

Is Lombok Really Perceived as Halal Tourism Destination? A Study of Tourist Satisfaction and Loyalty

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Abstract. Indonesia could take advantage of being the largest Muslim country in the world by creating an attractive value proposition as a halal tourism destination. This study aims to determine the effect of how the Islamic attributes of estimation is perceived by Muslim travellers and how such a perception influenced tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Lombok was selected as a study object since its appointment as Indonesia's halal tourism destination. A survey was completed to 130 respondents who had visited Lombok. Using a structural equation modelling, the main results indicated that: 1) worship facilities; 2) halalness; 3) alcohol and gambling free; and 4) general Islamic morality, as four formative dimensions of Islamic attributes of destination. These four sub-dimensions were perceived as underlying factors to affect tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Tourist satisfaction plays as a full mediating variable of how Islamic attributes of destination influenced tourists' destination loyalty. These findings advance our understanding of how Moslem domestic tourists perceived the provision of Islamic attributes in a halal tourism destination and how it could trigger their behavioural intention in the future.

Keywords: *halal tourism, Islamic attributes of destination; tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism is one of the most recent trends emerging from the growing number of Muslim tourists worldwide and the development of the halal tourism industry will continue experiencing growth [1][2]. Claiming its spot as 'the new billions dollar travel trend', the halal tourism market' share is expected to grow by 30% in the year 2020 as well as its estimated tourists' expenditure to be up to 200 billion USD [3]. Qur'an (*Al-Qur'an/Koran*) and Hadith (*Hadits*) present fundamental aspects of Islam teachings that play important roles for Muslim tourists. Therefore, adopting this concept of tourism is accordingly with the Muslim' halal and haram criterion. This also means that each aspect of tourism activity is attached to the idea of having halal certification as references. To meet those needs, all tourism contributors in Indonesia should

provide more services by improving the quality of Islamic attributes of destinations that are capable of satisfying incoming tourists (customer satisfaction). Eventually, with the increase in tourists' satisfaction, this may lead to the increase in the number of tourist arrivals from around the world. Islamic attributes of destination are categorized as follows: The availability of halal food at tourist destinations (halalness), the facilities for prayer or devotion (worship facility), the application of Islam moral values in general in tourist destinations (general Islamic morality), and the application of alcohol and gambling free policies [4]. Based on the 2018 Mastercard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) research, Indonesia is ranked second in halal tourism destinations. The study also made a clear statement that the Muslim tourism market will continue to grow rapidly. Lombok, as a tourism representative of West Nusa Tenggara Province

of Indonesia, happens to be one of the best areas in carrying efforts to develop halal tourism. This claim is proven when Lombok won two awards, the World Best Halal Tourism Destination and the World Best Halal Honeymoon Destination. Therefore, Lombok is regarded as an example and became the spotlight in the development of halal destinations in Indonesia. With this consideration, Lombok became the object of this study which has been proven to be the world's best halal destination in the GMTI version.

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of the Islamic destination attribute on tourist satisfaction and its effect on destination loyalty. The findings are expected to explain the attributes of Islamic destinations comprehensively, which can influence tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty of a tourist destination. Thus, contributing to the future development of Lombok, Indonesia's, halal tourism.

1.1. Related Work

In the research conducted by [4], the developed Islamic Attributes of Destination model complemented the relationships between variables and dimensions. Meanwhile, in this research, the authors use the formative relationships model because each dimension complements the variables within Islamic Attributes of Destination. Additionally, the West Nusa Tenggara local government has issued regional regulation that contains all four dimensions in the Islamic Attributes of Destination. The result of using this formative model is that these four dimensions are perceived to be crucial in halal destinations in Lombok.

1.1.1. Halal Tourism

Many researchers have tried to define Islamic tourism and halal tourism in the literature of tourism and marketing [4- 7]. Regardless of the terms used to describe halal tourism, the core meaning is related to Muslims' compliance with the concepts of rules and guidelines of halal and Islamic sharia (shariah/shari'a). Moreover, labeling halal tourism as "Islamic tourism" might give the notion that tourism activities and/or products are only for Muslims, which is not always the case because non-Muslim tourists can also participate in halal tourism for various reasons. Therefore, it is preferable to use the term "halal tourism" as the only term for branding with regards to describing tourism products and/or activities that have full compliance with the rules and guidelines of the concept of halal and Islamic sharia (shariah/shari'a). This provides a better way of understanding the nature and true meaning of these types of tourism activities. Halal tourism, in this study, is defined as the use or engagement or action of any object by Muslim tourists in accordance with Islamic teachings and facilitating religious practices [1]. As described by [1], halal tourism is seen as the

provision of travel and tourism services in terms of tour packages and travel destinations that meet Muslim requirements and preferences.

