



OPTIMIZING GOVERNMENT POLICIES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE SHARIA-BASED TOURISM

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Abstract: *This paper examines the optimization of government policies to support sustainable sharia-based tourism, a sector that is gaining prominence in the global tourism landscape, particularly among Muslim travelers. The study begins by exploring the current state of sharia-based tourism in various regions, highlighting its economic and cultural significance. It identifies the critical role of government policies in creating an enabling environment for the development of this sector while ensuring compliance with Islamic principles. The findings reveal significant gaps in the current policy framework, emphasizing the need for clear regulatory standards, enhanced infrastructure, and targeted marketing strategies. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of community engagement and capacity building to foster local participation in sharia-based tourism. The paper concludes with evidence-based recommendations for policymakers aimed at optimizing government interventions to promote sustainable sharia-based tourism, thus contributing to economic growth, cultural preservation, and the overall well-being of communities involved in this burgeoning sector.*

Keywords: *Government Policies; Sharia-Based Tourism; Halal Tourism.*

Abstrak: *Paper ini membahas optimasi kebijakan pemerintah untuk mendukung pariwisata berbasis syariah yang berkelanjutan, suatu sektor yang semakin mendapatkan perhatian dalam lanskap pariwisata global, terutama di kalangan pelancong Muslim. Penelitian ini dimulai dengan mengeksplorasi keadaan saat ini dari pariwisata berbasis syariah di berbagai wilayah, menyoroti signifikansi ekonomi dan budaya sektor ini. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi peran penting kebijakan pemerintah dalam menciptakan lingkungan yang mendukung pengembangan sektor ini sambil memastikan kepatuhan terhadap prinsip-prinsip Islam. Temuan menunjukkan adanya kesenjangan signifikan dalam kerangka kebijakan saat ini, menekankan perlunya standar regulasi yang jelas, infrastruktur yang ditingkatkan, dan strategi pemasaran yang terarah. Selain itu, studi ini menekankan pentingnya keterlibatan komunitas dan pengembangan kapasitas untuk mendorong partisipasi lokal dalam pariwisata berbasis syariah. Makalah ini diakhiri dengan rekomendasi berbasis bukti untuk pembuat kebijakan yang bertujuan untuk mengoptimalkan intervensi pemerintah guna mempromosikan pariwisata berbasis syariah yang berkelanjutan, sehingga*



berkontribusi pada pertumbuhan ekonomi, pelestarian budaya, dan kesejahteraan masyarakat yang terlibat dalam sektor yang berkembang ini.

Kata Kunci: Kebijakan Pemerintah; Pariwisata Berbasis Syariah; Pariwisata Halal.

BACKGROUND

In order to satisfy the demands of niche sectors, such as Shariah-based travel, the global tourist industry has experienced a dramatic shift in recent years and has become more diverse (Danugroho, 2022). With an estimated 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide, the demand for travel experiences that align with Islamic principles is on the rise, making sharia-based tourism a fast-growing sector with substantial economic potential. Sharia-based tourism encompasses a range of services and amenities adhering to Islamic guidelines, such as halal-certified food, prayer facilities, and activities that respect Islamic values (Qital et al., 2022). Government intervention plays a critical role in establishing a supportive framework for sustainable tourism, particularly in sectors with specific cultural or religious requirements (Subarkah, 2018). Effective policies are essential in developing infrastructure, enforcing standards, and promoting local enterprises that cater to Muslim tourists.

Nonetheless, the formulation of policies specifically targeting sharia-based tourism has been inconsistent across nations, often limited to sporadic initiatives without long-term sustainability goals (Kusumaningtyas et al., 2022). This lack of cohesive policy not only hinders the growth of the sharia-based tourism sector but also poses risks to environmental and socio-cultural sustainability (Pribadi, 2019). As the industry expands, there is an urgent need for government policies that are not only inclusive of Islamic values but also embedded within broader sustainability frameworks. Sustainability in tourism is a multifaceted concept, encompassing environmental preservation, socio-cultural integrity, and economic resilience (Rusby & Arif, 2020). While many governments are increasingly aware of the need for sustainable tourism practices, few have incorporated these principles into the specialized area of sharia-based tourism. Current policies often emphasize economic gain without adequately addressing the potential environmental impact or the need for community involvement in tourism development. For instance, in several developing countries such as Thailand, tourism policies are often focused on increasing revenue through mass tourism, yet they frequently overlook the negative environmental consequences, such as coral reef damage and marine ecosystem degradation (Lopez & Bhaktikul, 2018). Additionally, in Bali, Indonesia, despite significant growth in tourism, local communities are often not actively involved in the



planning and management of tourism destinations, leading to social inequality and the loss of cultural values (Arismayanti et al., 2019).

