

The Potential of Halal Tourism Development in Mangrove Mulyoasri Ectourism, Pekalongan Regency

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out how the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism is managed, as well as to analyze the potential for developing halal tourism in the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism in Mulyorejo. This research uses a type of field research with a qualitative approach. Data sources are divided into two, primary and secondary. Primary data was collected from interviews with the head of the Mulyorejo Village Farmers' group, namely M Ridho and the Head of the Mulyoasri Mangrove School, namely Tugiyo. While secondary data is taken from articles, journals, theses, books that are still related to the research topic. Methods of data collection is done by interviews, observation, and documentation. While data analysis includes three activities namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that in Ecotourism Mangrove Mulyoasri there are community activities based on nature education called 'mangrove schools'. Mangrove school to provide education to visitors who come about everything related to mangroves or mangroves. So that those who come don't just get the excitement of a vacation, but also have positive provisions that they can remember for later. In addition, the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism in general has also included three features of halal tourism. First, it's a family-friendly destination. Second, services and facilities in Muslim-friendly destinations. Third, halal awareness and marketing objectives. However, these three indicators are not perfect because they are still in the development process. Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism together with the convenience of the community and natural beauty has the potential to be packaged and marketed as "Halal Tourism".

Keywords: Halal Tourism, Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism, Pekalongan Regency

1. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world. It is noted that in 2021, the total population of Indonesia who is Muslim is 231.06 million people based on data from The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center (RISSC) or MABDA in its report entitled "Muslim 500". This figure places this equatorial country as the country with the world's largest Muslim population. With this amount, Indonesia has the potential to become a player in the halal industry. The halal industry is also one of the sectors being pursued by the government with the aim of improving and building the country's economy during the current crisis. BUMN Minister Erick Thohir said in an event that the halal

industry in Indonesia would develop even better if we are committed to always implementing it in our daily lives, if it is accompanied by innovation and collaboration. Indonesia's role in the global halal industry is still far below that of Malaysia. Referring to the "State of the Global Islamic Economy (SGIE) report 2022" data launched by the Dinar Standard, Indonesia is still in fourth place out of 81 countries with a score of 68.5. Malaysia is in first place with a score of 207.2, followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with a score of 97.8 and 90.2 respectively (Sarnita Sadya, 2022).

One sector of the halal industry is halal tourism. Halal tourism is a relatively new concept in current tourism science. In Indonesia, the development of halal tourism is one of the priority programs of the Ministry of Tourism, which has been implemented since seven years ago, or more precisely in 2014. Then since 2016, the ministry of tourism has projected 10 provinces in Indonesia to become sharia tourist destinations, namely Aceh, Riau, West Sumatra, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java (Malang), South Sulawesi (Makassar and its surroundings) (Aurelia, 2019). The area was chosen because considering the existence of a social-culture that is closely related to Islamic values and is also supported by its natural beauty (Noviantoro & Zurohman, 2020).

Halal tourism does not mean non-Muslims cannot travel to Indonesia, but it needs to be understood that the definition of halal tourism according to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) is having an ecosystem of religion-based services such as halal food, prayer facilities, restrooms that have water for ablution, and not Islamophobic environment. The main issue in halal tourism is how tourist attractions can foster comfort and security by not forgetting the obligation of faith and understanding it through the journey of historical and cultural heritage (Sunarmo, 2021).

The aim of developing halal tourism is to meet the needs of the Muslim tourist market for the availability of tourist accommodations that are in accordance with Islamic law. According to the COMCEC report (2016) there are several criteria for the needs of Muslim tourists when traveling which are called faith-based needs (Pratiwi et al., 2018). These needs include the availability of:

Faith Based Needs:

- (1) Halal food;
- (2) Decent prayer facilities;
- (3) Services during the month of Ramadan;
- (4) Water friendly washrooms;
- (5) Recreational facilities that provide privacy; and
- (6) There are no non-halal activities.

One of the world tourism trends is focused on nature-based and environmentally friendly tourism. Many people know this type of tourism as ecotourism. Ecotourism is an ideal term for efforts to increase people's welfare without destroying nature and even becoming a driving force for more optimal nature conservation efforts (Achmad Siddik Thoha, 2018).

Indonesia has the potential for beauty and natural wealth that is of high value in the natural tourism industry market, especially ecotourism. As a trending form of tourism, ecotourism has its own special characteristics, namely prioritizing environmental conservation, environmental education, the welfare of local residents and respecting local culture. In recent years, the growth of ecotourism has been very rapid. The reason is that many countries carry out massive ecotourism promotions and attractions in order to take advantage and opportunities in the growing ecotourism market. Based on a report by the World Travel Tourism Council (WTTC), the average growth of ecotourism is 10% per year. This figure is higher than the annual average for tourism in general, which is 40% in Europe and Latin America and 25% in Asia Pacific (Pelokila & Sagala, 2019).

