



## Implementation of Halal Tourism in Managing Forbidden River as a Sustainable Tourist Attraction in the Development of the Bilebante Green Tourism Village, Pringgarata Sub-District, Central Lombok District

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the development of sustainable tourist at Halal in the Bilebante Tourism Village. This study uses a qualitative method with an autoethnography approach. The stages of the research include planning, information collection, data analysis, and reporting. This autoethnographic approach was chosen as the research design because it sees the position of the author who is a key actor in the development of the Bilebante Green Tourism Village. The results of this study are (1) potential assets such as natural beauty. Natural wealth. Cultural wealth and local human resources are essential in developing Experiential Halal Tourism. (2) Innovative tourism creations are the main driving force in building Experiential Halal Tourism. (3) Tourist consumption plays a central role in shaping Experiential Halal Tourism. Overall, the close linkage between destination potential assets, innovative tourism creations, and responsive tourist consumption forms a solid foundation for developing Experiential Halal Tourism. This approach not only supports local economic growth and cultural preservation but also promotes environmental sustainability and respect for local Halal values, making it a sustainable and inclusive tourism model at the global level.

**Keywords:** *Halal Tourism; Sustainable Tourism; Innovative Tourism; Experiential Tourism*

### **Introduction**

The tourism industry remains strong as one of the largest industries in the world. In unstable conditions with the COVID-19 pandemic, this sector was severely affected, but this sector grew aggressively after the pandemic. This can be seen from Widi's presentation (2022), which shows that in 2022, the foreign exchange earnings of Indonesia's tourism sector experienced a surge of up to 769.39%, which reached US4.26 billion. This makes Utama (2017) still believe in the tourism sector as a driving engine of the world economy that contributes significantly to increasing the income and prosperity of a region, including Indonesia.

From a business point of view, the position and potential of the tourism sector are undoubtedly very profitable and promising. This has certainly attracted and becomes the industrial world's primary

focus and must be maintained and guaranteed sustainability. Tourism growth cannot be avoided from the surge in tourist visits, especially after the pandemic. This situation leads to over-tourism, indicated by the destination's physical, psychological, economic, and social capacity exceeding the limit. It creates high demands for destination development to continue to meet tourist demand and consumption by expanding the industrial area that focuses on the number of tourists to seek the highest profit.

Consequently, the development of the tourism industry will continue to experience economic growth and the community in the destination. This condition is then interpreted as a form of tourism that reflects the principles of sustainable development. This understanding is considered wrong by Sharpley (2020), but the reality for two decades has continued to develop in the tourism industry ecosystem.

Ira and Muhammad (2019) confirmed that the focus of destination development to date has been sustainable tourism development. According to Sharpley (2020), the term development is still unclear regarding tourism development. However, it is broadly understood as a process that a community or region goes through from one condition to another better condition, as well as the purpose of the process. Similarly, Clarke (2013) and White, McCrum, Blackstock, & Scott (2006) stated that sustainable tourism is understood as a goal of development that must be achieved. This indicates that the scope of sustainable tourism is vast and complex.

In essence, Sharpley (2000) mentions three basic principles of sustainable tourism development: (1) holistic approach, i.e., economic and environmental development must be integrated into socio-culture; (2) futurity, i.e., having a focus on long-term capacity and resources for the ecosystem; and (3) equity, i.e., fair and equitable development, providing opportunities for access and use of resources for all communities, both in the present and the future. White et al. (2006) also emphasized that the main principle of sustainable tourism is attached to the balance of environmental, economic, and social. Furthermore, the opinion of Pratama, Busaini, and Saufi (2020) suggests the management aspect of responsible management as a critical element that can glue and integrate aspects of sustainability (economic, social, and environmental).

In its development, implementing the concept of sustainable tourism is still a challenge and an exciting issue that will continue to be discussed. Sharpley (2000) suggested the basic principles of sustainable tourism as the characteristics of sustainable tourism products. However, his investigation (Sharpley, 2020) found that implementing this concept is still challenging to achieve and identify achievements. On the other hand, Haid and Albrecht (2021) built an understanding and reinterpretation of sustainable tourism from the perspective of tourism industry players who then found 13 characteristics of sustainable tourism products, namely quality, price and performance ratio, long-term goals, future-oriented; balanced management and distribution of benefits; promoting collaboration; returning to nature (close to nature); education and behavior change; efficient resources; authentic; promoting regionalism/local culture; attractiveness; and strategic thinking.