In the absence of comprehensive regulatory frameworks, sharia-based tourism runs the risk of prioritizing commercial interests over sustainable practices, potentially leading to environmental degradation and cultural commodification (Widyastuti, 2011). This study aims to explore how governments can optimize policies that simultaneously support the growth of sharia-based tourism and promote sustainable development. One of the primary challenges in optimizing government policies lies in the lack of standardized halal tourism regulations across countries (Danugroho & Yusfira, 2023). The absence of unified standards leads to discrepancies in service quality and undermines tourists' trust in halal-certified destinations. Countries that have recognized the potential of sharia-based tourism have taken steps to establish national halal certification bodies; however, inconsistencies remain, especially in international contexts.

Collaborative efforts among governments, religious authorities, and international organizations are essential to creating globally recognized standards that can enhance the credibility of sharia-based tourism and ensure service consistency across borders (Competitiveness of Sharia Tourism Destination, 2020). For instance, the Indonesia Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, in collaboration with the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), developed the Clean, Health, Safety, and Environment (CHSE) certification, which is tailored for halal tourism establishments. This initiative aims to establish uniformity in standards across tourism providers, ensuring that they meet both health and halal requirements, which helps in promoting the credibility of sharia-compliant tourism services internationally.

Similarly, the Malaysia Halal Tourism Council has worked with the government and religious bodies to promote halal-certified tourism services and facilities, ensuring consistency in the quality and service of sharia-based tourism across the country. Furthermore, infrastructure development is a crucial component of government support for sharia-based tourism. This includes both physical infrastructure, such as transportation and accommodations, and digital infrastructure to facilitate the online presence and marketing of halal-friendly destinations. However, in many developing countries with high tourism potential, limited resources often restrict the government's ability to make the necessary infrastructure investments.

Public-private partnerships (PPP) represent a viable solution to this issue, allowing governments to leverage private sector investment while retaining regulatory control. By

creating an enabling environment for PPPs, governments can facilitate infrastructure improvements that not only meet the needs of Muslim travelers but also align with environmental and social sustainability goals. Another vital aspect of sustainable tourism policy is the empowerment of local communities. Sharia-based tourism can offer unique opportunities for community engagement, enabling local populations to benefit economically while preserving cultural heritage. Government policies that encourage community participation in tourism development can help create resilient, locally-driven tourism economies. By providing training programs and financial incentives for local entrepreneurs in halal food, artisanal crafts, and other tourism services, governments can foster a tourism sector that is both culturally authentic and economically sustainable (Syufa'at & Zayyadi, 2023).

This approach has been successfully implemented in countries like Morocco and Turkey, where the government has introduced training programs for local businesses to develop halal tourism products, such as halal food and traditional crafts, tailored to the growing Muslim travel market. In Morocco, for example, the government supports small businesses in rural areas through training and microfinancing initiatives, enabling local artisans to sell authentic, culturally significant products to tourists while preserving their heritage (Berriane, 1993). Similarly, in Turkey, local entrepreneurs in areas such as Antalya have received financial support and marketing assistance to offer halal food options and culturally relevant tourism services, creating a thriving, sustainable halal tourism market that benefits both the local economy and cultural preservation.

In light of the challenges and opportunities presented, this study seeks to examine existing government policies related to sharia-based tourism and identify areas for optimization (Hernanda, 2018). By analyzing policy frameworks and their implementation across different countries, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how governments can enhance their role in supporting sustainable sharia-based tourism. Key areas of focus include regulatory standardization, infrastructure investment, community empowerment, and environmental regulation (Sumiati, 2017). By adopting a holistic approach to policy optimization, governments can better support the growth of sharia-based tourism while ensuring that it contributes to sustainable development.

