



***Halal* Tourism Opportunities and Challenges in Toraja’s Muslim Minority**

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Abstract

This study describes *halal* tourism in Muslim minority areas. *Halal* tourism is an industry currently developing in developed countries, not only in Muslim-majority countries but also in Muslim-minority countries. According to the Global Muslim Travel Index in 2019, Indonesia rose to the top position as a tourist destination. The coronation of Indonesia as the world’s best halal tourism destination is a new wind of optimism for stakeholders in the halal tourism sector. The Ministry of Tourism continues to expand the scope of priority *halal*



tourist destinations. LPPOM MUI, as an institution that focuses on handling *halal* certification no less agile in conducting *halal* certification in tourist destinations. However, the development of *halal* tourism in several areas has been rejected by residents. This study examines the effect of *halal* tourism and facilities for Muslim tourists visiting Muslim minority areas. The research method used is qualitative by using observation, interviews, documentation, and in the final stage by concluding. This study found that *halal* tourism in North Toraja was initially rejected due to a lack of socialization in the community. It causes public misunderstanding regarding *halal* tourism policies. *Halal* tourism services still need to be improved, from the availability of *halal* food, worship facilities, water and bathrooms, and religious harmony. Therefore, the development of *halal* tourism needs to be a concern for the government.

[Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan wisata halal di daerah minoritas muslim. Wisata halal merupakan industri yang kini berkembang di negara-negara maju, tidak hanya di negara-negara mayoritas Muslim tetapi juga di negara-negara minoritas Muslim. Menurut Global Muslim Travel Index tahun 2019 Indonesia naik di posisi teratas sebagai negara tujuan wisata. Penobatan Indonesia sebagai destinasi wisata halal terbaik dunia menjadi angin baru optimisme bagi para pemangku kepentingan di bidang wisata halal. Kementerian Pariwisata terus memperluas cakupan destinasi wisata halal prioritas. Sedangkan LPPOM MUI sebagai lembaga yang fokus menangani sertifikasi halal, tak kalah gesit dalam melakukan sertifikasi halal di destinasi wisata. Namun pengembangan pariwisata halal di beberapa daerah mendapatkan penolakan oleh warga. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji terkait pengembangan pariwisata halal dan penyediaan fasilitas bagi wisatawan muslim yang berkunjung di daerah minoritas muslim. Metode penelitian yang digunakan yaitu kualitatif dengan menggunakan instrumen observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi dan pada tahap akhir dengan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa awalnya wisata halal di Toraja Utara mengalami penolakan karena kurangnya sosialisasi kepada masyarakat. Hal ini menyebabkan kesalahpahaman masyarakat terkait kebijakan pariwisata halal. Pelayanan wisata halal masih perlu ditingkatkan, baik dari ketersediaan makanan halal, sarana ibadah, air dan kamar mandi serta kerukunan umat beragama. Oleh karena itu, pengembangan pariwisata halal perlu menjadi perhatian bagi pemerintah.]

Keywords: *halal* tourism; Muslim minority; North Toraja



Introduction

Islam has adherents in many countries, cultures, and ethnic groups. Thus, it is essential to distinguish between issues of culture or ethnicity and religion. In particular, some may think that Islam is a faith of the Arabic peoples. It originated in the Middle East and specifically in the western coast of the Arabian Peninsula; however, today, the country with the largest Muslim population is Indonesia.¹ With the establishment of Indonesia as the largest Muslim country globally, this is an opportunity to develop *halal* tourism. With an estimated value of US\$150 bn in 2014, the *halal* tourism sector is expected to grow to US\$ 200 bn by 2020.²

Islamic teachings must guide the development and offering of all aspects of *halal* tourism. In other words, the adherence to the religious rules and regulations while traveling needs to be observed by Muslims and facilitated by the service providers.³ In 2019, the Global Muslim Travel Index announced ten tourist destinations where Indonesia was named the best and Malaysia. The top 3 countries are Indonesia and Malaysia in the first position with a score of 78, second Turkey with a score of 75, and third Saudi Arabia.⁴ The crowning of Indonesia as the world's best *halal* tourist destination is a new wind of optimism for stakeholders in *halal* tourism. Ministry Tourism continues to expand the scope of priority *halal* tourist destinations. While LPPOM MUI, an institution that focuses on handling *halal* certification, is no less agile in

¹ Noel Scott and Jafar Jafari, ed., *Tourism in the Muslim World: Bridging Tourism Theory and Practice* (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2010), 1-13, [https://doi.org/10.1108/S2042-1443\(2010\)0000002004](https://doi.org/10.1108/S2042-1443(2010)0000002004).

² Context Consulting, "Halal Travellers 2016," *Amadeus.com: ATTO Report*, July 1, 2016, <https://amadeus.com/documents/en/retail-travel-agencies/research-report/halal-travel-report-2016.pdf>.

