Global Muslim Response to Bandung Halal Tourism Branding

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Abstract: The city of Bandung has great potential for halal tourism. In addition to the carrying capacity of natural and human resources, Bandung has been designated by the Indonesian. However, policy makers still have not carried out special branding for halal tourism for the city of Bandung. This study has a purpose to observe the importance of branding for halal tourism in Bandung. This study uses a qualitative approach. The data were collected through questionnaires and literature study. The result showed that the majority of Muslims from various countries consider halal tourism branding important and influence their choice of the city they will visit.

Keywords: Halal Tourism, Tourism Branding, Bandung Tourism, Destination Branding, Tourism Marketing

Introduction

Bandung city is a very important tourism city in Indonesia. According to statistical data, the number of foreign tourists visiting the city of Bandung in 2019 reached 157,833 people (Disbudpar Kota Bandung, 2019). Meanwhile, from the perspective of city income, the contribution of the creative sector in 2018 reached 33.09% of Bandung City's original regional income (Gaffar et al., 2019). This is also corroborated by the results of measurements carried out by Frontier Consulting Group and Tempo Media Group in 2017 with the establishment of Bandung City as the city with the highest tourism index in Indonesia, which is 95.30 which is higher than Denpasar and Yogyakarta (Octaviany et al., 2019).

Then in 2018, the City of Bandung won the ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard Award or the Clean Tourism City from the ASEAN Tourism Forum (Republika.co.id, 2018). Bandung is also one of the most popular tourist destinations. In 2019, it became the fourth city after Bangkok, Seoul and Mumbai. Bandung is also ranked fifth and 21st in Asia and the world (Octaviany et al., 2019).

In addition to general tourism, the city of Bandung also has a high potential to become a halal tourism destination. According to the author's observations, there is an increasing trend of tourists from the Middle East to Bandung City before the pandemic. These observations also show that the Middle Eastern tourists are satisfied with the destinations, attractions, and tourist amenities of the city of Bandung (Parhan et al., 2020).

This is in line with the results of a study conducted by the Enhaii Halal Tourism Center (EHTC) and the Salman Halal Center which showed the high potential for halal tourism in Bandung. EHTC has established 21 halal tourism destinations in the city of Bandung (Palupi et al., 2017). This is also confirmed by the stipulation of the City of Bandung as one of the eleven leading Indonesian destinations for halal tourism by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism in year of 2019 (Perbawasari et al., 2019)

Besides Bandung, West Java Province has been established and promoted as a halal tourism province. This is shown by the achievement of the Best Halal Tourism Destination award

through the IMTI (Indonesia Muslim Travel Index) Award in 2019 (Perbawasari et al., 2019). West Java's seriousness in promoting halal tourism was also proven by the publication of the West Java Halal Tourism Guidelines on June 25, 2019. These guidelines provide guidance in four strategic focus areas, namely destinations, industry, institutions and marketing. It has received the Anugrah Syariah Republika award in 2019 for being chosen as the most favorite halal tourist destination in Indonesia (Kurniati et al., 2018).

For the national scope, the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and all its pentahelix elements have led Indonesia to become the number 1 halal tourist destination in the world. Through various efforts since 2015, Indonesia's ranking has increased steadily from 6, 4, 3, 2 and finally the first in 2019 (Achyar, 2015). Indonesia has also hosted several international Islamic forums such as the OIC's First International Islamic Tourism Forum in Jakarta in 2014. At the end of 2015, Indonesia became the head of a special task force to prepare a roadmap for the development of Islamic tourism in OIC member countries. In August 2016, Indonesia was trusted to host the 12th World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) in Jakarta. This initiative illustrates the government's strong commitment to the development of halal tourism

As an industry, halal tourism can be seen as a product category that must be marketed. One important part of marketing activities is branding. Halal tourism branding is branding of tourist destinations aimed at a special market segment that considers or emphasizes Muslim-friendly services in every aspect (Rasul, 2019).

