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Potential and Challenges of Developing Halal Tourism in Non-Central Areas: Strategies for Accelerating the Regional Economy in Bengkalis

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the potential and challenges of *halal tourism* development in non-central regions, particularly in Selat Baru Bengkalis, and to formulate strategies as an effort to accelerate regional economic growth from an Islamic economic perspective. This research uses a qualitative, descriptive approach through library research, combined with field data from interviews with local communities. The data include secondary sources from scientific journals, academic books, and institutional reports published within the last ten years, as well as primary data from interviews. The data were analyzed using content analysis techniques. The results indicate that Selat Baru Bengkalis has significant potential for halal tourism development, particularly through its natural attractions, Malay local culture, and strong religious values aligned with Islamic principles. In addition, this sector contributes to the local economy by increasing the income of micro and small enterprises and creating job opportunities. However, several challenges remain, including limited infrastructure and accessibility, low-quality human resources, limited public literacy on *halal tourism*, and inadequate promotion and policy support. Therefore, integrated development strategies are required, including improving infrastructure, enhancing human resource capacity, increasing public literacy, and strengthening synergy among government, community, and business actors. A *community-based tourism* approach is also essential to encourage active participation of local communities. In conclusion, developing halal tourism in non-central regions not only contributes to economic growth but also supports the sustainable achievement of sharia.

Keywords: ***halal tourism, non-central regions, Islamic economics, maqashid sharia, regional economic acceleration.***

Introduction

The tourism industry contributes significantly to global and national economic growth. This sector boosts foreign exchange earnings and drives job creation, local business development, and equitable regional development. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2022) The tourism sector is among the fastest-growing industries globally. In this context, the emergence of value-based tourism trends indicates that traveler preferences are no longer solely destination-oriented; they also focus on aligning services with personal beliefs and lifestyles, including halal tourism.

The lack of concrete regulations regarding Halal Tourism remains a dilemma amidst the Ministry of Tourism's numerous achievements. Currently, its guidelines rely on the general rules stipulated in Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism. To address this legal vacuum (Ramadhani, 2021) emphasizing three crucial steps the government needs to take: first, accelerating the drafting of specific regulations for halal tourism; second, coordinating regularly with the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) to update regulations; and third, preparing other technical aspects to support the acceleration of these regulations.

From an Islamic economic perspective, economic activities—including tourism—are not solely oriented toward material aspects; they must also reflect Sharia principles, such as the separation of men and women, appropriate attire, the provision of worship facilities, guidelines regarding food and drink, fairness, and so forth. According to (Huda, 2022) Conceptually, halal tourism encompasses requirements that both tourists and tourism destinations must meet. A trip can be classified as halal tourism if its purpose aligns with Sharia principles—such as visits to the Holy Lands, maintaining kinship ties, pilgrimages to visit religious scholars, business travel, *dakwah* (religious outreach) activities, or simply recreation for physical and spiritual refreshment. Meanwhile, a tourism destination must meet halal standards, including the availability of prayer facilities; the absence of elements involving immorality or the consumption of haram (forbidden) items; the preservation of the environment and local culture in accordance with Sharia; and the absence of unjust practices. Consequently, the destination must also guarantee the fulfillment of visitors' rights, including the safety of their lives and property, ease of access to worship, and the provision of facilities and services as agreed upon.

Halal tourism integrates tourism activities with Sharia principles, such as providing halal products, worship facilities, and an environment that upholds Islamic ethics and morals. (Suhandi, 2023) It emphasizes that economic development in Islam must aim to achieve holistic well-being encompassing not only the material but also the spiritual dimension. Consequently, developing halal tourism can boost economic growth while also advancing the objectives of Sharia *(maqashid al-Sharia),* particularly the preservation of religion (*hifz al-din*) and the economic well-being of the community (*hifz al-mal).*

As the country with the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia has a significant opportunity to develop the halal tourism sector (Noviantoro, 2020). According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) report, the number of global Muslim travelers continues to rise year by year and is projected to reach hundreds of millions of international trips in the coming years. (Noer, 2020). This positions halal tourism as a potential driver of national economic growth. However, this sector tends to remain concentrated in central areas or premier tourist destinations with adequate infrastructure, such as major cities and key tourism hubs. (Razal, 2024).

