostility, hatred or other negative forms. [15]

The image can be formed by several factors namely (Andreassen & Lindestad, 1997):

1. Advertising is all processes consisting of preparing, planning, implementing and supervising the delivery of advertisements.
2. Public relations is a deliberately and continuously planned effort to build and maintain feedback between the organization and its community.
3. Physical image is physical evidence that can provide a self-image for the company in the eyes of consumers.
4. Actual experience is an experience that is directly felt by customers in consuming goods and services.

3 Research Methods

This research is classified as a comparative qualitative research that focuses on research objects in the form of halal tourism policies and images in Indonesia and Malaysia. Comparative qualitative research is research conducted to find and find similarities and or differences in phenomena [16]. The research was conducted with qualitative data analysis techniques, namely data analysis derived from data netted from the data collection process, namely records and records, literature reviews, interviews, and participation [17]. Research data sources were obtained using the literature review method through books, reports, journals, and internet sources related to halal tourism policies and images for Muslim travelers in Indonesia and Malaysia.

4 Discussion

4.1 Halal Tourism Policy and Image in Malaysia

Malaysia is a country that is serious about developing halal tourism. This can be seen from the very high government support by making policies on halal tourism, with the participation of all stakeholders who have successfully communicated and increased awareness among stakeholders in the destination and ensured the infrastructure needed by Muslim Travelers. The Malaysian government is very serious in developing halal tourism, taking into account all the needs of Muslim Travelers in order to get satisfactory service, starting from the available policies and making concrete steps, such as the policy of setting high halal standards in restaurants and hotels, serving food menu dishes that are in accordance with the country of origin, making information brochures for tourists that are multi-language,

providing signboards that read Arabic, hen hiring Arabic-speaking workers or staff in hotels and travel complexes. Malaysia also made a rule not to allow tourists to carry out activities contrary to Islam in tourist areas.

Regarding halal tourism policy, Malaysia has 13 provisions related to halal products that encourage halal certification and 9 standards in the development of the halal industry. The 13 provisions include: 1) Trade Act of 2011 (Trade Law of 2011); 2) Food Act 1983; 3) Food Rules of 1985; 4) Regulation on Food Hygiene of 2009; 5) Animal Rules; 6) Animal Act of 1953; 7) Animal Regulation of 1962; 8) Animal Slaughtering, 9) Public Livestock Progress of 1983; 10) Law on Public Livestock Progress; 11) Law of Kastam 1967 (Prohibition of Import in 1998); 12) Law of the Local Kingdom 1976 (deeds 171) and 13) local government act (PBT), Act/Enactment of Islamic Administration; and Trade Stap Certificate 1976.

To control and control the development of halal tourism, Malaysia has 16 deputy committees related to halal standards and 24 engineering committees related to halal food and products where all committees are connected to Malaysian Halal Standards. Malaysian Standard is an institution under the Malaysian Standards Department in charge of recognizing standardization and as an accreditation body in Malaysia. Halal standards in Malaysia include MS 1500:2009 – Halal Food- Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage – General Guidelines (Amendment 2009), MS 1514:2009 – Good manufacturing practice (GMP) for food, MS 1480:2007 – Food safety according to hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) system (First Revision). While halal certification is managed by JAKIM, a public institution that is responsible to the Prime Minister, for in the state the issue of halal certification is managed by JAIN / MAIN (State Islamic Religious Office / State Islamic Religious Majlis).

Malaysia has a good tourism image in the eyes of Muslim travelers which is the fruit of government support through implemented policies. In forming an image, several factors that influence it are:

1. Advertising

   In terms of advertising, Malaysia has a focus on disseminating information to the public through displays and sponsorships with the aim of encouraging the purchase and acceptance of products, ideas or services. Advertising carried out by the Malaysian government related to halal tourism by taking the initiative to follow the "Feel-at-Home" and "Ain Arabia" campaigns to promote Middle Eastern culture and providing advertisements informing that restaurants and travel guides are provided in Arabic considering that it is a profitable niche market for Malaysia.

2. Public Relation

   Malaysia is known as a pioneer country related to halal standardization in products by positioning its country as an Islamic country that applies the concept of sharia related to tourism. Malaysia has a good public relationship between the government/stakeholders and its people which is characterized by a fairly high public awareness regarding halal standards. From around May to June 2014, two types of Cadbury chocolate products were found to be contaminated with pig DNA after an investigation by the Ministry of Health Malaysia and JAKIM which resulted in halal certification suspension for the two types of Cadbury chocolate products. However, it is good that the public relations between the government and Cadbury chocolate problems can be properly resolved and halal certification on the two products returned.