As an important part as well as the front of the tourism marketing aspect, branding is an important thing that almost always exists and is an important part of the tourism marketing strategy. Branding has been applied in many countries in the form of city branding or destination branding. Regarding destination branding, Ritchie et al. (1998) says that "Destination branding is a name, symbol, logo, word mark, or other image that identifies and distinguishes a destination; furthermore, it conveys the promise of an unforgettable travel experience that is uniquely linked to the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce pleasant memories of the destination experience (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998).

As an observer and actor in the tourism industry in the city of Bandung, since 2010 until this writing was written, the author has never seen, heard, or known the concept of branding or branding products for halal tourism in the city of Bandung. In addition, in the conclusion of an article, Soraya Ratna Pratiwi et al stated that a more complex communication strategy is needed to communicate halal tourism to stakeholders and the community (Andrianto, 2017).

As for the results of the author's observations in the field, the author did not find a single visual logo or other form of visual design that represents the branding of Bandung's halal tourism. This has been recognized by the Head of the Culture and Tourism Office and the Head of the Bandung City Tourism Division, namely Mrs. Kenny Dewi Kaniasari, S.Sos, M.M. and Mr. H. Nanang Sodikin, MM. These two resource persons have conveyed this in the interview session with the author. These two pieces of evidence are further strengthened by not finding any information on the internet related to Bandung City Halal Tourism Branding.

On the other hand, although the halal tourism of Bandung City is not branded in a visual form in the form of a logo or other, the halal tourism industry and its marketing activities have been stated clearly and unequivocally as part of the Bandung Travelers Friendly City campaign. All these facts and phenomena have prompted the author to examine the importance of halal tourism branding from the point of view of the tourists or potential tourists who are targeted.

Concept of Branding

The following are some of the theories that is used in this research, starting with the grand theory, middle range theory, and applied theory. The grand theory that the author uses is the marketing management theory of Kotler & Keller (2012). This theory the author chose because branding activities are part of marketing activities. Meanwhile, for the middle range theory, the author uses the marketing mix theory from Kotler & Armstrong (2012) and branding from Anholt (2010) and Hermawan Kertajaya (2010). And for the applied theory, the author uses the halal tourism destination branding theory (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015).
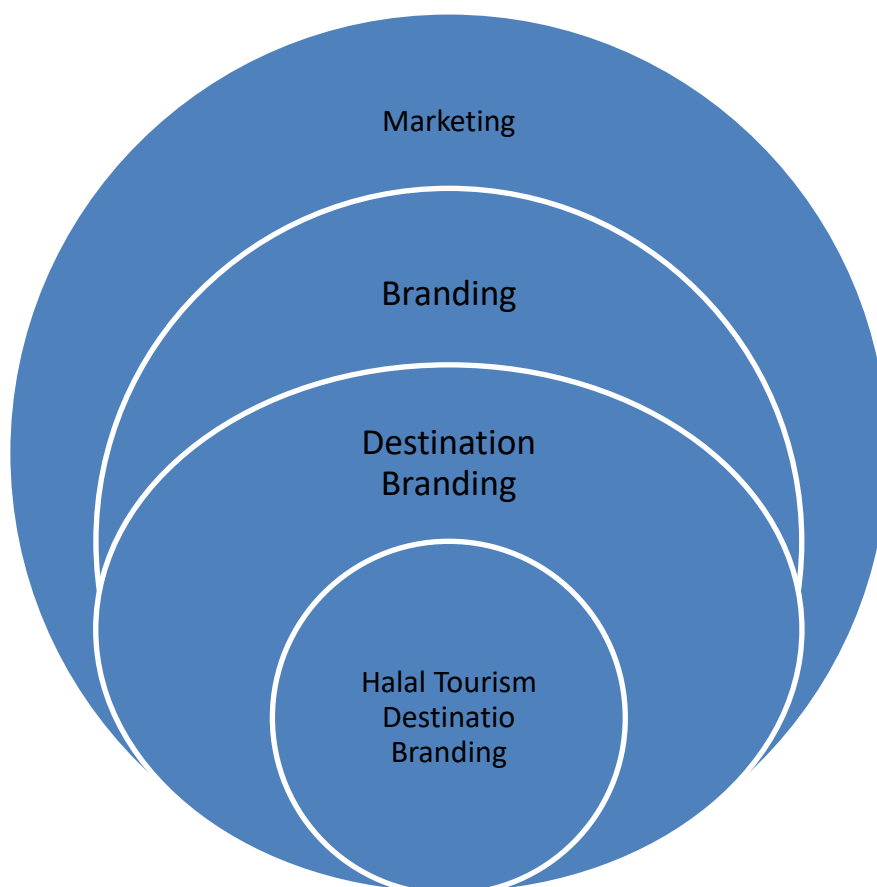
Source: Author's Data Processing, 2021
Figure 1. Theoretical Foundation of the research