³ Mohd Fuaad Said et al., "Exploring Halal Tourism in Muslim-Minority Countries: Muslim Travellers' Needs and Concerns," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* vol. ahead-of-print no. ahead-of-print (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-07-2020-0202>.

⁴ Mastercard-Crescent Rating, "Indonesia Muslim Travel Index (IMTI) 2019," April 8, 2019, <https://lifestyle.okezone.com/read/2019/04/08/406/2040696/kalahkan-aceh-lombok-jadi-destinasi-wisata-halal-nomor-satu-di-indonesia>.



carrying out *halal* certification in tourist destinations.⁵

Halal tourism is considered a subcategory of religious tourism. The word *halal* (حلال) comes originally from the Arabic language, meaning: allowable, acceptable, permitted, or permissible. This word is the leading source for the concept of *halal*, which is not only related to food or food products (as most people will expect or think), but it goes beyond food to cover all the aspects of a Muslim person's life (male or female). Within this regard, the concept of *halal* is built around the need for any Muslim to have products that are allowable, acceptable, permitted, and permissible from a religious point of view. As such, the concept of *halal* includes any Islamic *shari'ah*-compliant product(s) which start with food and beverages and move from it to cover banking and finance, tourism, cosmetics, jobs, travel, and transport services.⁶

According to experts, the definition of *halal* tourism is as follows: *halal* tourism refers to the provision of tourism products and services that meet the needs of Muslim tourists to facilitate worship and food needs according to Islamic teachings.⁷ *Halal* tourism is a subtype of religious tourism by submissive Muslims on Sharia law.⁸ *Halal* tourism involves tourism activities carried out by Muslims for "recreational, leisure and social purposes".⁹

North Toraja is one of the regencies in South Sulawesi Province. North Toraja Regency has a beautiful natural panorama. In addition,

⁵ LPPOM MUI, "Menuju Indonesia Sebagai Destinasi Wisata Halal Dunia," www.halalmui.org, September 21, 2019, <https://www.halalmui.org/mui14/main/detail/menuju-indonesia-sebagai-destinasi-wisata-halal-dunia>.

⁶ Hatem El-Gohary, "Halal Tourism, Is It Really Halal?," *Tourism Management Perspectives* 19, (2016): 124–30, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2015.12.013>.

⁷ Asad Mohsin, Noriah Ramli, and Bader Abdulaziz Alkhulayfi, "Halal Tourism: Emerging Opportunities," *Tourism Management Perspectives* 19, (2016): 137–43, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2015.12.010>.

⁸ Maedeh Bon and Mazhar Hussain, "Halal Food and Tourism: Prospects and Challenges," *Bridging Tourism Theory and Practice* 2, (2010): 47–59, [https://doi.org/10.1108/S2042-1443\(2010\)0000002007](https://doi.org/10.1108/S2042-1443(2010)0000002007).

⁹ Chris Ryan and Opal Higgins, "Experiencing Cultural Tourism: Visitors at the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, New Zealand," *Journal of Travel Research* 44, no. 3 (2006): 308–17, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287505279002>.



North Toraja is also known for its various natural tourist destinations. The majority of the population of Toraja is Christian; some are Muslim and believe in animism, commonly called *Alu To Dolok*. Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi Andi Sudirman Sulaiman seeks to bring halal tourism to North Toraja and Tana Toraja Regencies. Considering Toraja as a tourist destination that many people visit, it is possible for Muslims. They think tourists who visit Toraja mostly come from Muslims. Toraja Regency needs to build a *halal* tourism area. We include it in the Regional Medium-Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), said Andi Sudirman while attending the Sharia Economic Forum event Baruga Aging Mamiri, Makassar Mayor's Office.¹⁰

The implementation of halal tourism in several areas in South Sulawesi (South Sulawesi), especially in Tana Toraja Regency and North Toraja Regency, has sparked a polemic. Several parties reject the concept of *halal* tourism from the South Sulawesi Provincial Government because they know that Protestant and Catholic Christians are in Tana Toraja reached 83% and in North Toraja about 92%.¹¹ The statement from the Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi was responded to by the people who are members of the Toraja Culture Permerhati Forum (FPBT) by putting up banners rejecting the discourse of *halal* tourism.¹² Hundreds of residents and students members of the United Toraja Community Alliance held a demonstration against the halal tourism speech in Tana Toraja and North Toraja. Demonstrations took place at several points, starting from the office of the Tana Toraja Regent, the Tana Toraja DPRD, and speeches around the *Makale* pond

¹⁰ Irwan Kahir, "Banyak Dikunjungi Wisatawan Muslim, Wagub Sulsel Segera Wujudkan Wisata Halal di Toraja," *fajar.co.id*, February 25, 2019, <https://fajar.co.id/2019/02/25/banyak-dikunjungi-wisatawan-muslim-wagub-sulsel-segera-wujudkan-wisata-halal-di-toraja/?page=all>.