In the context of sustainable tourism implementation, tourism product development has an attachment to elements of regionalism, mobility, community engagement, digitalization, cultural attractions and traditional sports, and visitor satisfaction (Haid and Albrecht, 2021). This confirms that realizing sustainable tourism must involve local communities as the subject of development or community-based. The active involvement of the community as a whole is oriented toward conservation and empowerment (Sulistiyadi et al., 2019), which is the main foundation of sustainable tourism development. Thus, Pratama, Busaini, and Saufi (2020) describe tourism in the context of sustainability, including tourism activities that are developed and maintained in tourist destinations that encompass the community and its environment, meet the needs for survival in an indefinite period and do not change the environment both physically and socio-culturally but remain well maintained as a form of local social welfare.

## Methodology

This research will use a qualitative method with an autoethnographic approach. Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced and felt by research subjects, such as behavior, motivation, action, and others, thoroughly and described in words in a unique natural context and by utilizing other natural methods (Moleong, 2011). The tools used in this research include a Hand Phone to record and document the interview process with informants; guideline instruments used only in the form of outlines of problems so that the excavation process is more directed; as well as writing tools such as books and *ballpoints* as a means of making notes in the research process; then Laptop to pour the results of data collection obtained in the field. This research is descriptive and uses content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is a research method that conducts subjective interpretations of the content of text data through a systematic classification process, such as coding, to identify themes and patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

## Results and Discussion

Three main elements were found to be the foundation for managers in applying the halal concept in a sustainable tourism village: potential assets, tourism creation, and tourist consumption. As a sustainable tourism village, Bilebante Green Tourism Village has potential assets and utilizes them well as tourist attractions, including unique natural, cultural, culinary, and wellness attractions. The manager also shows creativity and innovation in developing tourism products by processing and packaging potential assets into authentic tour packages. This approach is designed to provide a memorable experience for tourists with guaranteed services, respect for visiting ethics, and promote Islamic authenticity and local community involvement.

Table 1. Results of Data Analysis Coding

Code	Theme	Category	Purpose
Kebun Herbal	Nature	Potential Assets	Experiential Halal Tourism
River			
Fishing Market			
Persawahan			
Hospitality	Culture		
Sanggar Tari			
Chicken Crawl	Culinary		
Traditional Snacks			
<i>Cooking Class</i>			
Spa	Wellness		
Cycling			
ATV Tour			
Vision/ Orientation	Product/ Service	Tourism Creation	
Characteristics of Tourists			
Service Guarantee			
Camping Ground	Tour Packages		
Walking Tour			
Traditional Fishing	Experience	Tourist Consumption	
History (storytelling)			
Visiting Ethics			
Localities			

## Potential Assets

The potential assets referred to in the findings of this study are resources that can attract attractions and have been developed to attract tourist visits. Bilebante Village has grown and developed as a tourist village that optimizes the potential of natural resources by presenting the authenticity of rural topography with its natural beauty, expanse of green rice fields, and harmonious community culture. Many parties have witnessed, felt, and recognized the advantages of the Bilebante green tourism village. Saufi et al. (2023) stated that the virtues of the Bilebante tourist village are the beautiful natural nuances with a large and fertile rice field area, surrounded by three rivers that never dry up, and the background of the scenery of Mount Rinjani in the southeast. The potential resources owned and known are: 1) Natural attractions include rice fields, rivers, herb gardens, and fishing markets. 2) Cultural attractions include hospitality and dance art. 3) Culinary attractions include chicken crawling, traditional snacks, and cooking classes. 4) Wellness attractions include SPA therapy, cycling, and ATV.

## Tourism Creation

In the context of this research, tourism creation is interpreted as an effort to create innovation or newness in tourism products that are unique, alluring, and provide added value for tourists. This creation is inseparable from the demands of being a sustainable tourism village in terms of maintaining and ensuring the sustainability of resources and tourism businesses. In addition, Saufi et al. (2023) highlighted that one of the tourist attractions that tourists are most interested in is natural attractions that evoke adrenaline. Thus, developing tourism products that innovatively utilize natural potential increases tourists' destinations' attractiveness and supports local economic growth—for example, the development of the Forbidden river as a tourist attraction. The Forbidden river is one of the potential assets owned by the Bilebante Green Tourism Village. Although it has excellent potential, previously, this river was ignored as a tourist attraction because it was filled with people's belief in the existence of mystical history around it. However, through capacity-building efforts carried out by Saufi et al. (2023) and supported by mentoring programs, it has succeeded in providing a deeper understanding and finding essential points of attraction for the Forbidden river. The river has the potential to be used as an attractive tourist attraction and deliver its product value. This then triggers the creativity of managers to create the Forbidden river with other assets based on two main focuses, namely the deepening of tourism products/services and the creation of tour packages.