Etymologically, the word branding comes from the word brand which means brand. In the KBBI, the equivalent word offered is a brand (KBBI, 2021). In English, a brand means a kind of product made by a certain company and a kind of product, service, etc. that is produced or offered by a certain company with a certain name (Welch & Ramsey, 2018).

From the word brand, the word branding was created. In Indonesian, the equivalent of the term branding is naming. Although the word translation has not been found in the KBBI, many observers and Indonesian language experts have proposed and approved the use of the term translation as the equivalent of the word branding. Branding has the meaning of the process of creating a unique name and image for a particular product to impress in the minds of consumers, especially through advertising (Johnson, 2017).

Meanwhile, the definition of branding in the English dictionary is the activity of giving a special name and special image to goods or services that people will be attracted to and want to buy (Santi & Basit, 2019). In the Cambrige dictionary, branding means to give a brand a brand name. In a broad sense, branding means the promotion of certain products or companies by using advertisements and unique designs (Björk & Weidenfeld, 2016). The word which originally meant translation then continued to develop until it got meanings that changed from the initial meaning.

Methodology

This research method uses a qualitative-descriptive method. The stages of this research are data collection, analysis and conclusion. Data collection was carried out by literature study and questionnaires. The questionnaire had been distributed on 2-9 December 2021. The target of the questionnaire is Muslim from various countries in the world. Link to access the author's

digital questionnaire sent to several Whatsapp groups, also through private messages and through social media Facebook, Youtube and Twitter.

The following is a list of questions in the questionnaire distributed to the respondents: (1) Are you Muslim? (2) In which country do you live? (3) In which city do you live? (4) Have you ever heard the name Indonesia? (5) Did you know that Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country in the world? (6) Did you know that Indonesia is a country rich in tourist attractions? (7) Have you ever heard the name Bandung City? (8) Did you know that Bandung City is a Muslim-majority city? (9) Did you know that Bandung City is a city that is rich in tourist attractions? (10) Have you ever visited Indonesia? (11) Do you have a desire to visit Indonesia? (12) Have you ever visited Bandung City? (13) Do you have a desire to visit Bandung City? (14) Do you attach importance to halal services in traveling? (15) Do you consider the halal tourism branding of a city or country important? (16) Does the halal tourism branding increase your desire or belief to visit that city or country? (17) If you had to choose from two Muslim-populated tourist cities, which city would you choose: One that does halal tourism branding or one that doesn't?

Triangulation of data sources for this study used observations, interviews, documents, or archives from internet to verify the clarity of information related to halal tourism in Bandung. This study also interviewed more than one subject who is considered to have different points of view. This method may produce different evidence or data, which can then provide a different view of the phenomenon for triangulation process.

Results and Discussions

After collecting the responses from the respondents for about a week (2-9 December 2021), the data has been collected. The following are the countries of origin (and amount) of the respondents: Egypt (2), United Kingdom (2), France (1), India (1), Indonesia (1), Palestine (3), Jordania (1), Malaysia (5), Morocco (1), Singapore (20), Turkey (1), UAE (1), USA (1), Uzbekistan (1), & Bahrain (1). So the total respondents achieves 42. All respondents already know about Indonesia as a country but 2 (4.8%) of them don't know that Indonesia has the biggest Muslim population in the world, and 39 (92.9%) of them agree that Indonesia is a tourism country.

