

The Role of Environmental Responsibility and Community Support in Halal Tourism Development

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of environmental responsibility and community support in shaping perceptions of halal tourism through the Social-Ecological Systems (SES) Theory. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and a survey-based approach, data were collected from 300 respondents across three major halal tourism destinations in Indonesia: Lombok, Aceh, and West Sumatra. The findings reveal that community support significantly influences the perception of halal tourism, highlighting the importance of cultural alignment and local participation in tourism development. Additionally, environmental responsibility positively affects perceptions of halal tourism, suggesting that sustainable practices enhance the sector's appeal. The study emphasizes that integrating ecological concerns with community engagement fosters a more inclusive and sustainable halal tourism model. These insights contribute to the growing discourse on sustainable tourism, offering practical implications for policymakers and industry stakeholders in designing effective halal tourism strategies. By aligning tourism development with environmental stewardship and local community interests, halal tourism can achieve long-term success while maintaining cultural and ecological sustainability.

1. Introduction

Halal tourism has garnered significant global attention (Rasul, 2019; Ainin et al., 2020; Jafar et al., 2024), appealing to a diverse range of markets by aligning tourism experiences with Islamic principles (Pradhita, 2024). This sector leverages cultural, religious, and lifestyle preferences to attract a growing base of Muslim and non-Muslim tourists seeking ethical and family-friendly travel options (Nofandi et al., 2023). However, as destinations aim to capture this emerging market, there is a pressing need to balance the economic benefits with the environmental and cultural impacts on local communities. Achieving this balance requires a comprehensive understanding of how halal tourism influences and is influenced by the intricate relationships between tourists, local residents, and ecological systems.

Social-Ecological Systems (SES) Theory (Ostrom, 2009) offers a robust framework for analyzing the dynamic interactions within halal tourism. This theory emphasizes the interdependence of human and ecological systems, providing a structured approach to explore how tourism activities impact and are

impacted by local environmental and cultural contexts. Despite its potential, current research predominantly focuses on individual intentions and behaviors toward halal tourism, leaving critical gaps in understanding how collective factors, such as community support, environmental concerns, and cultural acceptance, shape the overall perception and sustainability of halal tourism.

This study addresses this gap by analyzing how these factors—community acceptance, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits—interact to influence the perceptions of halal tourism. By investigating the perspectives of both tourists and residents, the study seeks to uncover how these key variables collectively shape attitudes toward halal tourism. Such insights are essential for identifying the potential of halal tourism to foster sustainable, community-aligned tourism models that benefit all stakeholders.

To achieve this, the study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the interrelationships between community support, environmental integration, and tourism perception. SEM allows for a nuanced

analysis of how these variables influence one another, providing deeper insights into the interconnectedness of human and ecological factors within halal tourism. Framed by the SES Theory, this approach highlights the critical role of integrating human-environment interactions into tourism development strategies, ensuring that economic growth does not come at the expense of environmental and cultural sustainability.

The findings from this study will contribute to the development of marketing strategies that resonate with community values and promote environmental stewardship. By prioritizing sustainability and cultural alignment, these strategies can enhance the appeal of halal tourism across diverse cultural contexts. Ultimately, this research aims to provide actionable insights for policymakers, marketers, and tourism developers to design halal tourism models that are inclusive, sustainable, and culturally sensitive, thereby ensuring long-term success in this rapidly growing sector.

2. Literature Review

The following sections explore the literature on each of these critical factors. First, the role of community acceptance in tourism development is examined, highlighting its significance in fostering positive relationships between tourists and locals. Next, the concept of environmental responsibility in tourism is discussed, emphasizing the increasing demand for sustainable tourism practices and their relevance to halal tourism.

Finally, the impact of perceived benefits on tourism perception is explored, with particular attention given to how these benefits intersect with the cultural, environmental, and religious aspects of halal tourism. The review concludes with the presentation of the study's hypotheses, which aim to investigate the direct effects of these factors on perceptions of halal tourism.

2.1 Halal Tourism

While existing studies have investigated individual attitudes and behaviors toward halal tourism, limited research has examined the collective influence of community support, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits. Furthermore, the application of SES Theory in halal tourism remains sparse, highlighting the need for a holistic approach to understanding the interconnected factors that shape perceptions and support for halal tourism.

2.2 Social-Ecological Systems (SES) Theory in Tourism Studies

Social-Ecological Systems (SES) Theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of human activities and ecological systems, making it a valuable lens for analyzing tourism dynamics (Ostrom, 2009). In tourism studies, SES Theory has been applied to assess how tourism affects local communities and ecosystems, particularly in sustainable tourism development (Tu et al., 2021). The theory underscores the importance of balancing stakeholder needs, fostering community support, and mitigating environmental degradation to ensure long-term sustainability (Elegbede et al., 2023). This study extends the SES framework to halal tourism, focusing on how community acceptance, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits interact to shape perceptions of halal tourism.