¹¹ Abdurrahman, "Rencana Penerapan Wisata Halal di Toraja Memicu Polemik," *sulsel.idntimes.com*, March 4, 2019, <https://sulsel.idntimes.com/news/indonesia/abdurrahman/rencana-penerapan-wisata-halal-di-toraja-memicu-polemik/3>.

¹² Ghifari Yuristiadhi Masyhari Makhasi and Muhammad Thohir Yudha Rahimadhi, "Ramai-Ramai Menolak Wisata Halal: Kontestasi Politik Identitas dalam Perkembangan Wisata Halal di Indonesia," *Jurnal Sosiologi Reflektif* 14, no. 2 (2020): 373, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jsr.v14i2.1767>.



square, Tana Toraja. Some time ago, the crowd who entered the Tana Toraja DPRD building vehemently denied the Deputy Governor of South Sulawesi Andi Sudirman Sulaiman to implement *halal* tourism in two districts Tana Toraja and North Toraja. The Chairman of the Toraja Cultural Observer Forum, Sismay Eliata Tulungallo, said that if the council members approved *halal* tourism in Toraja, he would demand that the Tana Toraja DPRD office be closed immediately.¹³

Meanwhile, local tourists visiting North Toraja Regency from year to year are increasing; only in 2020, there is a drastic decline due to the corona virus. According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics of North Toraja Regency, in 2017, the number of tourists was 285,566 people. In 2018, there was an increase of 310,114 people; in 2019, there was an increase of 352,030 people; and in 2020, there was a drastic decrease due to the corona virus. While foreign tourists visiting North Toraja Regency from 2017 were 62,356 people, in 2018 there was a decrease of 53,207 people, in 2019 there was a decrease of 32,272 people, and 2020 also experienced a drastic decline of 730 people.¹⁴

In facing the new normal, this is a particular concern for tourism managers to continue improving to be the best. Seeing the vast potential of local and foreign tourists, some Muslim. Moreover, local tourists in Indonesia are done mainly by Muslim tourists. With the availability of worship facilities, *halal* food, water, bathrooms, and an environment that is not Islamophobic, it will be an attraction for traveling to North Toraja Regency.

North Toraja has several existing tourist destinations and beautiful culture and nature. The tourist objects include the country Above the Clouds, Kampung Lola, where visitors can enjoy views of the Toraja region from the highlands. This tourist attraction is equipped

¹³ Makassar Indeks, "Ratusan Pemuda Dan Warga di Toraja Tolak Wisata Halal," *kumparan.com*, March 11, 2019, <https://kumparan.com/makassar-indeks/ratusan-pemuda-dan-warga-di-toraja-tolak-wisata-halal-1552313176906199182/full>.

¹⁴ Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Toraja Utara, "Kabupaten Toraja Utara dalam Angka 2020," *Badan Pusat Statistik*, April 27, 2020, <https://torutkab.bps.go.id/publication/2020/04/27/2758bec0c81d38baf9526425/kabupaten-toraja-utara-dalam-angka-2020.html>.



with *Tongkonan* or traditional Toraja houses and tents that visitors can rent. In addition, there is also the Batutumonga area which is located on the slopes of Mount Sesean, Sesean Suloara District. One of the attractions that can be visited is Loko Mata, a large stone more than 15 meters high carved and used as a stone tomb. Another tourist attraction is the Kalimbuang Bori Megalith Complex located in the Sesean District, North Toraja Regency. An object is a place for traditional funeral ceremonies equipped with hundreds of years old *menhirs* erected to honor traditional leaders or noble families who died.¹⁵

A good understanding of the current implementation of *halal* tourism services in these destinations is very much needed. This understanding can be obtained by studying the experiences of Muslim tourists. This approach allows an examination of their religious needs against the services they receive during their journey.¹⁶

Methods

The qualitative researcher views social phenomena holistically. It explains why qualitative research studies appear as broad, panoramic views rather than micro-analyses—the more complex, interactive, and encompassing the narrative, the better the qualitative study. The qualitative researcher uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted, iterative, and simultaneous. The qualitative researcher adopts and uses one or more inquiry strategies as a guide for the procedures in the qualitative study.¹⁷ This analysis is based on qualitative research methods. It combines secondary sources (such as online newspapers and

¹⁵ Endy Poerwanto, “Tana Toraja Menolak Wisata Halal,” *bisniswisata.co.id*, March 14, 2019, <https://bisniswisata.co.id/tana-toraja-menolak-wisata-halal/>.