If the respondents are grouped by region, it will be presented as follows:

Table 1. Respondents by region

No	Region	Country	Amount of Respondent	%
1	Europe	Turkey, UK, France	4	9.5%
2	USA	USA	1	2.3%
3	Middle East	Jordania, UAE, Bahrain, Palestine	6	14.2%
4	Central Asia	Uzbekistan, India	2	4.7%
5	South East Asia	Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia	26	61.9%
6	Africa	Egypt, Morocco	3	7.1%
			42	100%

Source: Author's Data Processing, 2021

From the table above, we can see that the largest number of respondents are from the Southeast Asia region. Meanwhile, the second rank is the Middle East region. This composition is sufficient to represent the total Muslim population in the world as well as the halal tourism market segment in Bandung and Indonesia.

The author has also recapitulated the data on the cities of origin of the respondents so that data on the names of the cities where the respondents live appears. Some of the entries from the respondents have been adjusted by the author so that the data is easier to present. The following are the names of the cities where the respondents live, namely Manama (Bahrain), Cairo (Egypt), Lyon (France), Nainital (India), Batam and Bandung (Indonesia), Jerusalem &

Alquds (Palestine), Amman (Jordania), Seremban, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya, (Malaysia), Marrakesh (Morocco), Singapore (Singapore), Istanbul (Turkey), Dubai (Uni Emirate Arab), Chelsea and Liverpool (The United Kingdom), Sacramento (The United States of America), and Tashkent (Uzbekistan).

To confirm the respondents' beliefs, the author asks the question about their religion. The result that 100% respondents answered that they were Muslims. This question and response are important and basic because, halal tourism is closely related to Muslim-friendly tourism.

In the next step, the author wants to know their knowledge about Indonesia and Bandung City. This is important to ask because their knowledge of Indonesia and Bandung, especially about the religion of the majority of the population, will relate to their belief in the halal tourism services they may receive.

When asked about the City of Bandung, 40 people (95.2%) claimed to have heard the name Bandung City, but only 35 people (83.3%) knew that Bandung is a city with a majority Muslim population and a tourism city.

Authors also need to know their desire to visit Indonesia. This is important because it can be a reference for the tourist attraction of Bandung City in the view of Muslim tourists. This can also be a hope for Bandung City tourism policy makers if the respondents have plans to visit Bandung City.

When asked about their experience and desire to visit, 34 (81%) respondents claimed to have visited Indonesia, 40 (95.2%) respondents wanted to visit Indonesia, 25 (59.5%) had visited Bandung, and 39 (92 ,9%) want to visit Bandung City.

An interesting finding from the answers of these respondents is that the number who want to visit is always greater than those who have visited. This indicates that most Muslim tourists want to come back to Indonesia and Bandung City. This can also be an indicator of the satisfaction of Muslim tourists on previous visits. From the data above, we can also find out that even without halal tourism branding, the respondents already have the desire to visit the city of Bandung.