The findings of this study have significant implications for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers in the field of tourism studies. As sharia-based tourism continues to expand, a proactive approach to policy formulation is essential in navigating the unique challenges associated with this sector. Optimized policies can enable governments to



not only tap into the economic potential of sharia-based tourism but also promote values of sustainability, inclusivity, and cultural respect. This research contributes to the discourse on sustainable tourism by highlighting the importance of government intervention in fostering a tourism sector that is both responsive to the needs of Muslim travelers and aligned with global sustainability goals..

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Sharia-Based Tourism

The concept of sharia-based tourism has gained considerable attention in recent years, driven by the increasing demand from Muslim travelers seeking experiences that align with their religious beliefs. Sharia-based tourism refers to travel practices that comply with Islamic law (sharia), encompassing various aspects such as halal food, prayer facilities, modest clothing, and cultural sensitivity (Marbun et al., 2021). This type of tourism not only provides an opportunity for leisure and exploration but also serves as a means for Muslims to engage with their faith in diverse contexts (Harjawati & Ardiansyah, 2021). The growing interest in sharia-based tourism reflects a broader trend of integrating religious and cultural values into travel experiences. One of the foundational elements of sharia-based tourism is the provision of halal services, which are critical for Muslim travelers.

Halal certification ensures that food, accommodations, and activities meet the dietary and ethical guidelines outlined in Islamic teachings. According to the Halal Industry Development Corporation (2017), the halal market has expanded significantly, with halal tourism emerging as a lucrative sector. However, challenges remain regarding the standardization and recognition of halal certifications across different regions. Establishing universally accepted guidelines for halal certification is essential for enhancing consumer confidence and ensuring a consistent quality of offerings within the sharia-based tourism market (Mohamed et al., 2016). In addition to halal services, the availability of prayer facilities and spaces for religious practices is a crucial aspect of sharia-based tourism.

Travelers often seek destinations where they can perform their daily prayers and engage in religious activities without inconvenience. Studies have shown that the presence of mosques and prayer areas significantly influences destination choice among Muslim tourists (Norazla A. Wahab et al., 2016). Moreover, the design and management of these facilities must reflect cultural sensitivities to accommodate the diverse needs of Muslim travelers, particularly in non-Muslim-majority countries. Understanding these dynamics is vital for tourism stakeholders aiming to cater effectively to the sharia-based market. Cultural

authenticity is another important dimension of sharia-based tourism (Slamet et al., 2022). As travelers seek experiences that resonate with their cultural and religious values, the preservation of local traditions and customs becomes paramount.

Sharia-based tourism should not only promote economic benefits but also emphasize the importance of cultural integrity (Rhama, 2022). This dual focus can create a more meaningful and enriching experience for travelers while fostering respect for local heritage. Consequently, tourism policies should encourage the involvement of local communities in the planning and development of tourism initiatives to ensure that cultural authenticity is maintained. Sustainability is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in the development of sharia-based tourism. The integration of environmental sustainability practices aligns with Islamic teachings that advocate for stewardship of the earth (Vargas-Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2020). That sharia-based tourism can promote sustainable practices, such as responsible waste management and conservation of natural resources, which benefit both the environment and local communities.

By adopting sustainable tourism practices, stakeholders can contribute to the long-term viability of destinations while enhancing their appeal to environmentally conscious Muslim travelers (Effendi et al., 2021). Moreover, the economic implications of sharia-based tourism cannot be overlooked. The potential for economic growth within this sector is significant, particularly in regions with substantial Muslim populations. Sharia-based tourism has the capacity to generate employment opportunities and stimulate local economies. However, realizing this potential requires coordinated efforts between government bodies, private sector players, and local communities to create an enabling environment for investment and development. Policymakers must also address regulatory frameworks that facilitate the growth of sharia-based tourism while ensuring compliance with halal standards (Marlinda, Tamara, et al., 2023). Despite the growing interest in sharia-based tourism, there remain challenges and barriers that need to be addressed. Issues such as lack of awareness, misconceptions about sharia compliance, and inadequate infrastructure can hinder the growth of this sector. Destination marketing strategies should focus on educating potential travelers about sharia-based offerings and promoting the unique experiences available in various destinations.