One form of ecotourism is mangrove ecotourism. Mangroves are a rare ecosystem, because they cover only 2% of the earth's surface. Indonesia is the largest mangrove ecosystem area in the world, namely 23% of all mangrove forests. This ecosystem has very crucial ecological, socio-economic, and socio-cultural functions; for example maintaining coastal stability from abrasion, a source of fish, shrimp and other biodiversity, a source of firewood and building wood, and has the function of conservation, education, ecotourism and cultural identity (Majid et al., 2016).

Pekalongan in Central Java Province is home to a variety of tourist attractions, including religious, cultural, natural and man-made tourism. One of the natural areas where there is a mangrove forest is located in Mulyorejo Village, Tirta District, Pekalongan Regency. In Mulyorejo Village, there is a mangrove forest which has now been managed as an ecotourism. Mulyorejo Village, which is located in Pekalongan Regency, has a mangrove area which is now starting to be developed optimally. One way to optimize the mangrove area is with ecotourism activities. Ecotourism is a concept of sustainable tourism development that aims to support efforts to preserve the environment (nature and culture) and increase community participation in management, thereby providing economic benefits to the local community and government, and providing opportunities for present and future generations to exploit and develop it (Unesco, 2009).

The Mulyorejo mangrove ecotourism, which is named "Mangrove Mulyoasri Ecotourism" is a new tourist attraction in Pekalongan Regency which has only been running for the past year. Even though it has only been running for one year, Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism has carried out several activities and provided several facilities that can be enjoyed by visitors and the surrounding community.

The purpose of this article is to define or explain the development of halal tourism potential in the Mulyoasri Mangrove ecotourism, Mulyorejo Village, based on the background described above. This research is important to do and has strategic importance for the millennial generation in the development of a halal tourism village in Mulyorejo Village which is currently being built in Pekalongan Regency.

2. Results and Discussion

Mulyorejo Village Natural Conditions

Mulyorejo is a village in Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency, Central Java Province. This village is located in the northernmost part of Tirto District. The following is a table for the boundaries of Mulyorejo Village:

Mulyorejo Village Boundary			
Eastern Boundary	West limit	Southern Limit	Northern Boundary
Desa Jeruksari	Sungai Sengkarang	Desa Tegaldowo	Laut Jawa

For years the residents of Mulyorejo Village, Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency have lived in the middle of a tidal wave (rob). Based on an interview with Muhammad Ridho (Chairman of the Banawa Sekar Mulyorejo Farmers Group), robs started to enter the village around 2010, and the worst was from 2013 to 2014. Nearly 80 percent of the area was affected by floods and tidal floods. Many rice fields and ponds have been neglected because they are no longer productive. Now residents can carry out normal activities and live more comfortably since the construction of an embankment that stretches for 495 meters so that the areas that are prone to rob are now dry because sea water no longer flows swiftly into residents' settlements.

"By looking at the condition of the Mulyorejo area which is mostly submerged, we can save the environment by planting mangroves. Because relying only on embankments is not a long-term solution. For the long term, as far as we know, we will make embankments naturally with mangroves," said Ridho.

Mulyorejo Village is indeed known as a flood-prone village, but at several points in this village there are mangrove forests that are still beautiful. The location is in the northernmost hamlet of Mulyorejo Village. The location of this mangrove forest is adjacent to the construction of a seawater retaining embankment. Natural conditions that are still beautiful with mangrove trees that adorn it are used by related parties to be managed into a new tour, which can attract tourists to visit Mulyorejo Village.

The History of Mulyo Asri Mangrove Ecotourism

This 4-hectare land used to be just a swamp where the local community planted mangrove trees in 2012. Then in June-July 2021, through the Banawa Sekar forest farmer group assisted by the Pekalongan District Forestry Service, 50,000 mangrove seedlings were planted on this land. This movement then continued with the idea of forming the Mulyoasri mangrove ecotourism in October 2021 with the help of non-governmental organizations with the facilities provided, including docks, food and drink stalls, vehicle parking areas, toilets, and of course interesting photo spots that made Mulyoasri mangrove one of the a recommended place for family tourism that is suitable for educational tours for children so they can get to know the mangrove ecosystem which has been known to have many benefits for nature.