Regarding the value of halal in tourism activities, 40 (95.2%) respondents consider halal service in tourism important. Meanwhile, 39 (92.9%) consider halal tourism branding important and agree that halal tourism branding can increase interest and trust in visiting the city.
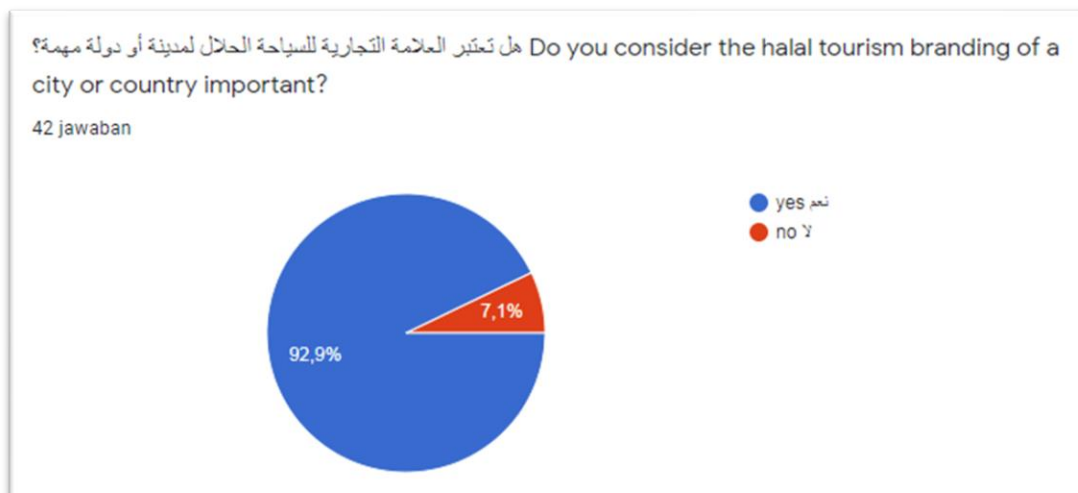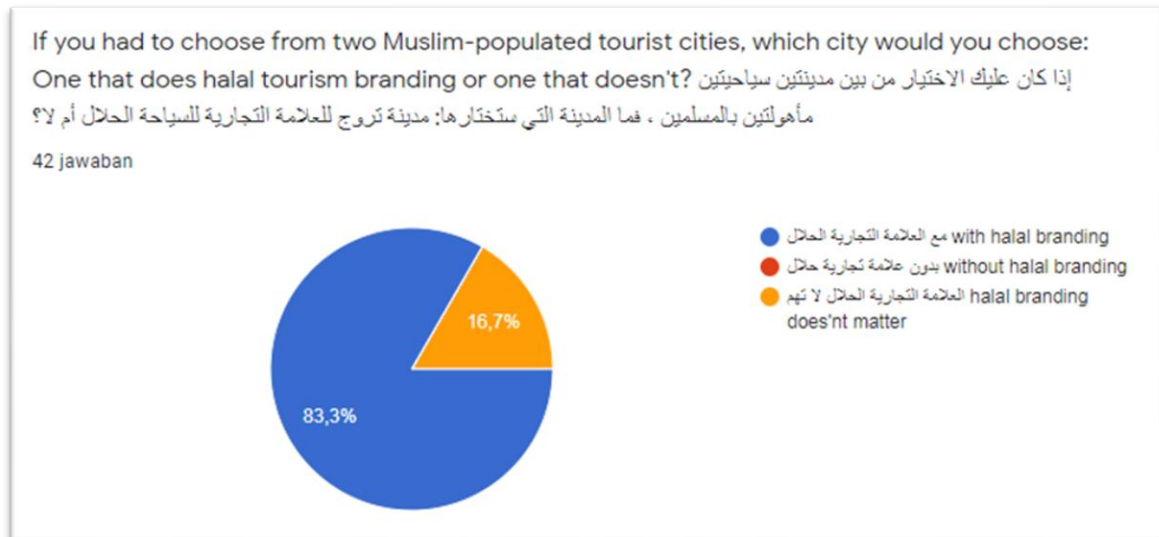

Source: Author's Data Processing, 2021
Figure 2. Response upon the importance of halal tourism branding of a city

From the data above, it is clear that Muslim tourists not only attach importance to halal tourism services, but also require clear communication regarding the status of halal for all services they receive during their trip. They also believe that the branding of halal tourism will increase the trust and interest of tourists to visit the city.

The researcher also gave the following choice questions: If you had to choose from two Muslim-populated tourist cities, which city would you choose: One that does halal tourism branding or one that doesn't?, For this question, the author provides three answer options, namely (a) a city with halal branding, (b) a city without halal branding, and (c) not having a problem with halal tourism branding.

Source: Author's Data Processing, 2021
Figure 3. Responses upon the plan or decision of visit based on halal tourism branding

Based on the answers of the respondents above, it is clear that they are all Muslims from various countries which are quite representative to represent the halal tourism market segment. They already know Indonesia and the city of Bandung, although only 59.5% have visited Bandung. According to figure 3, the respondent's answer was 35 (83.3 %) chose a city with halal tourism branding, and 7 (16.7%) did not mind the halal branding.

As a business process, branding is a deliberate activity. Thus, of course, this intentional activity has a specific purpose. According to Neumeier, the goals of branding include differentiating product brands from competing brands, facilitating promotional activities, building an image, providing confidence or trust, providing quality assurance, giving prestige, and helping market control (Salehudin & Luthfi, 2010). Branding contributes to competitive advantage by creating associations in the minds of consumers between named products and various other attributes so that consumers not only buy physical products or services but also various other intangible symbolic benefits (Damiasih & Isdarmanto, 2019).