3. Physical Image

   Malaysia is known as the country in the fastest category to respond to the increase in the number of Muslim tourists by providing hospitality facilities and tourism in accordance

with Islamic law has a positive impact on the country's halal tourism image. It is known that Malaysia already has muslim friendly hotels and restaurants. Around 273 3-star to 5-star hotels then 53 1- and 2-star hotels have halal certificates. Hotels that are halal certified have provided facilities for prayers, ablutions to qibla directions. In addition to hotels that are halal certified and provide Muslim-friendly facilities, restaurants in Malaysia also sell a lot of halal products. In an effort to continue to increase halal tourism in the country, Malaysia is very serious about halal certification on food and beverage products circulating in their country's market.

4.2 Halal Tourism Policy and Image in Indonesia

Each country has its own policies related to halal tourism. Indonesia as the country with the most Muslim population in the world has a different halal tourism policy from Malaysia which is fully supported by the government. Until now, Indonesia does not have any laws and regulations made by the central government and even ministry regulations do not exist.

Previously, the government through the Ministry of Tourism had issued policies related to the halal tourism sector in the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy No.1 of 2016 concerning the implementation of tourism business certification, one of which regulates halal tourism certification, however, the article on this matter was revoked. The Ministry of Tourism, assisted by the National Sharia Council (DSN), has also issued Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy No.2 of 2014 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of Sharia Hotel Business which functions as a guideline and standardization in the implementation of sharia hotels. However, the regulation was repealed with the Minister of Tourism Regulation No.11 of 2016 due to mixed reactions from the industry. Currently, the guidelines for tourism activities in Indonesia refer to Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism. Meanwhile, the rules regarding supporting facilities for halal facilities in tourist destinations refer to Law No.30 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantees.

The image (image) of halal tourism in Indonesia is very diverse. Some parties view the development of halal tourism in Indonesia positively, while some view this negatively. This negative view of halal tourism in Indonesia can be seen from the rejection in several areas that will be carried out halal tourism development such as Bali, Tana Toraja, Labuan Bajo and Lake Toba. This rejection occurs as a result of the contestation of identity by the Muslim minority community who consider the discourse on the development of halal tourism as shariaization and the Islamophobic view that links the halal tourism discourse as a form of Islamization. In addition, the low public awareness about halal certification makes Indonesia's halal tourism image not so good. There are still many restaurants, culinary business actors, and hotels that have not taken care of halal certification for their business. A poor enough understanding of halal tourism and minimal public awareness of the importance of halal certification shows that in Indonesia, literacy related to halal tourism is still low. And this is a challenge or obstacle for Indonesia to develop the potential of domestic halal tourism or even surpass Malaysia in utilizing the potential of halal tourism.

5 Conclusion

Malaysia's success in developing halal tourism is inseparable from the government's full support by making policies related to halal tourism that involve all stakeholders who have managed to communicate well so as to increase the awareness of stakeholders to improve the infrastructure needed by Muslim Travelers. The Malaysian government has also made policies related to halal tourism such as setting high halal standards in restaurants and hotels, serving food menu dishes that are in accordance with the country of origin, creating information brochures for multi-language tourists, providing signage that reads Arabic, and then hiring Arabic-speaking workers or staff in hotels and travel complexes. Malaysia also made a rule not to allow tourists to carry out activities contrary to Islam in tourist areas. Policies made by the government and encouraged by high awareness of business people related to halal certification are able to build a positive image for Malaysian halal tourism.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the government is still considered not serious because until now the Indonesian government has not officially issued a policy on halal tourism, so halal tourism is still a controversy in tourist locations that are majority non-Muslim, even though the success of non-Muslim countries in the world that implement halal tourism, can be a concrete example of how halal tourism as one of the important assets for the country to bring in foreign exchange and be favored throughout the world. As a result, the image of halal tourism has become diverse in Indonesia, some accept it and some consider it a form of Islamization that violates Bhineka Tunggal Ika. For this reason, the Indonesian Government is expected to be more serious in developing halal tourism, by issuing regulations or policies related to halal tourism, so that the implementation of halal tourism in society in Indonesia is clearer and more orderly. The awareness of business people in Indonesia is also still low on halal certification.

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