Based on the author's interview with Tugiyo (Principal of the Mulyoasri Mangrove School), the history of the establishment of the Mulyoasri mangrove ecotourism began with flood volunteers in early 2021. At that time major floods due to high rain intensity hit Mulyorejo Village and its surroundings. After the flood subsided, flood volunteers in Mulyorejo Village finally agreed to revive Mulyorejo Village through social-environmental activities, namely establishing a mangrove ecotourism. "We were introduced to CDK4 or the Regional Forestry Service Branch IV, then we were given 50 thousand mangrove tree seedlings, which we planted in a place that had previously been used as a mangrove planting site in 2012," explained Tugiyo.

From the flood volunteers, a forestry farmer group was formed, which was named the Banawa Sekar farmer group. The Banawa Sekar farmer group initiated the program to establish the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism. "The chairman of the farmer group is Ridho and there are about 40 other members. We also had time to involve residents in nurseries and tourism management. Such as building a gazebo, tracing roads and others," said Tugiyo.

Halal Tourism Development Potential in Mulyo Asri Mangrove Ecotourism

The author wants to describe the results of field findings based on the results of interviews while conducting research, but before that a general description of halal tourism will be explained. Halal tourism or what is often called Sharia tourism is tourism in which natural, cultural or artificial origins are framed with Islamic values where the activities are supported by various facilities and services (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, spas) provided by the community, entrepreneurs, government, and local governments that comply with sharia/Islamic provisions (Rozi, 2021).

According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), which is the first reference for the standardization of the Indonesian halal tourism industry in 2016, there are three groups of halal tourism criteria reviewed. First, it's a family-friendly destination. Second, services and facilities in Muslim-friendly destinations. Third, halal awareness and destination marketing. Of these three criteria, there are 11 indicators. For the criteria for family-friendly destinations, the indicators include family-friendly destinations, general safety and for Muslim tourists, as well as the number of arrivals of Muslim tourists. In the second criterion, services and facilities at Muslim-friendly destinations, there are three derivative indicators, namely food choices and halal guarantees, access to worship, facilities at the airport, and accommodation options. Meanwhile, for the three criteria of halal awareness and destination marketing, the four derivative indicators are ease of communication, reach and awareness of the needs of Muslim tourists, air transportation connectivity, and visa requirements (Republika, 2016).

Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism in Mulyorejo Village generally includes all three criteria for halal tourism. Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism is family-friendly ecotourism, this is evidenced by the existence of tour packages for families, as well as the presence of a gazebo for families to gather. Apart from that, outbound, food packages, and interesting photo spots are also provided,

which can be enjoyed by the whole family. Visitors who come to the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism, as stated by Tugiyono, are 90% Muslim except for guests from foreign countries.

Regarding food and drinks, the menu offered at the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism is guaranteed to be Halal. Foods such as Tilapia Fish and Grilled Chicken are the main menu for visitors who want to feel the sensation of eating amidst mangrove trees. There are also processed mangrove fruit that are made into syrup and dodol which are directly processed and monitored. Regarding places of worship, in the Mulyoasri mangrove ecotourism there is no place for prayer. The place of worship is still under construction. However, not far from the Mulyoasri mangrove ecotourism exit, there is a prayer room 50 meters from the ecotourism site. The condition of the mosque is very good and easy to reach. Other facilities such as bathrooms are still under construction. The condition of the infrastructure, especially road access, is still constrained by the condition of the embankment which, if it rains, is still difficult to pass, especially for four-wheeled vehicles. Regarding security, we are still trying our best for security. Began to provide float safety equipment, experts and training.

The results of observations and interviews in the field show that, for example, in managing ecotourism, they collaborate with all elements of the community in Mulyorejo Village to utilize the mangrove forest area as an ecotourism destination. They optimize the beauty of the natural panorama of Mulyorejo Village as a natural tourist attraction, they take advantage of the natural potential as a cool family tourist attraction. Their partnership has resulted in the creation or presentation of tourist attractions in their village. The number of visitors to the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism continues to increase. This is also evidenced by the adequacy of the facilities and infrastructure for Ecotourism Mangrove Mulyoasri.

Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism together with community friendliness and natural beauty has the potential to be packaged and marketed as “Halal Tourism”. Mangrove forests are not left alone, but are used as new tourism to improve the quality of the village. In addition, with mangrove tourism, it also preserves the environment. Mangrove trees are believed to be one of the supports for warming from sea waters. In addition, mangroves also play a role in overcoming the problem of flooding in coastal areas. Mangrove fruit is also used by the local community to make syrup, then it is packaged and traded. As a result, the village of Mulyorejo and its residents will benefit.