On the other hand, non-central areas—such as rural and coastal regions, as well as 3T areas (frontier, outermost, and underdeveloped)—possess significant tourism potential. This potential stems from their natural beauty, rich local culture, and local wisdom values that align with Sharia principles. However, this potential has not yet been optimally harnessed within the framework of halal tourism development (Suhandi, 2023).

Various obstacles—such as limited infrastructure, low-quality human resources, a lack of public awareness regarding the concept of halal tourism, and weak institutional support—serve as major impediments to the development of this sector in non-central regions (Hardana, 2025).

Previous studies have largely focused on developing halal tourism in urban areas or prime destinations, emphasizing aspects such as marketing, tourist preferences, and destination competitiveness (Wisnu & Anshori, 2025). Meanwhile, studies specifically examining the potential and challenges of developing halal tourism in non-central regions—particularly those linking it to regional economic acceleration strategies based on Islamic economic principles—remain relatively limited. Furthermore, most research has yet to comprehensively integrate an analysis of local potential with the Maqasid Sharia approach as a normative foundation for halal tourism development. (Nugraha, 2025). This indicates a significant research gap and creates an opportunity for deeper study.

This research is urgent because it must formulate a halal tourism development strategy oriented not only toward economic growth but also toward equitable development and enhanced community welfare in non-central regions. From an Islamic economic perspective, the development of the economic sector must be capable of fostering distributive justice and reducing regional disparities (Agus Eko Sujianto, 2023). Therefore, developing halal tourism in non-central regions can serve as a strategic instrument to accelerate regional economic growth in an inclusive and sustainable manner.

Based on the foregoing, this study aims to analyze the potential and challenges of developing halal tourism in non-central regions and to formulate strategies to accelerate regional economic growth based on Islamic economic principles.

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative, descriptive approach to provide a systematic overview of the potential and challenges of developing halal tourism in non-central regions from an Islamic economic perspective. The methodology combines a literature review with field data gathered through interviews to strengthen the analysis. The study utilizes both secondary and primary data. Secondary data were sourced from scholarly materials such as national and international journals, academic books, and relevant institutional reports published within the last decade. Primary data were obtained through interviews with local residents in the Selat Baru area of Bengkalis who are directly involved in tourism activities. Data collection involved document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The interviews focused on the state of tourism development, economic impacts on the community, obstacles to development, the condition of facilities and infrastructure, the community's understanding of the halal tourism concept, and the availability of training or guidance related to halal tourism. The data were then analyzed using content analysis, comprising stages of data reduction, descriptive presentation, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data validity, the study employed source triangulation by comparing relevant references with interview findings, thereby verifying the consistency and accuracy of the information.

Results And Discussion

General analysis of halal tourism development

Using a qualitative approach through literature review and content analysis, the study found that halal tourism development in non-central regions has significant potential to accelerate regional economic growth. This is reinforced by global trends indicating a year-on-year increase in the number of Muslim travelers. The Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) report reveals that global Muslim travel reached approximately 160 million trips in 2019 and is projected to rise to 230 million trips by 2026, with expenditure exceeding USD 300 billion. These data indicate that halal tourism is a continuously expanding market, offering substantial opportunities for Muslim-majority nations like Indonesia to capitalize on. (Jimea & Mea, 2023).

Nationally, the tourism sector also contributes significantly to the economy. Data from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) indicates that the tourism sector accounts for approximately 4–5% of Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs millions of workers. However, the sector's economic benefits remain concentrated in major hubs such as Bali, Jakarta, and Yogyakarta. This suggests that regions outside these hubs have not yet been fully integrated into mainstream national tourism development, including the halal tourism sector. (Jimea & Mea, 2023).