2.3 Community Acceptance and Tourism Development

Community support plays a critical role in the success of tourism development. Residents who perceive tourism as beneficial are more likely to support its growth, contributing to a harmonious relationship between tourists and locals (Sharpley, 2014). In the context of halal tourism, community acceptance is influenced by cultural compatibility and the perceived alignment of tourism activities with local values and traditions (Berakon et al., 2023). However, the lack of community involvement in decision-making processes can lead to resistance and

dissatisfaction, undermining the long-term viability of halal tourism initiatives.

2.4 Environmental Responsibility in Tourism

Environmental sustainability is a cornerstone of responsible tourism development. Tourists are increasingly seeking environmentally friendly options, while destinations face pressure to minimize ecological footprints (Chakraborty, 2021). Halal tourism's alignment with ethical and sustainable practices provides a unique opportunity to integrate environmental considerations into its framework. However, research is limited on how environmental integration influences the perceptions and support for halal tourism among residents and tourists alike.

2.5 Perceived Benefits and Tourism Perception

Perceived benefits—such as economic opportunities, cultural exchange, and improved infrastructure—are significant predictors of positive attitudes toward tourism (Ribeiro et al., 2017). In halal tourism, these benefits often extend to religious and spiritual fulfillment, enhancing its appeal among Muslim tourists. However, understanding how these perceived benefits interact with environmental and cultural considerations remains underexplored.

While existing studies (Juliana et al., 2021; Ratnasari et al., 2021; Al-Ansi et al., 2023) have investigated individual attitudes and behaviors toward halal tourism, limited research has examined the collective influence of community support, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits. Furthermore, the application of SES Theory in halal tourism remains sparse, highlighting the need for a holistic approach to understanding the interconnected factors that shape perceptions and support for halal tourism.

Based on the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1 : Community acceptance positively affects perception of halal tourism.

H2 : Environmental responsibility positively affects perceptions of halal tourism.

H3 : Perceived benefits positively affects perception of halal tourism.

3. Research Methods

This study employs a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships between community acceptance, environmental responsibility, perceived benefits, and perceptions of halal tourism. The study integrates Social-Ecological Systems (SES) Theory to provide a holistic framework for understanding the dynamics of halal tourism development in Indonesia.

3.1 Population and Sampling

The population for this study consists of residents and stakeholders involved in or affected by halal tourism activities. This includes community members, local business owners, and government officials in regions recognized for halal tourism. The study focuses on three key halal tourism destinations in Indonesia, namely:

1. Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) A leading halal tourism destination with strong government support and an established tourism infrastructure.
2. Aceh A province with a distinctive Islamic culture and strong community regulations regarding halal tourism.
3. West Sumatra Known for its integration of Minangkabau cultural values and halal-friendly tourism development.

A stratified random sampling method is used to ensure diverse representation of stakeholders across these regions. Based on prior studies and the number of parameters analyzed, a sample size of 300 respondents was collected to ensure robust statistical analysis.

3.2 Measurement and Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed using validated scales adapted from existing literature:

1. Community Acceptance Adapted from Gursoy et al. (2010) and Rahman et al. (2019).
2. Environmental Responsibility Adapted from Buckley (2012).
3. Perceived Benefits Adapted from Nunkoo & Ramkissoon (2011).
4. Perceptions of Halal Tourism – Designed to measure the alignment with SES Theory dimensions.

The survey was administered via an online platform (Google Form) to reach a wider audience while ensuring efficient data collection.

3.3 Data Analysis

The study employs regression analysis to examine the direct effects of community acceptance, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits on perceptions of halal tourism. The analysis also explores how Indonesia's diverse cultural and religious backgrounds influence halal tourism acceptance among different societal groups. By incorporating multiple destinations, this study provides insights into the broader acceptance and sustainability of halal tourism across Indonesia's multicultural and multireligious landscape.

4. Results and Discussion

The regression model demonstrated a good fit, explaining 62.5% of the variance in perceptions of halal tourism, as indicated by the R^2 value in Table 1.

Table 1. Model Summary

Statistic	Value
R^2	0.625
Adjusted R^2	0.620
Standard Error	0.45
F-statistic	156.23
p-value (F-test)	<0.001

This study aimed to examine the factors influencing perceptions of halal tourism, focusing on three key predictors: community acceptance, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits. Using regression analysis with data collected from 300 respondents, each variable was measured using four indicators to ensure comprehensive coverage of the constructs. The results provide a robust understanding of the direct effects of these predictors on perceptions of halal tourism.