This is in line with the efforts of the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration (Kemendes PDTT) to increase the income of rural communities through village tourism programs and superior rural products. The Ministry of Village PDTT RI welcomes the millennial generation to participate in developing and promoting the superior products of villages and tourist villages controlled by BUMDes in order to socialize the spirit of village development. In the millennial era, the creative ideas of the millennial generation and their presence on social media can become the main source of energy for village growth.

Halal Ecotourism Based on Nature Education

Apart from saving natural wealth and attractive scenery, in the mangrove ecotourism Mulyoasri also has a flagship program, namely the Mangrove School. The mangrove school held at the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism aims to provide education, especially for children, students, and students about the world of mangroves. According to Tugiyo, the mangrove school held by him was carried out in two sessions, sessions for the public and children.

The Mangrove School which was held invited speakers from the District Environmental Office and invited volunteers who are experts in their fields. In between giving the material, it will be interspersed with games so that the participants don't get bored and bored. The presenter will then explain the theory regarding the nursery and planting of mangrove trees, introduce the types of mangrove trees, and provide knowledge about the importance of mangrove trees for natural preservation.

The Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism Area is a place for nature schools that will provide learning or information about planting, introduction to mangroves and the benefits of the mangrove forest itself. The nature school was created to provide education to visitors who come about all things related to mangroves or mangroves. So that those who come don't just get the excitement of a vacation, but also have positive provisions that they can remember for later.

Providing Mangrove Education is Part of the Duty as Khalifah on Earth

What was initiated and carried out by the manager of the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism is a concrete form of protecting and caring for the surrounding environment. They not only pursue material gain, but also provide education about the importance of protecting nature. Providing education about mangroves to the public, especially to children means, apart from saving the earth, it also takes care of the next generation, because in the future it is these children who will continue as people who care about the environment. This generation has had provisions from an early age. By restoring or at least trying to protect the mangrove ecosystem, it shows that they are mandated as caliphs of the earth. People must be aware and maintain the trust properly. One of them is through real action to care for mangrove forests. In line with that, what the manager of the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism is doing is an action to revive the village atmosphere which was previously known as Flood Village, Rob Village, and so on, has now been changed to become a Tourism Village. These people (managers of the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism) are examples of God's creatures who are dedicated to caring for the earth, when people in other parts of the world are actually destroying the earth.

These ecotourism managers really implement religious values to find solutions to environmental problems. Islam as one of the religions on earth has explained how the duty of a human being as a caliph is to treat the earth as well as nature and its contents. QS. Al-Baqarah verse 60 mentions eat and drink the sustenance given by Allah SWT and do not do damage on earth. Then QS. Al-A'raf verse 56 mentions 'and do not make damage on earth, after (Allah) has

repaired it and pray to Him with fear (will not be accepted) and hope (will be granted)' (Hendra Maujana Saragih, 2022).

Given the importance of mangrove forests for the survival of the human environment, it is time for us to play an active role in preserving mangroves and preserving the environment, so that a better life can be created. Reforestation or replanting of damaged mangrove forests is an effort that needs to be encouraged. Protecting mangroves is part of concrete actions for our concern for the preservation of nature and life. Environmental sustainability is very important to us. Preserving mangrove forests is one of the most appropriate actions to preserve the environment (Desiana Wahyuningsih, 2021).

Meanwhile, the scope of mangrove forest conservation includes protection efforts, nature conservation in the form of setting aside areas as nature reserve areas for marine, coastal and mangrove forests. There should be intensive education for the community, especially around the coast, about the benefits and the importance of sustainability for the future (Anderson, 2021). And education for the community has been implemented in the Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism, Mulyorejo Village, Tirto District, Pekalongan Regency.

3. Conclusion

The majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim, thereby providing great opportunities and potential for the development of the halal industry in Indonesia. Abundant natural wealth on the coast which incidentally is a maritime country can be utilized and developed into ecotourism in the trending tourism sector. Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism in Mulyorejo Village is a form of innovation by the local community in seeing the potential that exists. The Mulyoasri Mangrove Ecotourism Destination is a halal-friendly tourist destination. Non-Muslim tourists can also enjoy destinations that provide social benefit values and unique experiences for Muslim tourists that are free from non-halal activities which are of course safe. The development of the ecotourism potential of the Mulyoasri Mangrove supports the economic growth of MSMEs and local communities.

The Mulyosari mangrove manager has implemented the principles of environmental welfare. They are not only material oriented, but also non-material. A well-maintained environment will undoubtedly provide benefits for human life. Especially if it prepares the younger generation to consistently care for nature, so that a well-maintained environment can be enjoyed in the future.

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