According to Philip Kotler, branding is the use of a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination of these, which is designed to identify goods or services or a particular group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors (Kotler, 2017). Meanwhile, Hermawan Kertajaya defines branding as an asset that creates value for customers by increasing satisfaction and appreciation for product quality (Kladou et al., 2017)

From the development of the understanding of branding, the author will refer to the broadest understanding. As described by Firman Juliansyah in his book, branding is no longer just an identity or differentiator, but has become a product image, producer promises, quality assurance, accumulated consumer experience with certain products, and even has economic value/equity (Handriana, 2017).

Another important finding is that they have visited Indonesia and still have the desire to visit Indonesia again. Likewise for the city of Bandung, the number who want to visit the city of Bandung is quite high, both for those who have visited and those who have never visited. Moreover, they attach great importance to the value of halal in tourism services, including halal tourism branding.

Branding activities can be applied to goods and services. Branding activities can also be applied to countries, places, cities and tourist destinations. The spirit is the same, the only difference is the area, the character of the area, the process and the actors (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015).

Place branding can be defined as the process used by public administrations to intend to create a place brand, a network of associations in the minds of the target group "based on the visual, verbal, and behavioral expressions of a place, manifested through common goals, communication, values and culture, place stakeholders and overall place design (Ramadhanti et al., 2016). Many place names are also brand names: people respond to place names as they respond to brand names, place names can gain or lose equity (Dirgiatmo et al., 2019).

Meanwhile, within the city scope, city marketing relies heavily on the construction, communication, and management of city image, based on perception. Therefore city image is the starting point for developing a city brand. City branding provides the basis for developing policies to pursue economic development and serves as a channel for resident cities to identify their cities. City branding is based on a combination of city marketing measures and city brand management components (Shafaei & Mohamed, 2015).

In a smaller scope, there are tourism destinations that can also be branded. Destination branding is related to the idea of creating a uniqueness that distinguishes one place from another in order to gain competitive brand value (Simoes & Dibb, 2001). Destination branding is one of the most powerful and innovative tools of a destination marketing strategy (Hultman et al., 2017).

According to Buhalis, destination branding is branding related to a particular area that is understood by tourists as a unique entity (Buhalis, 2000). Meanwhile, according to Cai, destination branding can build a positive image by combining unique things from a place (Cai, 2009). This can be interpreted that destination branding is a step to build a positive image of the country and includes marketing its tourism. Destination branding is needed so that the perception between place managers and visitors has the same understanding of tourist destinations.

Destination branding consists of two elements, namely brand identity and brand image. Brand identity is the way marketers create their image by displaying all or part of tourism such as nature, culture, society, or anything that can be displayed to the public. Meanwhile, brand image is the perception captured by the recipient of the message towards the tourist destination (Kladou et al., 2017).

Marketing policy is a major part of the national tourism strategy. As a promising market niche, halal tourism also needs to be marketed to raise awareness, attract more tourists, generate more income and sustain sectoral growth. A good marketing strategy needs to go through market research and implement the right marketing mix.

The term halal by the International Union of Muslim Scholars is interpreted as everything that is allowed or doing something in accordance with Allah's law (Qardhawi, 2003). Thus, the definition of halal means permissible according to Islamic teachings. Halal is one of the five laws (al-ahkam al-khamsah) in Islam. The other four laws are haram (strongly prohibited), fard (mandatory), mustahabb (recommended), and makruh (should not be done) (Al-Faruki, 1966). Halal in the context of tourism refers to activities in the realm of tourism that are permitted by Islamic teachings (Mohamed Battour & Mohd Nazari Ismail, 2015; Djakfar, 2017). Halal tourism is tourism that is supported by various facilities and services provided by the government, entrepreneurs or the public that meet sharia provisions (Jaelani, 2017).