1.1.2. Islamic Attributes of Destination

The Islamic attributes of destination are one of the significant things in fulfilling the needs of tourists who travel to a halal destination [8]. In Islam, the purpose of visiting destinations is to praise the beauty, greatness, and creation of Allah SWT God based on the guidance of the practice of the Qur'an [8]. In his research, [8] stated that Muslim tourists are indeed required to follow the teachings of Islam, which directly or indirectly may influence their decisions in traveling. Assuming that religion influences Muslim tourists in picking their destinations, it is critical to ensure that Islamic provisions in tourism services are fulfilled. This can provide tourist satisfaction. The following four elements are the base of forming Islamic destination attributes.

1.1.2.1. Worship Facility

Formal prayer is one of the most important acts of worship. Prayer or Salah (Salat) reflects the personal relationship of a human being with God, a moment to gather strength, guidance, and peace of mind. According to the second pillar of Islamic belief, a Muslim must perform five prayers, which are before sunrise/dawn (Fajr), afternoon (Dhuhr), late afternoon ('Asr), sunset (Maghrib), and night ('Isha) respectively. Salah (Salat) is considered essential for Muslims. Therefore, space availability or supporting facilities is deemed necessary. It is also suggested by [4] that the availability of mosques at tourist destinations could increase the level of satisfaction. The mosque itself can be considered as a tourist attraction if unique and exceptional [7].

1.1.2.2. Halalness

Eating halal food is an obligation for every Muslim. Not only halal, but the food must also delightful for both physical and spiritual aspects. Therefore, getting halal food should be a privilege for every Muslim tourist. Additionally, halal means separate and having no restrictions, meaning that halal food is permissible for consumption by Islamic provisions. The availability of halal food is pivotal, especially in tourist destinations, airports, shopping centers, hotels, parks, and other public places. When halal food is accessible, it can guarantee the comfort of Muslim tourists in visiting a destination. Furthermore, in the kitchen, food processing must be separated from the cooking equipment used for non-halal food. It has been argued by [4] that because Muslims must follow and maintain meals in accordance with Islamic provisions, the availability and easy access to halal food affects the Muslim tourists' enjoyment abroad. When promoting destinations for Muslim tourists, marketers should run promotional campaigns

that focus on the availability of halal food and drinks [4].

1.1.2.3. Alcohol and Gambling Free

Muslims are prohibited from consuming or selling alcoholic beverages as well as engaging in gambling activities. Correspondingly, Muslims must avoid visiting alcohol-free-flow places and gambling practices. Thus, it is advised by [8] that Muslim guests to refrain from drinking liquor or alcoholic beverages in the fridge of their hotel room unless they specifically request it.

1.1.2.4. General Islamic Morality

As suggested by [8], destination advertisers must be able to customize tourism programs for the Islamic culture of each country accordingly. Hence, some advisable recommendation is to engage Hijab-user female staffs to serve female tourists or guests and male staffs for male tourists, further optional details including recruiting female taxi drivers for serving female tourists of Middle Eastern in particular [8]. Sharia forbids Muslims from engaging in fornication or adultery. Any sexual activities in any form are not permitted to be put into public display. Many Muslim scholars believe that it is haram or taboo to visit places or destinations that provide options for sexual activity.

1.1.3. Tourist Satisfaction

In the context of tourism, satisfaction serves as pre-travel expectations and post-travel experiences. When the experience goes beyond expectations, the tourists' satisfaction level goes up in return [9]. It is believed that customer satisfaction is a post-purchase experience. That is, assessing the customer's post-purchase experience in comparison to their expectations [9]. In this case, when tourists' appraisal of products and services exceed their expectations, it will increase their level of satisfaction. This positive tourist satisfaction leads to a positive impact. Satisfied tourists are subject to repeat their visits and recommend destinations to others. Meanwhile, dissatisfied tourists are not expected to do the same, which leads to unfavorable consequences. For the tourism industry, tourist satisfaction is essential to bring in more tourists and get income from foreign exchange. The tourism industry needs to put tourist satisfaction into consideration because it affects destination loyalty. Whether or not tourism is lucrative, it is dependent on tourists' level of satisfaction. Based on [10], tourist satisfaction can be measured through three indicators, namely: (1) Whether or not tourists are content with their decision to visit a destination. (2) The belief to choose the said destination as the right thing to do.