Potential for Halal Tourism Development in Selat Baru, Bengkalis

As a peripheral area, the Selat Baru tourism zone in Bengkalis Regency has significant potential for halal tourism development. This potential is evident not only in its natural beauty—such as pristine beaches and a tranquil atmosphere—but also in the local community's socio-cultural life, which is deeply rooted in Islamic values and Malay traditions. These conditions offer Muslim tourists a distinct sense of comfort, thanks to the welcoming environment, the availability of halal food, and the ease of performing religious observances.(Kurniawan et al., 2025). Furthermore, the support of the local community—accustomed to Islamic principles of living—is a key strength in creating a tourist destination that is not only visually appealing but also aligned with the requirements of halal tourism, offering the potential for continued development and the ability to compete with other destinations.

Developing halal tourism in non-central regions can also generate a multiplier effect on the local economy. Tourism activities can drive growth in the MSME sector, local transportation, and community-based creative industries. (Afriwanda, 2020). This is in line with the principle of distribution in Islamic economics, which emphasizes the importance of equal distribution of welfare (distributive justice), so that economic benefits are not only enjoyed by large business actors, but also by the local community at large (Kasmawati, 2025).

When evaluated against halal destination criteria, Selat Baru Beach possesses natural and cultural attributes that align seamlessly with Sharia principles. Naturally, the area prioritizes environmental sustainability, offering a pristine and tranquil beach setting ideal for visitors seeking recreation to restore their physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, the preservation of Malay traditions—manifested through beach festivals—reinforces the area's unique identity. In the context of halal tourism, this Malay culture—which is closely intertwined with Islam—plays a pivotal role in ensuring that local norms and values remain consistent with Sharia. A culture that emphasizes modesty and ethical conduct naturally safeguards the area against facilities or activities deemed contrary to religious tenets, thereby creating a tourism zone that is safe, comfortable, and suitable for Muslim travelers. To strengthen the analysis, this study also uses secondary data from the Bengkalis Regency Tourism Office, Statistics Indonesia (BPS), and relevant reports on the current state of tourism development in the Selat Baru area.

Tourism Development in Selat Baru, Bengkalis

Indicator	Data/Information	Source
Destination Status	Selat Baru is a premier tourism destination in Bengkalis	Bengkalis Tourism Office
Tourism Type	Nature, cultural, and religious tourism	Bengkalis Tourism Office
Tourist Visits	Increases during festivals	Bengkalis Tourism Office
Economic Impact	Boosts local community income	BPS Bengkalis
Infrastructure	Requires further development	BPS Bengkalis
Facilities	Available but not yet Halal-standardized	Tourism Office
Human Resources	No specific training in Halal tourism yet	Relevant reports
Promotion	Still limited	Tourism Office
Halal Potential	Supported by the Muslim majority	BPS
Policy	No specific regulations yet	Local Government

Table 1. Source: Compiled from the Bengkalis Regency Tourism Office, BPS Bengkalis Regency, and related reports. (2023–2025).

Interviews with Local Residents

Name	Occupation	Interview Findings
Mr.	Vendor	Tourism is busy during holidays, but

Udin		facilities are still lacking
Mr. Suyud	Vendor	Income rises when visitor numbers are high, but tourism promotion is insufficient, leading to unstable visitor numbers
Awal	Parking Service	Provides additional income; road access is poor
Mrs. Tini	Vendor	Halal food; no certification yet
Mrs. Wati	MSME	Supports the economy; no training received yet

Table 2. Informant Interview Results. Source: Interviews.

Based on this information, the development of the Selat Baru Beach area in Bengkalis Regency shows promising potential as a premier tourism destination, particularly within the framework of halal tourism development. From demographic and sociocultural perspectives, the fact that the majority of the local population is Muslim serves as a formidable foundational asset. Data from the Tourism Office corroborate this, classifying Selat Baru not merely as a nature tourism site but also as one encompassing cultural and religious tourism dimensions. The established cultural ecosystem creates an environment conducive to applying Sharia values, as the local community organically practices lifestyles and commercial activities that align with halal principles.