The Role of Government Policies in Sharia-Based Tourism

Government policies play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of sharia-based tourism, influencing its development, sustainability, and attractiveness to Muslim travelers. These policies can create an enabling environment that fosters growth in this sector while

ensuring that it aligns with Islamic principles and meets the needs of the community (Syamsurrijal, Nurmandi, Jubba, & Hiclayati, 2023). Through targeted interventions, governments can facilitate the establishment of standards, promote investment, and enhance the overall experience of sharia-based tourism, thus attracting more visitors and contributing to economic development. One of the primary roles of government policies is to establish clear regulatory frameworks that define sharia compliance in tourism services (Zaenuri et al., 2021).

This includes developing guidelines for halal certification that ensure food, accommodations, and recreational activities align with Islamic principles. Clear standards and regulations are crucial for building consumer confidence and ensuring that services meet the expectations of Muslim travelers (Yusuf et al., 2021). By collaborating with halal certification bodies and industry stakeholders, governments can create a cohesive system that enhances the credibility of sharia-based tourism offerings. Investment in infrastructure is another critical area where government policies can make a significant impact. For sharia-based tourism to flourish, there must be adequate infrastructure, such as halal-certified hotels, restaurants, and prayer facilities.

Governments can incentivize private sector investment through grants, tax breaks, or public-private partnerships aimed at developing the necessary infrastructure to support sharia-based tourism (Yahya et al., 2022). By prioritizing investments in these areas, governments can create a more appealing environment for Muslim travelers and enhance the overall visitor experience. Furthermore, government policies can support sharia-based tourism through targeted marketing and promotional strategies. By highlighting the unique offerings of sharia-compliant destinations, governments can raise awareness and attract a broader audience of Muslim tourists. Participation in international tourism fairs and collaboration with travel agencies that specialize in halal tourism can enhance the visibility of sharia-based tourism.

Additionally, campaigns that showcase cultural heritage, hospitality, and the availability of halal services can effectively engage potential travelers and promote positive perceptions of sharia-based destinations (Wahyudi et al., 2022). Engaging local communities is essential for the success of sharia-based tourism, and government policies should encourage community involvement in tourism development. Policies that promote local participation can empower communities to contribute to the tourism sector by offering authentic cultural experiences, guiding services, or artisanal products. This not only enhances the cultural richness of sharia-based tourism but also ensures that the economic benefits are shared equitably among local populations (Jaelani et al., 2021). By fostering community



engagement, governments can create a sense of ownership and pride, which is vital for the long-term sustainability of tourism initiatives.

Education and training programs also fall within the purview of government policies aimed at enhancing sharia-based tourism. Providing training for tourism stakeholders, including hotel staff, tour guides, and restaurant owners, on halal practices and customer service can significantly improve the quality of services offered to Muslim travelers (Karyati, 2021). By investing in capacity-building initiatives, governments can equip local businesses with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the specific needs of sharia-based tourists, ultimately contributing to higher satisfaction levels and repeat visits (Robiatun et al., 2021). Sustainability is an increasingly important consideration in tourism development, and government policies must integrate sustainability principles into sharia-based tourism initiatives. By promoting environmentally friendly practices, such as waste reduction and conservation efforts, governments can align sharia-based tourism with broader sustainability goals. Policies that incentivize eco-friendly practices within the tourism sector can attract environmentally conscious Muslim travelers while ensuring the preservation of natural resources and local ecosystems. Fostering collaboration among stakeholders is crucial for the effective implementation of government policies in sharia-based tourism.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study will adopt a qualitative research methodology to explore the optimization of government policies in supporting sustainable sharia-based tourism. The primary objective of this qualitative approach is to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and expectations of various stakeholders involved in sharia-based tourism. This includes government officials, tourism industry representatives, community leaders, and Muslim travelers. By focusing on their insights, the study aims to identify challenges, opportunities, and recommendations for enhancing government policies in this context. Data collection will be conducted through semi-structured interviews, which allow for flexibility and depth in exploring participant perspectives (Moelong, 2016).

