

Muslim Tourists' Knowledge of The New Halal Label Logo in The Tourist Object in The Brastagi Area, Karo District, North Sumatra

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Abstract : This study investigates Muslim tourists' awareness of the new halal logo introduced by the Indonesian Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH) at the Gundaling tourist site, Brastagi, North Sumatra. Observational data from 100 respondents show that only 17% recognize the new BPJPH halal logo, while 83% are either unaware of it or still associate halal certification with the previous MUI logo. This finding highlights a significant gap in public knowledge despite the logo's introduction in 2022. The dominance of the MUI logo in consumers' minds underscores its longstanding reputation and suggests that the new logo will require extensive education campaigns to achieve similar familiarity and trust levels. Limited socialization may explain the low awareness, especially in high-traffic tourist areas where clear halal labeling is critical for Muslim visitors.

Keywords: Halal Logo; Muslim Friendly; Tourism; Brastagi

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, plays a significant role in the halal industry, particularly in the tourism sector. The demand for halal products and services is increasing in tandem with the growing awareness among the Muslim community regarding the importance of consuming products that comply with Islamic law. One of the efforts made by the Indonesian government is the implementation of halal certification for products and services available in society, including in the tourism sector. In popular tourist destinations, such as the Brastagi area in Karo Regency, North Sumatra, the application of halal logos becomes increasingly relevant to attract Muslim tourists, both domestic and international. This aligns with the rising trend of halal tourism that is developing in various countries.

The government, through the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH), introduced a new halal logo that came into effect on March 1, 2022. This logo replaces the long-established halal logo from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), which has been widely recognized and trusted by the Indonesian public. The new logo is designed to represent Indonesia's cultural identity, featuring a mountain shape and surjan motifs, both of which carry significant philosophical values. Additionally, this logo aims to strengthen Muslim consumers' trust in halal products available in the market, including within the context of tourism.

However, the success of implementing this new halal logo heavily relies on the knowledge and acceptance of the public, particularly among Muslim tourists who are the primary target in halal tourism. Muslim tourists visiting popular tourist areas such as Brastagi in North Sumatra often consider halal aspects when making choices about food, beverages, and other facilities they utilize. A good understanding of the halal logo will help tourists feel more confident and comfortable consuming products and using services available in tourist areas.

This study aims to analyze Muslim tourists' knowledge of the new halal logo at tourist attractions in the Brastagi area. This research is significant given that Brastagi is a well-known tourist destination frequently visited by both domestic and international tourists, including Muslim travelers. Therefore, understanding tourists' perceptions of the new halal logo and its acceptance in this area can provide insights into the effectiveness of halal logo socialization and how much Muslim tourists feel assisted by the presence of this logo in ensuring the halal status of the products they consume.

As the trend of halal tourism continues to rise, the presence of halal logos on products and services in tourist areas has become one of the indicators determining Muslim tourists' trust. According to Edris et al. (2024), the halal logo not only serves as an indicator of product halalness but also provides assurances of product safety and quality. Thus, knowledge of the halal logo directly influences Muslim tourists' perceptions and purchasing decisions. The application of the halal logo in tourist destinations is also related to the concept of a halal lifestyle, which has become an essential part of many Muslims' lives. Literature reviews indicate that Muslim tourists are increasingly selective in choosing the food, beverages, and services they use. They tend to prefer products that have halal certification, especially when traveling in areas with a majority non-Muslim population. This research can help understand the extent to which Muslim tourists comprehend and trust the new halal logo implemented by BPJPH in the context of halal tourism in Brastagi.

Brastagi, as a premier tourist area in North Sumatra, has significant potential to be developed into a halal tourism destination. This area is renowned for its various natural, cultural, and culinary attractions appealing to Muslim tourists. However, tourists' understanding of the halal logo in this area remains unclear, necessitating research to identify the extent of Muslim tourists' knowledge regarding the new halal logo introduced by the Indonesian government. This understanding is crucial for measuring the success of socialization and implementation of the halal logo among tourists. Previous studies have shown that consumers' knowledge of the halal logo has a positive correlation with consumption decisions. Tourists with better knowledge of the halal logo tend to feel safer and more comfortable when selecting products in tourist areas. Consumers' understanding of the halal logo can enhance their trust and satisfaction with halal products. In the context of Brastagi, this research is expected to provide important information regarding Muslim tourists' attitudes and perceptions toward the new halal logo.