From an economic perspective, this tourist destination has proven to be a catalyst for boosting the local economy. Data from the Bengkalis Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and empirical field verification indicate that tourism in Selat Baru has directly raised local residents' income. Accounts from micro-entrepreneurs such as Mr. Udin, Mr. Suyud, Ms. Tini, and Ms. Wati, as well as service providers like Mr. Awal, suggest a positive correlation between tourism activities and improved grassroots economic well-being. However, this economic growth remains volatile and heavily reliant on specific periods, such as holiday seasons or festivals. Such fluctuations indicate that the destination's appeal is not yet underpinned by a sustainable visitor management strategy.

Despite this potential and positive economic impact, Selat Baru's development faces significant structural challenges, particularly in infrastructure and basic facilities. Macroeconomic data from BPS aligns with the local community's firsthand experience of inadequate supporting infrastructure. Awal's complaints about poor road access, alongside Mr. Udin's points about the lack of public facilities, suggest that accessibility and amenities—key pillars of tourism—have not been managed well. In the context of halal tourism, these facility limitations are particularly critical; data from the Tourism Office reveals that existing facilities in the area lack robust halal standardization, such as adequate places of worship and sanitation facilities that meet proper standards.

Furthermore, the discourse surrounding Selat Baru's readiness to become a halal tourism destination reveals a dichotomy between cultural practices and institutional recognition. According to Buk Tini, the food products sold by the local community are essentially halal in substance, yet none have obtained official halal certification. This lack of certification is compounded by limited human resources capacity within the tourism sector. Statements from Buk Wati—corroborated by reports from relevant agencies—confirm that MSME operators and the community members managing tourism activities have never received specialized training on the concepts of "halal hospitality" or service standards for Muslim-friendly tourism. This indicates that the community's readiness remains organic and has not yet become a standardized service industry.

These weaknesses regarding standardization and human resource capacity stem from fundamental issues at the regulatory and policy levels. To date, the local government has not formulated specific regulations or a legal framework to guide halal tourism implementation in the area. This policy vacuum has resulted in a lack of systematic intervention—whether through large-scale support for halal certification, budget allocation for human resource training, or the development of facility standards. A further consequence of this weak governance is the limited promotional support the Tourism Office acknowledges remains in place. This aligns with Mr. Suyud's concerns that the lack of promotion has led to unstable tourist visitation levels.

Overall, tourism development in Selat Baru is currently in a transitional phase, characterized as "culturally halal yet structurally uninstitutionalized." Transforming this immense potential into a competitive halal tourism destination requires holistic policy interventions from the local government. These interventions must begin with specific regulations for halal tourism, followed by accelerated physical infrastructure improvements, facilitation of free halal certification for MSMEs, and the implementation of continuous human resource training programs for the tourism sector. Through this integrated approach, Selat Baru will not only ensure comfort for Muslim tourists but also secure sustainable economic stability for the local community.

Challenges in Developing Halal Tourism in Bengkalis

Although the Selat Baru area in Bengkalis Regency possesses promising socio-religious capital and coastal geographical potential, its status as a peripheral region presents a complex array of structural, cultural, and institutional obstacles. Based on a synthesis of secondary data from the Tourism Office and the Bengkalis Regency Statistics Agency (BPS), alongside empirical findings from in-depth interviews with local business operators, the primary challenges facing the development of halal tourism in Bengkalis can be comprehensively outlined across the following five critical:

1. Limited Geographical Accessibility and Muslim-Friendly Tourism Infrastructure

As a peripheral area and coastal archipelago, Selat Baru faces fundamental challenges in physical connectivity and supporting facilities at the destination. Interviews with a local informant, Mr. Awal (a parking service provider), confirm that road access to the tourist site remains inadequate and often hinders visitors' movement.

Beyond road access, the physical facilities supporting the "halal-friendly" concept at the beachfront have not yet met established standards. As Mr. Udin (a local vendor) noted, inadequate public facilities remain a significant issue, particularly during peak weekend visits. Within the framework of halal tourism, facilities encompass more than just standard restrooms and seating; they also include:

- Availability of clean water with high sanitary standards for ritual purification (wudu).
- Toilets with privacy separation and drainage systems protected from contamination by impurities.
- A prayer room (mushala) that is suitable, clean, well-maintained, and easily accessible from the shoreline.