The semi-structured format will facilitate guided discussions while also enabling respondents to express their views in their own words, providing rich qualitative data. A purposive sampling technique will be employed to select participants who possess relevant knowledge and experience in sharia-based tourism. This sampling strategy will ensure the inclusion of diverse viewpoints and expertise, enhancing the comprehensiveness of the findings. The analysis will focus on the experiences of stakeholders concerning the

effectiveness of existing policies, the barriers they encounter, and their suggestions for improvements. By interpreting the findings within the broader context of sustainable tourism development, this qualitative research will provide valuable insights into how government policies can be optimized to better support sharia-based tourism, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive tourism framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Importance of Sharia-Based Tourism in Indonesia

Sharia-based tourism in Indonesia has garnered increasing attention, not only due to the country's substantial Muslim population but also as a strategic response to global trends in halal tourism. As the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, Indonesia holds a unique position in catering to both domestic and international Muslim travelers (Danugroho, 2020). Sharia-based tourism emphasizes adherence to Islamic principles, including halal-certified facilities, the availability of prayer spaces, and activities that align with Islamic ethics. This sector is particularly appealing to Muslim travelers seeking assurance that their travel experience will respect their religious values.

Consequently, sharia-based tourism offers Indonesia an opportunity to strengthen its appeal to this rapidly growing segment within the global tourism market. The development of sharia-based tourism in Indonesia also aligns with the country's economic objectives, particularly in generating income and creating job opportunities within local communities (Adinugraha et al., 2021). Tourism is one of Indonesia's largest economic contributors, and by expanding sharia-based options, the government can diversify its offerings and tap into new markets. This sector not only attracts foreign visitors from predominantly Muslim regions such as the Middle East but also enhances domestic tourism among Indonesian Muslims who seek destinations that cater to their religious requirements (Mahardika, 2020).

Through well-developed sharia-compliant facilities, Indonesia can capture a more significant share of the halal tourism market, thus boosting foreign exchange earnings, enhancing regional economic development, and reducing the socio-economic disparities within the country (Sumadi & Sari, 2022). An essential aspect of sharia-based tourism is its contribution to cultural preservation, particularly of local Islamic customs and traditions. Sharia-based tourism enables the promotion of Indonesia's rich Islamic heritage, such as mosques, religious festivals, and Islamic architecture, as core elements of its tourism appeal. By highlighting these aspects, Indonesia not only meets the needs of Muslim travelers but also strengthens its cultural identity.

Such tourism fosters appreciation for Islamic culture among both domestic and international visitors, thereby enhancing the country's cultural image globally. This cultural emphasis can also inspire local communities to preserve and celebrate their heritage, ensuring that traditions are passed down to future generations. However, to sustain and grow sharia-based tourism, Indonesia must address certain challenges related to infrastructure and regulatory frameworks (Trimulato et al., 2023). Currently, there are inconsistencies in the availability of sharia-compliant facilities and services across regions, which may create an uneven visitor experience. Effective government policies that mandate halal standards, along with robust regulatory bodies to oversee compliance, are essential to ensure uniformity and maintain quality standards.

Table 1. Contribution of tourism sector to GDP

| Indicator | Years | | |
|--------------|-------|------|------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Contribution | 4,0 | 4,2 | 3,6 |

(BPS and Kemenparekraf, 2022)

Furthermore, Indonesia's geographical diversity means infrastructure investment is crucial to providing reliable access to Sharia-compliant facilities in remote tourist destinations. Addressing these logistical and regulatory challenges will ensure a cohesive and reliable Sharia-based tourism experience for all visitors. A key driver for the success of sharia-based tourism in Indonesia is its potential for environmental sustainability. Sharia-based tourism emphasizes respect for nature, moderation, and minimal environmental impact, which aligns with sustainable tourism practices (Sumadi & Sari, 2022). Many aspects of Islamic teachings encourage conservation and ethical resource use, offering Indonesia a unique advantage in promoting eco-friendly tourism within the sharia framework. By incorporating these principles, Indonesia can position itself as a leading example of environmentally responsible tourism.

Policies that integrate environmental sustainability with sharia compliance could thus elevate the country's appeal among eco-conscious Muslim travelers who seek destinations that respect both their environmental and religious values (Syara & Fauzan, 2023). Moreover, the development of sharia-based tourism can serve as a catalyst for community empowerment. Sharia-based tourism encourages local entrepreneurship, as it allows communities to engage in providing halal food, Islamic souvenirs, and other sharia-compliant

services. This economic participation strengthens local economies and fosters a sense of pride and ownership over tourism development. By involving local stakeholders and offering training in sharia-based service provision, the government can cultivate a tourism sector that not only aligns with Islamic principles but also provides sustainable livelihoods for the communities involved.