¹⁶ MF. Said et al., “Exploring Halal Tourism in Muslim-Minority Countries: Muslim Travellers’ Needs and Concerns,” *Journal of Islamic Marketing* vol. ahead-of-print no. ahead-of-print (December, 2020), <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/JIMA-07-2020-0202/full/html>.

¹⁷ Dewan Mahboob Hossain, “Qualitative Research Process,” *Postmodern Openings* 7, no.7 (September 2011): 143–56, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267798343_Qualitative_Research_Process/figures?lo=1.



magazines, literature reviews, statistics, and reports by national authorities and international organizations) and interviews.¹⁸

Methods for collecting data comprise two parts. The first is a comprehensive review of past literature and the second part involves a series of interviews with the industry experts in logistics and *halal* businesses.¹⁹

According to Miles and Huberman (1992), to analyze data, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and concluding or the verification as an intertwined weave before, during, and after data collection in parallel forms, to build general insights called analysis.²⁰

- a. Data reduction is defined as the process of selecting, focusing on simplifying, abstracting, and transforming “rough” data that emerges from written records in the field—selection and transformation of “rough” data obtained from the results of data collection.
- b. Presentation of data, namely, structured information, allows drawing conclusions and taking action. In the research context, the presentation of data includes an inventory of all related data to form a pattern of the social construction of governance.
- c. Drawing conclusions or verification, after data reduction and data presentation, the last stage in analyzing the data is concluding. Conclusion drawing or verification is used to conclude the research results.

Results

Halal Tourism in North Toraja Regency

¹⁸ Michele Carboni, Carlo Perelli, and Giovanni Situ, “Developing Tourism Products in Line with Islamic Beliefs: Some Insights from Nabeul–Hammamet,” *Journal of North African Studies* 22, no. 1 (2017): 87–108, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2016.1239078>.

¹⁹ Mohamed Syazwan Ab Talib and Abu Bakar Abdul Hamid, “Halal Logistics in Malaysia: A SWOT Analysis,” *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 5, no. 3 (2014): 322–43, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2013-0018>.

²⁰ Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Analisis Data Kualitatif*, trans. Tjejep Rohendi Rohidi (Jakarta: UI Press., 1992).



Islam is a complete code of life, and it provides guidance that Muslims should follow in all spheres of life.²¹ There is indeed an explicit categorization between *haram* (non-allowable) and *halal* (allowable) in the food consumption context in Islam.²² The main concerns of Muslim tourists are whether the travel destination provides halal food and prayer equipment.²³ *Halal* is undergoing an evolution that includes four phases: Muslim companies, *halal* products, *halal* supply chains, and value chains.²⁴ Accordingly, *halal* themes begin to affect the tourism industry in those countries.²⁵

The description of the *halal* and *haram* (i.e., its opposite concept) is mentioned in the Qur'an and further explained through *hadith*, the sayings, and practices of Prophet Muhammad. Muslims (i.e., people who practice Islam and believe in the faith) must know the concepts and differentiate between the *halal* and *haram* of everything related to their lives.²⁶ In addition, the concept of *halal* is not just applied to food; instead, it includes any *sharia*-compliant products.²⁷ For instance, Islamic *shari'ah* requires particular practices such as prayer five times each day at certain times and its connectivity of health and hygiene through practicing "wudhu", i.e., washing before performing the daily prayers. It requires a worship place for Muslims (prayer rooms

²¹ Bon and Hussain, "Halal Food and Tourism: Prospects and Challenges,"

²² Mohd Hafiz Hanafiah and Nurul Alia Aqilah Hamdan, "Determinants of Muslim Travellers Halal Food Consumption Attitude and Behavioural Intentions," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-09-2019-0195>.

²³ Po-Yi Hsu et al., "Developing a Muslim Tourism Market: The Perspective of Travel Agencies," *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights* ahead-of-p, no. ahead-of-print (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1108/jhti-08-2020-0155>.

²⁴ Ririn Tri Ratnasari et al., "Emotional Experience on Behavioral Intention for Halal Tourism," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 12, no. 4 (2020): 864–81, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-12-2019-0256>.

²⁵ Said et al., "Exploring Halal Tourism in Muslim-Minority Countries: Muslim Travellers' Needs and Concerns,"

²⁶ Norliza Katuk et al., "Halal Certification for Tourism Marketing: The Attributes and Attitudes of Food Operators in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 12, no. 5 (2020): 1043–62, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2020-0068>.