On the other hand, challenges in socializing the new halal logo also remain a primary concern. The new halal logo features a design and symbolism that differ from the long-recognized MUI logo. Therefore, more intensive educational efforts are needed so that Muslim tourists, particularly in tourist areas, can understand this new logo and feel confident using it as an indicator of product halalness. This research can serve as an initial step in assessing the effectiveness of socializing the new halal logo in tourist destinations. Overall, this study will contribute significantly to understanding Muslim tourists' knowledge of the new halal logo in the Brastagi area. The findings are expected to serve as a basis for BPJPH, local governments, and tourism stakeholders to design more effective strategies for promoting halal products in tourist destinations. Thus, the new halal logo can maximize its benefits in enhancing Muslim tourists' trust in halal products available in tourist areas.

METHOD

This research was conducted in one of the tourism icons of North Sumatra Province, namely Gundaling Hill, Brastagi District, Karo Regency. This research was conducted in July 2023. The inclusion criteria for respondents were tourists as the sample in this study who; a) Muslim, b) Respondent aged at or above 17 years with the assumption that the respondent is responsible for the answer, c) Respondent is not vegetarian, d) Respondent has been or is currently traveling on Gundaling Hill and its surroundings in Brastagi District.

Determination of sample size using Slovin's opinion. The sample in this study consisted of 100 tourists. This research was conducted through direct observation with purposive sampling technique. The data obtained is primary data collected directly from the research location using a questionnaire given to research respondents to answer research problems. The type of research that the author uses is research, with a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative research is a study that describes or describes situations in the form of transcripts in interviews, written documentation, which are not explained through anka. Research the uniqueness found in individuals, groups, communities or organizations in daily life as a whole and can be scientifically justified.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Respondent Characteristics

The instrument or measuring tool used to determine tourists' knowledge of halal logos in this research is a questionnaire containing various types of halal logos circulating in Indonesia. Respondents were asked to check the list of halal logos that they knew to collect data for this research. The number of questionnaires collected was 100 questionnaires or 100 respondents. Respondent characteristics data can be seen in Table 1.

Tabel 1: Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Classifications	Amount (people)	Percentages (%)
Genders	Laki-laki	39	39
	Perempuan	61	61
Ages (years)	17-20	19	19
	21-30	21	21
	31-40	21	21
	41-50	23	23
	51-60	14	14
	61-65	2	2
Education	elementary school	3	3
	junior high school	16	16
	senior high school	38	38
	diploma (D3)	4	4
	Bachelor (S1)	35	35
	Masters (S2)	3	3
Occupation	Doctor (S3)	1	1
	Students	11	11
	College students	12	12
	Company employees	11	11
	Civil servants	26	26
	BUMN employees	0	0

Characteristics	Classifications	Amount (people)	Percentages (%)
	Farmer	1	1
	Laborer	1	1
	Housewife	16	16
	Self-employed	16	16
	others	6	6
Salary/ mounth	< Rp. 1.000.000	38	38
	Rp. 1.000.001-5.000.000	48	48
	Rp. 5.000.001-10.000.000	8	8
	> Rp. 10.000.001	6	6
Number of visits	a time	41	41
	2 times	27	27
	3 times	15	15
	4 times	3	3
	5 times	5	5
	> 5 times	10	10

Sources : Primary data (2023)

Characteristics of respondents based on gender, namely 39% male respondents and 61% female respondents. This shows that female tourists dominate during data collection. Based on age, the characteristics of respondents are in the age range 17-65 years. Tourist respondents were dominated by the age range 41-50 years (23%), the age range 31-40 (21%), and the age range 21-30 (21%). Meanwhile, respondents with the lowest percentage were in the age range 61-65 years (2%). Younger respondents, especially those aged between 18 and 35 years, tend to have higher access to halal logo information via social media and the internet. They generally recognize the halal logo better because they are more active in seeking information relevant to the halal lifestyle. Respondents over 35 years of age may have more limited knowledge or only recognize halal logos from more well-known institutions, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). Usually, they get halal information from traditional sources such as television, newspapers, or directly from their communities.