Empowering locals to participate in this sector ensures that economic benefits are widely distributed and helps create a resilient tourism industry. The success of sharia-based tourism in Indonesia also relies heavily on effective marketing and international partnerships (Syamsurrijal, Nurmandi, Jubba, Hidayati, et al., 2023). Many Muslim travelers from other countries remain unaware of Indonesia's extensive sharia-compliant offerings. Strategic marketing campaigns and participation in international halal tourism events can enhance Indonesia's visibility as a premier sharia-based destination. Additionally, forming partnerships with other Muslim-majority countries to establish mutual recognition of halal certifications can facilitate cross-border tourism (Hana, 2021). Through these initiatives, Indonesia can build stronger ties within the global halal tourism market, attracting more visitors and establishing itself as a benchmark for sharia-based tourism.

In addition to economic and cultural benefits, sharia-based tourism contributes to enhancing Indonesia's global image as an inclusive and culturally sensitive destination. By promoting a form of tourism that respects diverse beliefs and values, Indonesia fosters an image of tolerance and understanding (Rusby & Arif, 2020). Such an approach is critical in today's global tourism industry, where travelers increasingly seek destinations that offer both comfort and respect for their cultural backgrounds. Sharia-based tourism allows Indonesia to showcase its commitment to inclusivity while meeting the unique needs of Muslim travelers, thereby strengthening its reputation on the international stage.

While the potential of sharia-based tourism in Indonesia is substantial, continuous research and development are crucial to its long-term success. Ongoing studies into traveler preferences, cultural trends, and market demands can inform better policy-making and business strategies that adapt to evolving market conditions. Additionally, collaborations with academic institutions, private sector stakeholders, and international tourism organizations can provide Indonesia with the insights and innovations needed to maintain its competitive edge. By prioritizing research and development, Indonesia can ensure that its sharia-based tourism offerings remain relevant, sustainable, and aligned with global best practices.



Sustainability Challenges in Sharia-Based Tourism

Sharia-based tourism presents unique opportunities for cultural and economic growth, yet it also faces considerable sustainability challenges that must be addressed for long-term viability (Jaelani et al., 2021). These challenges cover a range of areas including environmental impact, infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, cultural preservation, economic sustainability, and evolving traveler expectations. Addressing these factors is essential to creating a tourism model that aligns with Islamic principles while also meeting global sustainability standards. Environmental concerns are among the most pressing issues for sustainable sharia-based tourism (Tayob, 2012). As with all tourism, increased visitor numbers can lead to pollution, habitat degradation, and resource depletion, which conflict with the Islamic principle of Mizan (balance) that emphasizes environmental responsibility.

However, in many destinations, the rapid development of tourism infrastructure, such as hotels, restaurants, and recreational facilities, has led to negative environmental impacts. Managing this effectively requires eco-certifications and strong environmental regulations, which are often lacking. Promoting sustainable practices within the industry can help align sharia-based tourism with ecological balance, but implementing these standards consistently remains challenging. Infrastructure limitations pose another challenge for sustainable sharia-based tourism. Many destinations lack the necessary facilities, including halal-certified hotels, prayer spaces, and modest recreational options.

Additionally, transportation infrastructure may be inadequate, particularly in rural or less developed areas, making it difficult for tourists to access these destinations. Investing in infrastructure that meets sharia-compliant standards is essential, yet it requires significant government and private sector support (Siregar & Ritonga, 2021). Without these developments, regions may struggle to attract Muslim tourists, limiting the sector's growth and sustainability. Regulatory challenges and the need for standardization also hinder the growth of sustainable sharia-based tourism. Since sharia-based tourism relies on adherence to Islamic principles, clear and consistent regulatory frameworks are crucial.

However, varying interpretations of sharia compliance and inconsistent halal certification standards across regions create confusion for tourists and undermine the industry's credibility (Mashuri, 2020). Unified halal tourism standards, developed in collaboration with national and international Islamic authorities, could ensure uniformity and trust in sharia-based tourism services. Establishing such standards is complex and resource-intensive, requiring strong coordination among government agencies, religious organizations, and industry stakeholders. Balancing the commercialization of sharia-based tourism with



cultural preservation is another significant challenge. In the pursuit of attracting more tourists, some regions may commodify local Islamic traditions, prioritizing profit over cultural integrity (Hadinata et al., 2021).