²⁷ Siripen Dabphet, "Managing Islamic Attributes through the Satisfaction of Muslim Tourists in a Non-Muslim Country," *International Journal of Tourism Cities* 7, no. 1 (2021): 237–54, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJTC-06-2020-0124>.



or Mosques) and the availability of washroom facilities at a ritual washing area for *wudhu*.²⁸

There is no precise definition of Islamic tourism as people view it differently. The emergence of Islamic tourism was highlighted in the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) meeting in 2000. At the meeting, OIC proposed that increasing people's movement and traveling within Islamic countries is required to generate income and facilitate the development of member countries. This movement and traveling of people envisaged tourism to the Islamic countries. However, no definition was offered as to what such tourism entails. This part of the research discusses various definitions of 'Islamic tourism'.²⁹

Researchers, academics, businesses, and practitioners use various terms to refer to the *halal* tourism market. Such terms are used interchangeably among such groups. The review of the related literature (as well as the *halal* tourism market) has revealed that one of the main obstacles to developing *halal* tourism potential is the absence of a clear conceptualization of *halal* tourism purpose and definition. Most researchers misuse the term *halal* tourism and use it with other terms interchangeably as if they are very similar or have the same meaning, which might not be correct (in most cases). Among the terms used in this regard are *halal* tourism, Islamic tourism, Islamic travel, *halal* travel, Muslim-friendly tourism, *shari'ah* tourism, *halal* transportation.³⁰

From some of the definitions above, it can be concluded that the meaning of *halal* tourism is: a Muslim tourist activity in the context of vacation or recreation following sharia rules based on the Qur'an and *As-Sunnah*. With the number, The largest population in Indonesia

²⁸ Ahmed M. Adel et al., "Muslims' Travel Decision-Making to Non-Islamic Destinations: Perspectives from Information-Seeking Models and Theory of Planned Behavior," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 12, no. 4 (2020): 918–40, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-04-2020-0095>.

²⁹ Aishath Muneeza et al., "Need to Pioneer Islamic Tourism in Tourist Resorts in the Maldives," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 11, no. 4 (2020): 895–916, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-01-2019-0004>.

³⁰ El-Gohary, "Halal Tourism, Is It Really Halal?,"



certainly provides excellent opportunities for business practitioners to make the most significant attention to the provision of *halal* tourism facilities and infrastructure. One of the drivers, or the selection of tourist destinations for Muslims, is that tourism is available following sharia rules.

The development of halal tourism in the North Toraja Regency has become a concern for the provincial government of South Sulawesi, but the lack of socialization related to halal tourism to the community has caused polemics even to the point of rejection by residents. The Deputy Governor (Vice Governor) of South Sulawesi monitors the community's response to the South Sulawesi Provincial Government's plan to build *halal* tourism areas in several areas in South Sulawesi including Toraja. Especially in this area, there are pros and cons. In this regard, the Deputy Governor listened to inputs and aspirations from various parties. Even the local government and representatives of North Toraja (Trout) met the Deputy Governor in his office at the South Sulawesi Governor's Office to ask for a complete explanation. The Deputy Governor explained that the Provincial Government is developing destinations in Toraja, both in Tana Toraja and North Toraja, so they are advanced.

Moreover, the budget and interaction are getting bigger in these two districts. However, regarding halal tourism plans, there are pros and cons. As a democracy, it is returned to the districts or cities. They continued that Toraja tourism that is also Muslim friendly or Muslim tourists want to develop can meet their needs when traveling or traveling, such as eating and worship.³¹

Seeing the circulation of issues related to halal tourism, the researcher tried to ask the Head of the Culture and Tourism Office; he said: "We in Toraja *halal* language is quite sensitive, so a few years ago there was a fuss because of the *halal* tourism campaign carried out by Deputy Governor, the discussion was good, but we in Toraja are not very familiar with that language. That is why our tourism department

³¹ Abd Latif, "Polemik Wisata Halal, Wagub Sulsel: Toraja Itu Muslim Friendly," *Panrita.news*, March 4, 2019, <https://panrita.news/2019/03/04/polemik-wisata-halal-wagub-sulsel-toraja-itu-muslim-friendly/>.



also adjusts, in the sense that the *halal* tourism program is still running, but our society does not use it, but we use the term Muslim friendly. The visit of domestic tourists and tourists outside Sulawesi is almost said to be 90% Muslim. They visited Toraja wanting to see Toraja culture and the activities of the Toraja people, including nature tourism. Moreover, the tourist attraction in North Toraja is magnificent to be a place to take pictures to be uploaded on social media.”³²

From the explanation given by the Head of Service and Head of the Destinations and Tourism Industry Division, it can indeed be said that there was a miscommunication between the concepts in implementing the development of *halal* tourism process in North Toraja Regency offered between the government and the residents there. If it is properly socialized, it will undoubtedly be an opportunity to develop tourism objects in North Toraja. Moreover, many tourists who visit are Muslim tourists. They want when visiting North Toraja their religious infrastructure can be fulfilled. The Chairman of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) of North Toraja Regency said the same thing: “*Halal* tourism has been in the spotlight here because they may not understand. Maybe they have the perception that there are no more businesses outside of Muslims. It will find all Muslim entrepreneurs the same, not like that. Indeed, socialization must also be disseminated to the public and religious shops. First, The governor immediately announced, so people were shocked. So people here are quite sensitive to the word *halal*.”³³

Coordination between the Provincial Government, Regional Government, Council of Ulama, and residents should need to be improved what researchers got in the field based on the results of interviews with stakeholders above until now this coordination has not worked anymore. Coordination works when there is a local community’s rejection. After that, there is no further communication. *Halal* tourism or Muslim-friendly tourism development in the North Toraja Regency is not optimal.