## Tourist Consumption

The consumption of tourists referred to in the findings of this study is reviewed from the perspective of managers who create and offer products that can be accepted or perceived as an experience by tourists. In general, consumption leads to consumer behavior, where one of the components is the pattern or way of consuming or enjoying a product. In tourism product development, it is essential to consider market aspects or tourist preferences. Marbun, Emrizal, and Darmawan (2023) stated that developing tourism products is inseparable from the ability to compete, and this must be reviewed in terms of demand and supply. This means that managers must understand what tourists want and how they can most efficiently and effectively meet those needs. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) also stated that competitiveness is not enough only with the existing tourism potential but must be packaged in such a way as to provide a unique, fun, and beneficial experience for tourists. In this study, three aspects were found that the Tourism Village needs to prepare to provide experiences to meet the needs of tourists, namely history, visiting ethics, and locality.

## Experiential Halal Tourism

Experiential halal tourism, referred to in this study, is an approach to tourism development that emphasizes a deep and meaningful tourism experience by paying attention to halal (halal) principles. Halal is defined as tourism behavior that is allowed according to the provisions of Islam. This Halal

behavior is associated with the locality of the tourist village community, especially on the island of Lombok. This concept is shown in the development of the Forbidden river in the Bilebante Green Tourism Village, where creative and innovative tourism experiences are designed to make optimal use of its potential assets and meet the consumption needs of tourists through halal principles. This approach not only aims to increase the attractiveness of the destination but also to maintain its economic, social, and environmental sustainability as well as strengthen the local cultural identity that is Halal sustainably.

Referring to the description of the research findings above, the development of the Forbidden river in the Bilebante Green Tourism Village is a clear example of the application of the experiential halal tourism concept that integrates all potential assets, be it natural resources, culture, or human resources. With innovative tourism creations, this tourist village has successfully created attractive and sustainable tourist destinations.

First, the Bilebante Green Tourism Village maximizes the potential attractions, such as the beauty of the Forbidden river and the rich local culture, to create creative and different tour packages. Tour packages such as camping grounds, walking tours, and traditional fishing offer an exciting and educational experience for tourists and introduce tourists to the uniqueness of local culture and traditions synonymous with Halal behavior (Pratama et al., 2020). This emphasizes the importance of a deep and meaningful tourism experience through local cultural values, namely Halal.

Second. Creativity in developing Halal tourism products is evident in the Bilebante Green Tourism Village. Each tour package is designed to provide added value and maximum satisfaction for visitors, taking into account aspects of safety, comfort, and conformity with halal principles that the local community believes in. For example, traditional fishing is not only a recreational activity but also educates tourists about conventional fishing techniques that are environmentally friendly. Similarly, walking tours allow tourists to explore the natural beauty and daily life of the local people while appreciating and learning about the cultural values of the local people. This is also shown by an attitude of tolerance and providing equal opportunities in choosing or determining the desired service.

Third. Bilebante Green Tourism Village also focuses on meeting the consumption needs of tourists in line with halal principles. This includes the provision of halal food and beverages, as well as adequate worship facilities. This effort attracts Muslim tourists and expands the market by offering friendly destinations for all groups. Thus, this tourist village can increase its attractiveness as a unique and authentic destination through the Forbidden river attraction.

Fourth. The experiential halal tourism approach in the Bilebante Green Tourism Village provides economic benefits for the local community. It ensures the preservation of the environment and cultural heritage for future generations. Tourists bring a direct financial impact through their spending, which helps create new jobs and business opportunities for locals. In addition, the active participation of the community in maintaining and promoting tourist attractions ensures that tourism activities are carried out in a sustainable manner and respectful of the environment.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the research results and discussion described above, the following conclusions can be drawn from this research:

1. Potential destination assets such as natural beauty, cultural wealth, and local human resources are essential to developing Experiential Halal Tourism. Destinations that can optimize the uniqueness and attraction of nature and cultural heritage will be able to attract tourists, especially those who are looking for an authentic experience with halal principles.
2. Innovative tourism creations are the main driving force in building Experiential Halal Tourism.

The development of tour packages such as walking tours that explore the history of local culture, halal culinary programs that promote traditional cuisine with local ingredients, or educational activities about environmental sustainability are concrete examples of how destinations can create memorable and beneficial tourist experiences.

3. Tourist consumption plays a central role in shaping Experiential Halal Tourism. The growing demand for halal-compliant products and services in food, accommodation, and tourism activities drives destination managers to adapt and offer experiences that meet these expectations. By understanding and responding to travelers' preferences towards halal principles, destinations can increase their attractiveness and expand their market share in the global tourism industry.

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