4.1 Research Results

Based on the regression analysis, Community acceptance emerged as a strong and significant predictor of perceptions of halal tourism, with a regression coefficient of $B = 0.45$ ($p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that for every one-unit increase in community acceptance, perceptions of halal tourism improve by 0.45 units. This positive relationship underscores the importance of societal support and involvement in fostering favorable attitudes toward halal tourism. Communities that actively participate in and endorse halal tourism initiatives help build trust and legitimacy, creating a conducive environment for the development and promotion of such tourism practices. This highlights the need for inclusive engagement strategies that empower communities to play an active role in shaping tourism policies and practices.

Environmental responsibility also showed a significant positive effect on perceptions of halal tourism, with a regression coefficient of $B = 0.35$ ($p < 0.001$). This result demonstrates that sustainable practices are crucial in shaping favorable views of halal tourism. Travelers and stakeholders increasingly prioritize destinations and tourism initiatives that adhere to environmental stewardship, such as minimizing ecological impacts, conserving natural resources, and supporting eco-friendly infrastructure. The findings highlight the growing alignment between sustainability values and halal tourism principles, suggesting that integrating environmentally responsible measures can

enhance the sector's appeal while contributing to broader global sustainability goals.

Perceived benefits were also identified as a significant determinant of positive perceptions of halal tourism, with a regression coefficient of $B = 0.40$ ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that for every one-unit increase in the recognition of benefits associated with halal tourism, perceptions improve by 0.40 units. These benefits may include economic growth, cultural preservation, community development, and enhanced well-being for local populations. By effectively communicating these advantages to stakeholders, policymakers and tourism developers can foster stronger support for halal tourism initiatives. This finding highlights the importance of creating and showcasing both tangible and intangible benefits to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of halal tourism projects.

4.2 Research Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors shaping perceptions of halal tourism. With an R^2 value of 0.625, the regression model demonstrates a good fit, indicating that the predictors—community acceptance, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits—explain 62.5% of the variance in perceptions of halal tourism. This strong explanatory power underscores the relevance of these factors in understanding how individuals perceive halal tourism.

Community acceptance emerged as the most influential predictor, with a regression coefficient ($B = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that greater community support and involvement significantly enhance perceptions of halal tourism. This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing the importance of societal endorsement in promoting inclusive tourism practices. Environmental responsibility also showed a significant positive effect ($B = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$), reflecting the growing importance of sustainability in tourism preferences. Travelers and stakeholders increasingly prioritize environmentally conscious practices, which

contribute to positive perceptions of halal tourism.

Perceived benefits were another significant predictor ($B = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting that individuals' recognition of the advantages associated with halal tourism—such as cultural preservation, economic growth, and improved local welfare—positively shapes their perceptions. This aligns with the notion that perceived tangible and intangible benefits play a pivotal role in fostering support for tourism initiatives.

Overall, the results demonstrate that community engagement, sustainable practices, and clear communication of benefits are critical in enhancing perceptions of halal tourism. These findings provide actionable insights for policymakers and tourism developers seeking to strengthen the appeal of halal tourism, ensuring it aligns with the values and expectations of diverse stakeholders. Future research could explore additional factors, such as cultural and religious motivations, to further refine the understanding of perceptions in this context.

5. Closing

5.1 Conclusion

This study highlights the critical role of community acceptance, environmental responsibility, and perceived benefits in shaping perceptions of halal tourism. With a robust regression model explaining 62.5% of the variance in perceptions, the findings underscore the importance of these predictors in understanding and enhancing the appeal of halal tourism. Community acceptance emerged as the most influential factor, demonstrating that societal support and involvement are key to fostering positive perceptions. Environmental responsibility and perceived benefits also significantly contribute, reflecting the increasing emphasis on sustainable practices and the tangible advantages of halal tourism, such as cultural preservation and economic growth.

These results provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and

tourism developers to focus on community engagement, promote sustainable practices, and clearly communicate the benefits of halal tourism to stakeholders. By aligning tourism initiatives with these factors, the sector can better meet the expectations of diverse audiences and promote inclusive and sustainable development. Future research should consider exploring additional variables, such as cultural and religious motivations, to deepen the understanding of factors influencing halal tourism perceptions.

5.2 Suggestion

Building on the findings of this study, future research could explore additional variables that may influence perceptions of halal tourism, such as cultural and religious motivations, destination image, and service quality. These factors could provide a more holistic understanding of the drivers behind perceptions of halal tourism. Furthermore, incorporating demographic and psychographic segmentation could reveal how different population groups, such as tourists from varying cultural or religious backgrounds, perceive halal tourism differently.

Longitudinal studies could also be conducted to examine how perceptions evolve over time, particularly in response to changes in community engagement, environmental practices, or policy initiatives. Cross-cultural or cross-regional comparisons may offer valuable insights into how the significance of these predictors varies across different sociocultural and economic contexts. Finally, integrating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could provide a deeper exploration of the nuanced factors and personal experiences that shape perceptions of halal tourism. These efforts would enhance the theoretical framework and practical applications of halal tourism development strategies.

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