³² Kepala Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan, “Interview” (Toraja Utara, 2021).

³³ Ketua Majelis Ulama Indonesia, “Interview” (Toraja Utara, 2021).



Halal Tourism Service in North Toraja

a. Halal Food

Halal food must be available in tourist destinations, especially tourist destinations that many Muslim tourists visit. Therefore, the availability of *halal* food is undoubtedly one of the supporting factors to attract Muslim tourists to visit, as it is known that North Toraja Regency is a Muslim minority area. When the researcher asked about this, the Head of the Culture and Tourism Office said that: “Now we are at the stage of *halal* certification for hotels, restaurants, restaurants but now we are constrained by the high cost of *halal* certification because this is only one institution that can issue only MUI, some hotels here have received *halal* certification, but not all of their food menus have been certified, because the more menus, the higher the cost. Incidentally, yesterday we had a collaboration with the South Sulawesi Tourism Provincial Government; we from North Toraja were given cooperation with the Indonesian bank to facilitate restaurants, restaurants so that there is a guarantee for tourists that this restaurant provides *halal* food.”³⁴

From the explanation given by the Head of the Service above, it can be said to implement *halal* products. Efforts have been made, namely inviting cooperation from the provincial government to manage halal certification. One of the obstacles for restaurants and culinary places is the cost of certification that burdens them. Meanwhile, according to the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council of North Toraja Regency, he said, “The North Toraja Regency MUI was established in 2001 for the work programs we have never met collectively. Our district is constrained by funding many work programs, including *halal* labels from restaurant businesses. However, now no, because we do not have the authority to issue it, it has to go to LPPM MUI, so we are only here to give the blanks they sent to Makassar. Some have completed it, but there is no label certificate; there are also salt entrepreneurs; we only give a temporary certificate because making it is expensive. Once I gave a logo that I believe is

³⁴ Kepala Bidang Destinasi dan Industri Pariwisata, “Interview” (Toraja Utara, 2021).



sterile for consumption. So I put it in the house to eat, so people do not hesitate. Nevertheless, many also make banners that are unclear about the procedure. Many have been conjured up by just putting up a *halal* logo.”³⁵

From the explanation of the MUI Chair, the researcher saw a lack of coordination between the local government and the North Toraja Regency MUI and LPPOM MUI as the person in charge of obtaining halal certificates. When the researcher discussed this with one of the halal auditors at the LPPOM MUI Office in South Sulawesi, she said we could trace this company data to us or not; maybe we can trace it to us they feel they have deposited official data. Because many companies receive assistance from the government, and after we met the companies directly, many complained that we had already deposited the data 2 or 3 years. We never allow companies that register to be discontinued unless there are some technical problems with incomplete documents or incomplete licenses. If, for example, there is data and they say LPPOM MUI does not serve, at least there is a company name for us to see, especially now that we have an online system we have been using since 2018. So if there is a problem, we can know if there is a company name because we cannot verify if there is no report where it has stuck.³⁶ The lack of good coordination between the three stakeholders above has resulted in halal food for Muslim tourists not being maximized.

b. Worship Facilities

Worship facilities are a must-have for tourism managers. Because Muslim tourists should pray five times a day, places of worship such as mosques or prayer rooms will undoubtedly make it easier for Muslim tourists to carry out worship. The Head of Destinations and Tourism Industry said: “There are indeed tourist attractions that do not yet provide mosques or *mushalla*. In the future, it may be necessary to discuss the object owners to provide special places of worship for

³⁵ Indonesia, “Interview.”

³⁶ Auditor LPPOM MUI, “Interview” (Makassar, 2021).



Muslim tourists”.³⁷ According to the Head of the Culture and Tourism Office, the internal facilities depend on the manager’s finances, not the owner or direct owner. We want to push there, but we are also constrained by funding.³⁸ Based on the explanation, the construction of prayer rooms in several tourist attractions has not been carried out due to the limited funds owned by tourism managers and the local government.

c. Water and Bathroom

Along with the increasing number of tourist attractions in the North Toraja Regency, this is good news because it will increase the surrounding community’s economy and regional income. However, with the increase in tourist destinations in North Toraja Regency, all kinds of facilities at tourist locations must be met. Even better, all the available facilities are prepared and considered for their suitability for use by visitors. Because several tourist attractions have a good place, the condition of the facilities is poorly maintained and even disappoints visitors.