The characteristics of respondents according to education are divided into 6 categories, namely elementary school/equivalent, junior high school/equivalent, high school/equivalent, diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree. Respondents were dominated by high school graduates/equivalent, namely 38%, bachelor graduates, 35%, junior high school graduates/equivalent, 14%, D3/equivalent graduates, 4%, elementary school graduates/equivalent, 3% respectively. %, and the level of doctoral graduates is 1%. Respondent characteristics based on work were divided into 10 categories. The job categories of respondents were dominated by civil servants, namely 26%, domestic workers and entrepreneurs each at 16%, students at 12%, students and private employees at 11% each, farmers and laborers at 1% each, and occupations other than existing categories is 6%.

Respondent characteristics according to monthly income were classified into 4 categories. The respondent income category is dominated by respondents with income in the range of Rp. 1,000,001-5,000,000, namely 48%, respondents with income < Rp. 1,000,000 were 38%, respondents with income Rp. 5,000,001-Rp. 10,000,001 by 8%, and

respondents with income > Rp. 10,000,001 by 6%. Respondent characteristics and number of visits were classified into 6 (six) categories. Respondents who visited for the first time dominated, namely 41%. Then followed by respondents who visited the second time, namely 27%, respondents who visited the third time at 15%, respondents who visited the fourth time at 3%, respondents who visited the fifth time at 5%, and respondents who visited >5 times at 10%..

The characteristics of respondents with knowledge about the halal logo in Indonesia vary greatly depending on age, education, employment, area of residence, and the sources of information they access. This research emphasizes the importance of halal education campaigns that target certain demographic groups, especially to increase the recognition of halal logos among consumers who are less exposed to information about halal.

b. Tourists' Knowledge of the Halal Logo in Indonesia

The halal logo in Indonesia is a sign that shows that a product has passed the verification and certification process in accordance with applicable halal standards, guaranteeing that the product is free from ingredients and processes that are haram for Muslim consumers. In 2014, through Law Number 33 concerning Halal Product Guarantee, the Indonesian government began to take a bigger role in managing halal products. Then in 2017, the Halal Product Guarantee Organizing Agency (BPJPH) under the Ministry of Religion was established to supervise, manage and issue halal certification in Indonesia. On March 1 2022, BPJPH introduced a new halal logo (Figure 1) which replaced the MUI halal logo (Figure 2). This logo applies nationally and must be used on all products that wish to obtain halal certification through BPJPH.

The new logo is shaped like a mountain with calligraphic elements of the Arabic letters "Ha", "Lam Alif", and "Lam" which form the word "Halal." Gunung is a form taken from wayang kulit, which has symbolic meaning in Javanese culture. Apart from that, there is a surjan motif, traditional clothing that symbolizes honor and purity. Based on the provisions of BPJPH, all products that have received halal certification are required to display this new halal logo on the product packaging, certain places on the product, or locations that consumers can see.



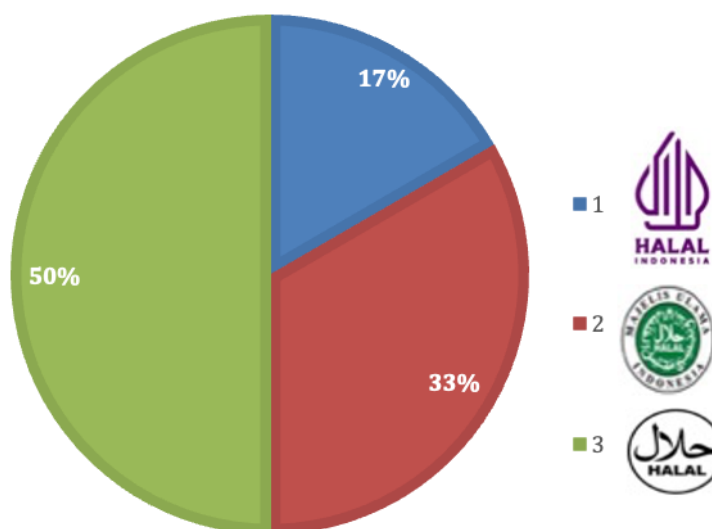
Gambar 1: Logo Halal baru (BPJPH)



Gambar 2: Logo Halal Lama (MUI)

Products that previously used the MUI halal logo are allowed to continue using it until the certificate expires or a maximum of five years from the promulgation of this regulation in February 2021. There is a transition period where products with the MUI logo are still permitted, but in the end all products must display the logo. new from BPJPH. The main challenge is to ensure that consumers recognize and understand this new halal logo, considering that the MUI logo has long been a widely recognized halal sign. BPJPH is collaborating with various institutions, including the MUI, to carry out outreach to the public so that this change can be well received by consumers.