This approach can lead to a loss of authenticity, where unique regional customs are replaced by marketable but generic elements of Islamic culture. Sustainable sharia-based tourism should emphasize preserving the authenticity of local traditions and promoting respectful tourism practices. Achieving this balance requires policies that protect cultural representation and actively involve local communities in the tourism sector (Hermawan Adinugraha et al., 2022). Economic sustainability and equitable community impact are also critical for sustainable sharia-based tourism. While the sector has the potential to drive economic development, large tourism enterprises often dominate, leaving small local businesses at a disadvantage. This can result in economic disparities and limited local engagement.

To ensure sustainable growth, sharia-based tourism should prioritize community-based initiatives, empowering local businesses to participate in providing halal services, accommodations, and cultural experiences (Aziz, 2021). Additionally, including local communities in decision-making processes can foster positive relationships and ensure that economic benefits are widely shared. Meeting the evolving expectations of Muslim travelers presents another sustainability challenge. As sharia-based tourism grows, travelers' expectations have become more sophisticated, with many seeking not only halal facilities but also experiences that emphasize environmental responsibility, cultural authenticity, and high service standards.

Adapting to these expectations requires continuous improvement in service quality and the introduction of innovative, eco-friendly tourism options (Tayob, 2012). For sharia-based tourism to remain competitive, the industry must respond to these changing demands by offering experiences that are both culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable. Sharia-based tourism also faces a marketing and awareness challenge, as many potential tourists are not fully aware of the range of halal and sharia-compliant offerings available. Effective marketing strategies and participation in global halal tourism events could boost Indonesia's visibility as a prime sharia-based destination. Building partnerships with other Muslim-majority countries to recognize and promote sharia-based tourism can strengthen Indonesia's position in the international halal tourism market.

However, developing and executing these strategies requires substantial investment and collaboration with tourism agencies, both domestic and international. The complexity of

integrating sustainability into sharia-based tourism requires ongoing research and development. Understanding traveler preferences, monitoring environmental impacts, and staying abreast of market trends are vital to adapting policies and strategies for this sector. Collaborative efforts with academic institutions, industry players, and environmental organizations can provide the insights needed to address these challenges effectively. By fostering innovation and research, Indonesia and other sharia-based tourism destinations can ensure that their offerings remain relevant and sustainable in the long term.

Strategies to Optimize Government Policies to Support Sharia-Based Tourism

To effectively promote sharia-based tourism, governments must adopt a multi-dimensional approach that aligns with the sector's unique religious, cultural, and sustainability requirements. One core strategy is to establish clear standards and certification processes for sharia compliance across all tourism-related businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies (Marlinda, Al-Fadhat, et al., 2023). By creating standardized guidelines, governments can ensure that services and facilities meet the necessary Islamic principles, which builds trust and clarity for tourists. This consistency will enhance the overall traveler experience and foster greater confidence in sharia-based tourism offerings. Moreover, aligning these national standards with international halal tourism certifications can further increase the competitiveness of domestic destinations in the global market (Destiana et al., 2020).

In addition to establishing clear standards, investing in infrastructure development is crucial for the success of sharia-based tourism. Proper infrastructure, such as halal-certified accommodations, prayer facilities, and modest recreational spaces, is essential to meet the needs of Muslim travelers (Yusuf et al., 2021). Governments can promote sharia-based tourism by prioritizing investment in these infrastructures, especially in areas identified as potential halal tourism hotspots. This could involve public-private partnerships to finance the construction of hotels, transportation networks, and amenities that cater to Muslim visitors. By ensuring that these facilities are accessible and well-maintained, the government can significantly enhance the attractiveness of sharia-based tourism destinations (Yanidin et al., 2020). Another vital strategy is the formulation of targeted marketing campaigns that highlight sharia-based tourism offerings.

Governments should work in collaboration with tourism boards, local businesses, and cultural organizations to develop marketing strategies that effectively communicate the unique benefits and experiences of sharia-compliant travel. Such campaigns can emphasize



the rich cultural heritage, scenic beauty, and hospitality that Islamic destinations provide. Additionally, participation in international tourism fairs and halal travel exhibitions can help raise awareness about the country's sharia-based tourism offerings and attract a broader audience of Muslim travelers (Mufli, 2021). Furthermore, engaging local communities in tourism development is essential for the sustainability of sharia-based tourism. Policies should encourage community involvement in tourism initiatives, ensuring that local voices and needs are considered in decision-making processes. By empowering local residents to participate in tourism-related activities such as offering guided tours, selling handicrafts, or providing halal culinary experiences the government can foster a sense of ownership among communities (Layali & Suriani, 2022).