One of the facilities that should be a concern is water and bathrooms. Water is used to clean oneself from urinating and defecating. In contrast, the bathroom is a place to defecate. Visitors, especially Muslim tourists, very much need this facility. Nevertheless, unfortunately, various tourist objects with water and bathrooms are still very dire conditions.

d. Islam Without Islamophobia

Islamophobia in this context is a combination of two nuanced words: Islam – an Arabic word meaning a religion that exists to reflect total and voluntary submission to God Almighty, by people who desire peace, equality, and wholeness, called Muslims; and phobia, which means fear of something because of the inherent danger in it. Thus, Islamophobia connotes the fear of being uninformed about Islam by non-Muslims who do not believe in the peaceful idea of Islam. It is a

³⁷ Pariwisata, “Interview.”

³⁸ Pariwisata.



term used to describe hatred, negative stereotypes, and hostility perpetrated against Muslims due to the wrong perception of Islam. They are reflected in verbal and physical assault, harassment, discrimination, torture, murder, bombing, kidnapping, arson and vandalism, use of agency media, hate speech, intimidation and marginalization, demonstrations, rallies and marches, and distribution of leaflets and other literature.³⁹

Tourism in North Toraja Regency has been running peacefully so far. It is based on the researcher's interview with the head of the Department of Culture and Tourism: If we want to see inter-religious relations in Toraja so far, we can see that there are no problems. We are always examples from various other regions to learn tolerance. The Toraja people never distinguish between Muslim tourists; basically, all tourists who come to Toraja are served the same. There is no difference between the two. Then the standard of service is also the same. However, slowly we are also improving services, including the provision of places of worship. Some hotels have also prepared the Qibla direction there, meaning that there has been an increase from the tourist attraction manager. Indeed, friends who come to Toraja who are Muslim need to be facilitated. There are Muslim communities, Christians, and Aru to Dolo regarding tourism activities.⁴⁰

Based on researchers' observations in the North Toraja Regency, religious harmony has been going well. It is based on the running of tolerance between religious communities. The concept of problem-solving managed well between the government, traditional, and religious leaders makes minor problems that do not expand into big ones. As stated by the Chairman of the North Toraja Indonesian Ulema Council: "The key to harmony here is a *tongkonan* which means the house of a family of several harmonies, so if there is a problem, then it is solved there, so that is like that never happen in other areas. Usually,

³⁹ Kazeem Oluwaseun Dauda, "Islamophobia and Religious Intolerance: Threats to Global Peace and Harmonious Co-Existence," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2020): 257–92, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v8i2.6811>.

⁴⁰ Kebudayaan, "Interview."



there are also, but we will solve it with the government, traditional leaders, religious leaders because usually, migrants are the ones who trigger it. It often happens here from Flores, brother *becak*, but since 1967 I have never had inter-religious friction here, if only there were people.”⁴¹

Religious harmony is one factor that influences tourist arrivals to North Toraja. For this reason, this harmony needs to be appropriately maintained, with mutual respect for one another. If there is a dispute between religious people, it needs to be resolved wisely. It happened in North Toraja Regency, when there was a dispute, the *tongkonan* was resolved, which is their custom.

Discussion

Communication in Building *Halal* Tourism Awareness

In order to support the preparation and development of *halal* tourism, a communication strategy is needed to increase stakeholder awareness. According to Jones, communication strategy is an active communication process and involves the public. According to Priyanka and Ardianto, the purpose of communication strategy to build awareness must pay attention to understanding the communication process, message clarity, persuasion power, and the completeness of the message.⁴²

From the research results, the fundamental problem of the community's rejection of *halal* tourism is the absence of massive socialization carried out by stakeholders. There is a misunderstanding between what was conveyed by the Deputy Governor and the community. People assume that *halal* tourism will change the local culture, even though it is not like that. The concept of *halal* tourism is only to facilitate Muslim tourists so that their religious advice and infrastructure are fulfilled.

⁴¹ Indonesia, “Interview.”

⁴² Soraya Ratna Pratiwi, Susanne Dida, and Nuryah Asri Sjafirah, “Strategi Komunikasi dalam Membangun Awareness Wisata Halal di Kota Bandung,” *Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi* 6, no. 1 (2018): 78-90, <https://doi.org/10.24198/jkk.v6i1.12985>.



Base on the problems, there was a miscommunication regarding using the word “halal” in that case. According to the Head of the North Toraja Regency Office, the word *halal* has become very sensitive for Toraja people, causing polemics. In contrast, the development of *halal* tourism in several Muslim minority countries is significantly developed because they consider that the potential of Muslim tourists is tremendous and will undoubtedly benefit their economy.