Halal tourism can be consumed by almost everyone because its products and services are universally applicable. Halal tourism products and services are no different from conventional ones as long as they do not violate the values of Islamic teachings. As stated by the WTO, consumers of halal tourism are not only Muslims but also non-Muslims who want to enjoy local wisdom (Riyanto, 2012).

The concept of halal tourism is the implementation of Islamic values in tourism activities. It is the actualization of the concept of Islam where the value of halal or haram is the main parameter. This means that all aspects of tourism activities cannot be separated from halal certification as a reference for every actor in the halal tourism industry (Chookaew et all, 2015: 739). The concept of halal tourism can also be interpreted as a tourist activity based on the motivation

of worship or da'wah. When a Muslim travels, he can glorify Allah's creation (tafakkur 'alam) by continuing to carry out obligatory prayers and other obligations (Ismail, 2013)

Meanwhile, the definition of halal tourism according to the West Java Halal Tourism Guidelines is very simple, namely all tourism activities that can meet the needs of Muslim tourists (West Java Halal Tourism Guidelines, 2019).

Establishing an effective marketing strategy in the halal tourism sector is a challenging task given the increasingly fierce competition between countries. Interestingly, this competition is not only between OIC member countries. Many countries with non-majority Muslim populations such as Thailand, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Singapore, Japan and others entered the market and started to serve a wide range of Islamic tourism products and services.

In addition to increasingly fierce competition, the main challenge in the realm of Islamic tourism is the issue of standardization and halal certification. In contrast to conventional tourists, Muslim tourists demand halal-standard services. But the good news, according to a survey conducted in 2016, 74% of tourists in the halal tourism market said they were willing to pay extra to receive customized products and services to meet their religious needs (COMCEC, Muslim Friendly Tourism: Developing and Marketing MFT Products and Services in the OIC Member Countries, 2016b)

According to Comcec, an effective marketing strategy in the tourism sector typically includes the following items: product development, branding, pricing, positioning and promotion. Integrating these items is not an easy task in determining an effective Islamic tourism marketing strategy. This combination will also be influenced by the existing Islamic tourism ecosystem in tourist countries, target groups and segments, infrastructure quality, global outlook, and strategies of other countries. It is also important to know the profile of Muslim tourists and calibrate a balanced marketing and promotion strategy for Islamic tourism products and services, which can usually be obtained through market research (COMCEC, Muslim Friendly Tourism: Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries, 2017).

As an industrial activity, halal tourism also requires a good branding concept. However, halal tourism requires a slight adjustment of the concept compared to the branding of other products. In an effort to package the potential of halal tourism, it is necessary to use a destination branding approach, namely the display in the form of names, symbols, logos, slogans, or images that can characterize certain destinations and differentiate them from others. In addition, he is expected to be a memorable attraction (Ritchie, J. R. Brent; Robin J. B. Ritchie., 1998).

Destination branding in the context of halal tourism marketing, still uses the same principles. What sets it apart is an understanding of the identity of the destination to be marketed, an understanding of the targeted market segment, and the values that are believed by the targeted market segment. Everything must be brought together in a branding concept that is easy to understand but leaves a good impression.

Broadly speaking, marketing and promotion strategies in halal tourism need to provide the necessary information to potential visitors about the state of services in five main sub-sectors, namely food and beverage, accommodation, transportation services, travel services, and tourism activities. In addition, other information must be included with all forms of adjustment.

Conclusions

Thus, it is quite clear that if we are targeting Muslim tourist visits to Bandung (and very possibly to other cities or countries), halal tourism branding is an important thing to do because it influences plans or visiting decisions. Although the charm of Bandung tourism without halal tourism branding remains attractive to tourists, the application of Bandung City halal tourism branding will increase the desire and trust of Muslim tourists to travel in Bandung City. Halal tourism branding can also be an added value for the City of Bandung compared to other cities such as Yogyakarta, Bali, Jakarta, or others.

Further studies should discuss the ideal concept of halal tourism branding and the right channels to make halal tourism branding did not get any rejection. The ideal concept was needed to avoid negative responses from potential tourists, industry players, and the people of Bandung. This is important to be studied further because as we know, there are some Indonesian people who reject the concept, development, including branding of halal tourism for certain destinations.

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