(3) The overall level of satisfaction during a tour of the chosen destinations. Tourists' opinions on each destination play important roles in the level of

satisfaction and the quality of tourism [11]. This model acts as a tool of assessment for the quality of the destination, such as how to manage tourists, in terms of service quality, accommodation, and accessibility, as well as attracting tourists to participate in any events at the destination. This type of model is also useful as a reference in developing competitive advantage of the destination.

1.1.4. Destination Loyalty

According to [12], destination loyalty can be described as the behavioural intentions of tourists to revisit and make positive recommendations about a particular destination to others through word of mouth. In simple words, loyalty to a destination is the intention of tourists to return and make positive recommendations about visited destinations through word of mouth. The literature on destination loyalty shows a large number of different approaches and operational definitions. There are three most frequently used approaches to measure destination loyalty: Behavioural approach, attitudinal approach, and composite approach (combination from the first two approaches) [13]. The behavioural approach is one of the earliest approaches and mostly used to measure loyalty [13].

Early studies, which used the attitudinal approach, on the measurement of destination loyalty [13] [14], explain that

destination loyalty was measured using two sub-dimensions of loyalty: Revisit intention and willingness to recommend. On this basis, the attitudinal approach is selected to measure destination loyalty concept. It consists of the aforementioned two indicators, namely: the revisit intention and willingness to recommend.

1.2. Our Contribution

The results of this study are expected to provide information regarding tourist satisfaction and loyalty in perceiving Lombok as a halal tourist destination. Moreover, the tourism industry can utilize this research for more in-depth implementation of halal tourism development in Lombok.

1.3. Paper Structure

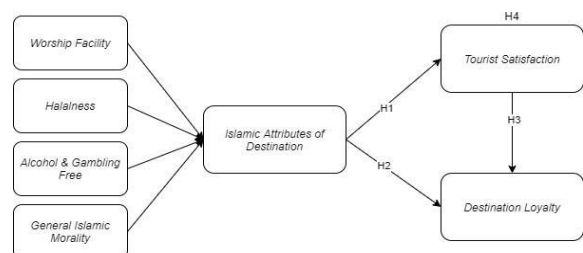


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

Following is the paper’s structure: Section 2 contains literature reviews of the main variables for this research, serving as the theoretical foundation in the development of hypotheses and instruments. Section 3 consists of the research design before collecting primary data. The next section (4 and 5) accommodates reports and discussions on the results of primary data processing and hypothesis testing. The last section, which is Section 6, states the conclusions of the research results and suggestions for future research.

2. METHODS

This research is a quantitative causal type of research focusing on the causality to determine the relationship of Islamic attributes of destination, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in perceiving Indonesia as a halal destination. The population for this research was Muslim tourists who have visited Lombok, either for vacation or business purposes in the last one year from April 2019- March 2020. Purposive sampling technique was selected based on relevant considerations to make the data representative and relevant enough for the general population. The source of primary data was through survey-based questionnaires. The questionnaires used closed-ended questions, consisting of 4 sections: (1) Profile of Respondent section, which consists of 6 questions regarding names, gender, age, length of stay, and motivation or reasons for visiting Lombok as a halal destination. (2) Islamic Attributes of Destination section, which contains 17 questions to measure the concept of Islamic Attributes of Destination. These questions categorized into 4 dimensions examined in this study. (3) Tourists’ Level of Satisfaction to be above 0.5. Worship facilities, halalness, alcohol-free and prohibited gambling variables, overall Islamic ethics, destination’s Islamic attributes, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty have a combined reliability score greater than 0.7. Thus, the structural model of the examined four variables met the ideal standard of composite reliability. Moving on, Cronbach’s alpha value for the Worship Facility variable is 0.787, the Halalness variable is 0.843, Alcohol and Gambling Free variable is 0.735, the General Islamic Morality variable is 0.872, Islamic Attributes of Destination variable is 0.935, Tourist Satisfaction variable is 0.729 and Destination Loyalty variable is 0.611. For this reason, all variables were reliable since they met the minimum value requirements, which was ≥ 0.6 . section, consisting of 2 agree-disagree questions about the level of satisfaction of respondents. (4) Destination Loyalty section consisting of 2 agree-disagree questions about respondents’ intention to revisit and willingness to recommend the destination. Afterwards, the authors used the Likert scale for

variables regarding Islamic attributes of destination. This scale was convenient in understanding respondents’ perceptions of the importance of an attribute in a halal destination in Lombok. The numbers of the scale start from (1) to (5), with (1) as Not at All Important, (2) as Slightly Important, (3) as Neutral, (4) as Important, until (5) as Very Important. Additionally, the authors also use a Likert scale for variables concerning tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Similarly, the scale starts from (1) to (5), with (1) as Strongly Disagree, (2) as Disagree, (3) as Between Agree and Disagree, (4) as Agree, until (5) as Strongly Agree.