Head of the Department of Destinations and the Tourism Industry: “*Halal* tourism is fine, because I think, like Bali and Thailand, seen from the Muslim population, they are a minority, but they can apply the concept of *halal* tourism, in the sense that *halal* tourism does not eliminate culture or customs and the local community. Only provides a place for Muslim tourists. The problem of community rejection, in my opinion, needs a way to communicate to the community so that people do not misunderstand. We also accept tourists here who are not picky, and indeed our tourists are predominantly Muslim. Hence, as good hosts, it is necessary to provide the accommodations they need without disturbing and changing the local cultural order.”⁴³

So it is necessary to build effective communication to create mutual awareness. North Toraja Regency is a tourism icon for South Sulawesi, but on the other hand, Muslim tourists also hope that those visiting Toraja can get good facilities. It is because, for every Muslim, worship is still the main thing. Wherever they are, they are in the form of carrying out Allah’s commands and staying away from His prohibitions.

Opportunities and Challenges: A SWOT Analysis

To see the opportunities and challenges of *halal* tourism in Muslim minority areas, the researchers conducted a SWOT analysis as reference material in this study.

⁴³ Pariwisata, “Interview.”



<p>IFAS</p> <p>EFAS</p>	<p>Strengths (S)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional tourism icon 2. Get full support from the government 3. It has beautiful culture and natural scenery 4. Increased tourist visits 	<p>Weaknesses (W)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Muslim religious facilities and infrastructure are still limited 2. Public understanding is still low 3. Lack of operational funds 4. Muslim Minority Areas
<p>Opportunities (O)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has 308 tourist destinations 2. Cooperation with government and private institutions 3. Development as an international tourist attraction 4. Marketing tourist destinations by utilizing technological developments 	<p>Strategi SO</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide religious facilities and infrastructure for tourists visiting North Toraja 2. Expanding the network of cooperation with the government and private institutions 3. Building a positive image and Muslim-friendly tourism to attract foreign Muslim tourists 4. Creating innovative and creative programs 	<p>Strategi WO</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out the construction of prayer rooms and provide halal-certified food at tourist destinations 2. Coordinate with stakeholders, in this case, the government, the Indonesian Ulema Council, and the private sector. 3. They were allocating APBD funds related to the provision of religious facilities



	to be promoted both nationally and internationally by utilizing technology	for Muslim tourists because the more Muslim tourists who visit the regional economy will also increase. 4. They convinced the public that halal tourism is an attraction for local and foreign Muslim tourists to visit North Toraja.
<p>Threats (T)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public rejection of halal tourism 2. Cooperation with stakeholders that have not been going well 3. The cost of halal certification is expensive 4. Inter-religious war 	<p>Strategy ST</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish coordination between the government, MUI, and local communities regarding halal tourism 2. Strengthening socialization about the importance of halal products 3. Provide assistance and assistance for halal certification costs to halal food providers 	<p>Strategy WT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Socializing and understanding the community about halal tourism 2. Creating an excellent cooperative relationship between stakeholders and the community 3. Discuss with the local government so that the operational budget for improving



	<p>4. Provide understanding to the surrounding community that halal tourism does not change local customs and culture; it only provides services for Muslim tourists</p> <p>5. Maintaining religious harmony by respecting each other among religious people.</p>	<p>worship facilities and halal certification can be given special attention to become an attraction for Muslim tourists.</p> <p>4. Through all programs, building synergy with the community is launched for the common good.</p>
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Based on the data, the researcher proposes a strategy in SO, WO, ST, and WT to prioritize socialization to the community about halal tourism and coordinate with the local community. The development of halal tourism, such as providing *halal* food, places of worship, bathrooms, and without Islamophobia, does not mean changing the cultural order of the North Toraja people but only providing religious facilities and infrastructure for Muslim tourists visiting North Toraja. It is also essential that the local government provide a particular budget to the managers of tourism objects in the North Toraja Regency in terms of financing assistance for the construction of mosques and the management of *halal* certification.

Conclusion

The development of halal tourism is the latest breakthrough in the world of the *halal industry*. The government carries out this program to attract Muslim tourists to visit. Setting up religious facilities in tourism facilities and infrastructure certainly affects the number of tourists coming. Tourist destinations in North Toraja Regency initially experienced rejection in the community, and this happened because the



concept of *halal* tourism was not socialized to the community. So that understanding in the community about *halal* tourism is not well understood.

In addition, the coordination between stakeholders has not been going well, so the potential for *halal* tourism development only moves in place. One of the factors that influence the arrival of Muslim tourists is the availability of *halal* food, worship facilities, water, and bathrooms, and maintaining harmony. Therefore, it is necessary to establish good coordination between the government, MUI, and the community to provide Muslim tourists.

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