This not only enhances the authenticity of sharia-based tourism but also ensures that the economic benefits are distributed equitably among local populations. Training and capacity-building programs for tourism stakeholders are also critical to optimizing government policies for sharia-based tourism (Alemu & Hamid, 2023). By providing training on halal tourism standards, customer service, and sustainable practices, governments can equip local businesses with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the expectations of Muslim travelers. Additionally, collaboration with educational institutions to develop tourism curricula focused on sharia compliance and sustainability can further enhance the skillset of the workforce. Such initiatives can help create a knowledgeable and culturally sensitive tourism industry that is better prepared to cater to the unique needs of Muslim travelers.

In Indonesia, one of the systems that has been implemented is the Halal Assurance System (HAS), issued by MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council). This system provides guidance for managers of halal tourism destinations to ensure that the facilities and services provided are in accordance with the principles of halal in Islam (Danugroho & Sa'adah, 2021). In addition, there are also broader standards applied in member countries of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC/OIC), such as the OIC Halal Certification. This certification refers to guidelines that have been agreed upon by OIC member states regarding halal products and services. This not only covers the food and beverage sector, but also includes facilities such as accommodation, transportation, and tourist services that suit the needs of Muslim travellers.

Implementing environmental sustainability measures is another important strategy for optimizing government policies in sharia-based tourism (Sawitri Yuli Hartati S & Tubagus Heru Dharma Wijaya, 2022). The government can establish guidelines and incentives for tourism businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices, such as waste reduction, energy



efficiency, and conservation efforts. Encouraging the use of sustainable resources and promoting eco-tourism activities that align with Islamic principles of stewardship can help minimize the ecological footprint of tourism. By prioritizing environmental sustainability, the government can ensure that sharia-based tourism contributes positively to the preservation of natural resources and ecosystems. Fostering partnerships with international organizations and Islamic bodies can enhance the credibility and growth of sharia-based tourism (Aksamawanti & Ridwan, 2022).

Collaboration with entities such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and international halal certification bodies can facilitate knowledge exchange, best practices, and capacity building within the industry (Windayani & Surtani, 2018). These partnerships can also open doors to new markets and investment opportunities, bolstering the growth of sharia-based tourism on a global scale. By leveraging international collaboration, governments can position their destinations as leading players in the halal tourism sector (Nurtanto & Ginting, 2023). Optimizing government policies to support sharia-based tourism involves a comprehensive approach that includes establishing clear standards, investing in infrastructure, engaging local communities, promoting sustainable practices, and fostering international partnerships. By implementing these strategies, governments can effectively enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of sharia-based tourism, ensuring it meets the expectations of Muslim travelers while contributing positively to local economies and cultures.

CONCLUSION

Optimizing government policies to support sustainable sharia-based tourism is essential for fostering an inclusive and thriving tourism sector that aligns with Islamic principles. Governments must prioritize the establishment of clear standards and certification processes for sharia compliance, ensuring that tourism-related services and facilities not only meet the expectations of Muslim travelers but also promote a consistent and trustworthy experience. This regulatory clarity, combined with targeted marketing initiatives, can significantly enhance the visibility and appeal of sharia-based destinations in the global tourism market. Moreover, strategic investments in infrastructure development are crucial for meeting the needs of Muslim travelers while facilitating community engagement in tourism initiatives. By empowering local communities to participate actively in tourism-related activities, governments can create an authentic and culturally rich experience that resonates with visitors. Training programs that equip stakeholders with the necessary skills to deliver



high-quality services further reinforce the importance of sustainable practices, ensuring that economic benefits are equitably distributed among local populations. Ultimately, the successful optimization of government policies for sharia-based tourism hinges on a collaborative approach that includes partnerships with international organizations, local communities, and the private sector. By fostering these collaborations, governments can leverage diverse expertise and resources, promoting innovative solutions to address the unique challenges faced by the sector. Through comprehensive strategies that emphasize sustainability, inclusivity, and cultural authenticity, sharia-based tourism can emerge as a significant contributor to economic growth while honoring the values and traditions of the Muslim community.

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