3. RESULTS

The compiled primary data is the respondent’s assessment of Islamic attributes of destination, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty towards Lombok as Indonesia’s halal destination. The questionnaires were distributed in April- May 2020. Table 1 shows that all indicators of each variable get a loading factor/outer loading value greater than 0.5, meaning that all indicators fulfilled the convergent validity requirements.

Table 1 Convergent Validity Results

Indicator	PLS Loading	Remark
	Worship Facility	
WF-1	0.577	Valid
WF-2	0.733	Valid
WF-3	0.737	Valid
WF-4	0.730	Valid
WF-5	0.700	Valid
WF-6	0.733	Valid
Halalness		
HL-1	0.823	Valid
HL-2	0.815	Valid
HL-3	0.790	Valid
HL-4	0.868	Valid
Alcohol & Gambling Free		
AGF-1	0.895	Valid
AGF-2	0.883	Valid
Islamic Morality		
GIM-1	0.823	Valid
GIM-2	0.820	Valid
GIM-3	0.795	Valid
GIM-4	0.775	Valid
GIM-5	0.850	Valid
Tourist Satisfaction		
TS-1	0.896	Valid
TS-2	0.878	Valid
Destination Loyalty		
DL-1	0.854	Valid
DL-2	0.843	Valid

Table 2 Discriminant Validity Results

Destination	Reliability	AVE Cronbach's of Alpha	
Worship Facility	0.854	0.540	0.787
Halalness	0.894	0.679	0.843
Alcohol & Gambling Free	0.883	0.790	0.735
General Islamic Morality	0.907	0.661	0.872
Islamic Attributes of Destination	0.943	0.508	0.935
Tourist Satisfaction	0.881	0.787	0.729
Destination Loyalty	0.837	0.720	0.611

Meanwhile, Table 2 discusses discriminant validity where the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for the Worship Facility variable is 0.540, AVE for the Halalness variable is 0.679, AVE for the Alcohol & Gambling Free variable is 0.790, AVE for the General Islamic Morality variable is 0.661, AVE for the Islamic Attributes of Destination variable is 0.508, AVE for the tourist satisfaction variable is 0.787 and lastly, AVE for the Destination Loyalty variable is 0.720. Since each variable has its loading value above 0.5, it confirms that each variable is valid. Hence, the results emphasized that the model had good discriminant validity, considering the result met the predetermined requirements

Table 3 shows the results of hypotheses testing. The results showed that three out of four hypotheses were accepted. H4 was rejected because its t-statistic value was 1.874, which was less than 1.96 in the t-table.

Table 3 Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Effect (direct & indirect)	Path STDEV	t-stat	Result
H1	Islamic Attributes of Destination -> Tourist Satisfaction	0.54 0.093	5.91	Accepted
H2	Islamic Attributes of Destination -> Destination Loyalty	0.20 0.111	1.874	Rejected
H3	Tourist Satisfaction -> Destination Loyalty	0.37 0.104	3.602	Accepted
H4	Islamic Attributes of Destination -> Tourist Satisfaction -> Destination Loyalty	0.20 0.066	3.139	Accepted

Figure 2 shows the results of the bootstrapping from the structural model used in this study.