In this research, observations were made of respondents, namely Muslim tourists who vacationed at the Gundaling tourist attraction, Kec. Brastagi, Kab. Karo, North Sumatra. Based on the results of observations, it is known that out of 100 respondents, only 19 (17%) respondents are aware of the new halal logo issued by BPJPH, while 81 (83%) respondents are not familiar with the new halal logo or still rely on the old halal logo issued by MUI. The survey results can be seen in Figure 3.



Gambar 3: New Halal Logo Knowledge Survey at Gundaling Tourist Attraction

Based on these findings, it shows that even though the new BPJPH halal logo has been introduced since 2022, the level of awareness and recognition of the logo by Muslim tourists is still low. This can be caused by a lack of socialization and education, especially in the tourism sector. Considering the large number of halal products in Indonesia, this new

logo should be introduced more widely so that Muslim tourists can more easily recognize and trust it. Research by Ma'Rifah et al. (2020), revealed that although 56.5% of tourists already know the concept of halal tourism, there are still challenges in increasing understanding and recognition of the halal logo among tourists. Better recognition of halal logos and effective socialization can contribute to tourists' decisions to choose halal destinations (Amalia et al., 2021).

Most respondents still recognize the halal logo from MUI as a sign of halal products. This is understandable considering that the MUI halal logo has been used for decades and has a strong reputation among Muslim consumers. The MUI logo has become part of people's habits in determining the halalness of products, so the change to the BPJPH logo will take time to be accepted and widely known by the public. Research by Musthofa and Burhanudin (2021) shows that Muslim consumers with a minimal level of halal knowledge tend to use the MUI halal logo as a basis for determining product halalness. This shows that the MUI logo has become part of people's habits in determining product halalness, and the transition to the logo New information issued by BPJPH takes time to be accepted and widely known by the public. According to Hapsari et al. (2019), although the MUI halal logo has a strong influence, the new logo from BPJPH needs to be supported by a wider educational campaign so that it can be accepted by the public.

The presence of an unrecognized halal logo can have an impact on tourists' trust in the products or services they consume at tourist attractions. Unfamiliarity with this new logo can create doubts in ensuring the halalness of the product, which in turn can affect their halal tourism experience. For Muslim tourists, halal assurance is an important factor in enjoying tourism services, and this trust must be maintained through the introduction of an easily recognizable halal logo. The development of halal tourism must be accompanied by good socialization regarding the halal logo (Bustamam & Suryani, 2022). The introduction of an effective and easily recognizable halal logo can improve tourists' experiences, so that they feel more satisfied and are more likely to return (Irdiana et al., 2021).

To increase tourist knowledge, BPJPH and local governments can utilize digital and physical media to socialize this new halal logo. Social media, tourism websites, brochures and information boards in tourist areas can be used to provide information about changes to the halal logo and its meaning. It is hoped that the education delivered through various media can reach Muslim tourists more effectively. Social media has great potential in communication management and can be used to disseminate information widely and quickly. In the context of halal tourism, the use of social media can help reach Muslim tourists more effectively, as well as increase their awareness of the new halal logo Madiistriyatno (2023). Apart from that, print media can also be an effective tool in conveying information, and can be used in conjunction with digital media to reach a wider audience. By combining these two types of media, BPJPH and local governments can ensure that information regarding the new halal logo can be accessed by all groups of tourists (Sari, 2019). The combination of media can increase the absorption of information, which is also relevant in the context of halal logo socialization. By providing clear and easily accessible information through various channels, Muslim tourists can better understand the meaning of the halal logo and the importance of halal products they consume (Hida et al, 2022). A comprehensive approach to socialization can increase public awareness and knowledge

about halal products, which can also be applied in the context of halal tourism (Fandhy and Robino, 2023).

CONCLUSION

These results emphasize that education regarding the new halal logo needs to be strengthened. BPJPH and related parties are advised to expand outreach efforts through collaboration with the tourism industry, community and media so that Muslim tourists become more familiar with this logo. Thus, the existence of a new halal logo can provide maximum benefits in ensuring the comfort and trust of Muslim tourists at various tourist attractions in Indonesia.

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