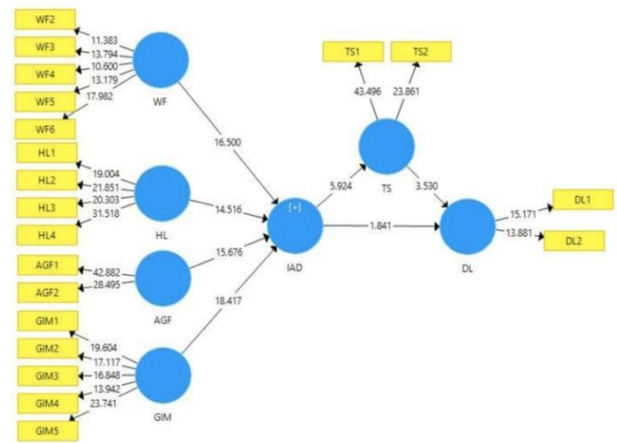


Figure 2 SEM-PLS Bootstrapping Result

4. DISCUSSION

The results showed that the indicators of each sub-dimension in Islamic attributes of destination could reflect this variable affirmatively. Additionally, the mean value of each indicator points out how its availability and accessibility play an important role during the tourists' visit. Moreover, both validity and reliability tests result are supportive of each other. Every sub-dimension like worship facilities, halalness, alcohol and gambling free, and general Islamic morality can explain the variables of Islamic attributes of destination accordingly. The results of this study are consistent and in line with research conducted by Battour [4]. These four elements refer to previous research conducted by [4], [8] and were used in this study as the basis for the Islamic attributes of destination. In the research conducted by [4], the developed Islamic Attributes of Destination model complemented the relationships between variables and dimensions. Meanwhile, in this research, the authors used the formative relationships model because each dimension complements the variables within Islamic Attributes of Destination. Additionally, the West Nusa Tenggara local government has issued regional regulation that contains all four dimensions in the Islamic Attributes of Destination. The result of using this formative model is that these four dimensions are perceived to be crucial in halal destinations in Lombok. As seen in Table 3, the result of hypothesis testing shows that there is a positive influence in the Islamic Attributes of Destination variable on tourist satisfaction. Therefore, it is safe to claim that Islamic Attributes of Destination affects tourist satisfaction. This finding is in line with the research conducted by [4] that there is a positive connection between Islamic Attributes of Destination on

tourist satisfaction. There are two required indicators to determine tourist satisfaction. Firstly, tourists must feel comfortable doing the traveling, and secondly, tourists must enjoy their tour. Therefore, the improvement of Islamic attributes of destination will increase the satisfaction of Muslim tourists because their needs and demands—especially in traveling—are fulfilled. Based on Table 3, the relationship between Islamic Attributes of Destination and destination loyalty has no significant effect. This finding confirms the opinion of [11], who states that tourists must feel satisfied first until they reach the point of loyalty. In the future, tourists will make a return to visit the destination and recommend it to others. Tourist satisfaction can result in positive news and publicity that contribute to destination loyalty. Destination loyalty plays a significant role in the financial status of the contributors in the tourism industry. On the other hand, satisfaction is an emotional bond from cognitive responses such as service quality and tourist experience. Simply put, tourist satisfaction is the key. When destination loyalty is present, tourists will return. These repeated visits promote a good image of the destination so that it could be a recommendation for new tourists. In this research, the scale of tourist satisfaction held a critical aspect. Its peak was when Muslim tourists' experiences were met with their needs and demands. Also, destination loyalty was related to how tourists were likely to revisit the destination and their willingness to recommend it to others. The key factor in this research was to discover and to understand the connections between tourist motivation and destination loyalty. Furthermore, the needs and demands of Muslim tourists in this research were a part of Islamic attributes of destination that had a positive influence on tourist satisfaction. This positive influence contributed to the increase of destination loyalty of halal destinations in Lombok. Thence, tourists' travel experiences in halal destinations create tourists' satisfaction, which affects destination loyalty. This finding is in line with research conducted by [15] where tourist satisfaction is an excellent mediator in increasing destination loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study, as discussed above, has advanced our understanding as to how Moslem domestic tourists perceived the provision of Islamic attributes in a halal tourism destination (in this case, Lombok), and how these attributes could trigger their behavioural intention to visit the destination in the future. The variables of Islamic attributes of destination have the greatest significance on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. For this reason, it is encouraged for Regional Government along with the tourism contributors to focus on the development of the Islamic

destination attributes of each halal destination in Lombok. If the Islamic' attributes of destinations are getting better, then Muslim tourists who have special needs and demands will feel more convenient to travel to the said destination. In the future, this may increase tourists' destination loyalty to Lombok, Indonesia's halal destinations. In addition, General Islamic Morality variable has the most influence on Islamic attributes of destination. In comparison with other sub-dimensions such as worship facilities, halalness, and alcohol & gambling free policies, General Islamic morality is the most difficult sub-dimension to build and may take years to come. Therefore, this should be a concern for the Regional Government and the society of Lombok to create an alliance in creating Islamic morality values. Eventually, this can create a good perception of Lombok as Indonesia's 'best' halal destination.

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