The lack of standardized physical infrastructure reduces comfort and shortens the length of stay for Muslim tourists, particularly family travelers (Battour & Ismail, 2015) It also defines the physical needs of Muslim travelers, including access to clean water for ritual purification (*thaharah/wudu*), privacy-friendly toilet facilities, and prayer rooms with clear indications of the *Qibla* direction.

2. Absence of Formal Halal Certification and Culinary Ecosystem Standardization

The predominantly Muslim character of the Bengkalis community naturally ensures the availability of food that is halal in terms of ingredients (halal by nature or de facto). However, a fundamental weakness is the lack of official halal legality and certification (halal by law or de jure). This is clearly reflected in Mrs. Tini's statement (a food vendor), who noted that while all the food products she sells are halal, none yet have official halal certification or labeling from the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH). According to (Azizah, 2021) which reveals that most culinary MSME operators consider product halal status sufficiently guaranteed by the producer's Islamic identity, without requiring official state recognition.

This gap between cultural guarantees and administrative guarantees gives rise to several critical weaknesses:

- For local tourists from the surrounding region, the absence of a label might be tolerated based on mutual trust. However, for tourists from other regions or abroad—particularly the potential cross-border market from Malaysia, given its proximity to the Strait of Malacca/Bengkalis—the lack of a formal certificate reduces trust (halal assurance).
- The halal supply chain ecosystem within the coastal culinary MSME sector remains vulnerable, particularly regarding processing hygiene, storage segregation, and the standardization of hygiene and halal requirements *(halalan thayyiban).*

3. Literacy Deficit and Limited Human Resource Capacity in Tourism

The next critical challenge lies in human resources and conceptual understanding. Most business operators and coastal community members in Selat Baru hold a narrow perspective of halal tourism, interpreting it solely as a prohibition against the sale of pork and alcoholic beverages. They lack a holistic understanding that halal tourism encompasses an entire service chain—from end-to-end Muslim-friendly hospitality and the management of clean coastal environments to ethical transaction practices (avoiding *tathfif*, or fraudulent dealing) and hospitable service. This situation aligns with the findings of (Sofiah & Khumaidah, 2023) which emphasizes that a lack of literacy and fragmented understanding among grassroots stakeholders are major obstacles to developing halal destinations. The community has yet to grasp the holistic nature of halal tourism—which encompasses the entire service chain (end-to-end Muslim-friendly hospitality), the management of clean coastal environments, and the delivery of hospitable service as mandated by Islamic principles of tourism management.

This situation is exacerbated by the absence of targeted capacity-building programs. Interviews with Ms. Wati (an MSME operator) revealed that small business owners in the tourism area have never received interventions such as technical guidance, assistance with legal compliance, or specialized training on halal tourism service standards. This lack of workforce competency means that service interactions remain conventional and traditional, lacking any orientation toward tourism product differentiation.

4. Fragility of Promotion Schemes and Economic Instability (Seasonal Volatility)

Tourism development in Selat Baru faces a highly vulnerable pattern of seasonal demand. As noted by Mr. Suyud (a local merchant), the surge in local income is fleeting—occurring only during annual festivals or national holidays—whereas visitor numbers drop drastically on ordinary days due to a lack of sustained promotional activities. This obstacle stems from:

- The absence of a digital-based destination branding strategy that articulates the unique blend of coastal ecology and the Malay-Islamic traditions of Selat Baru.
- The Tourism Office's marketing strategy still relies on conventional, ceremonial approaches rather than leveraging a digital marketing ecosystem (digital halal travel marketing) that targets urban Muslim communities—both within mainland Riau and outside the province.

As a result, micro-entrepreneurs' capital turnover becomes unstable, increasing the risk of economic vulnerability for small-scale traders who rely entirely on coastal activities.

5. Institutional Fragmentation and the Absence of a Regional Regulatory Framework (Regulatory Void)

Secondary data from the Bengkalis Regency Government indicates an absence of specific regulations—whether in the form of Regional Regulations (Perda) or Regent Regulations (Perbup)—that specifically govern the management and roadmap for halal tourism. This lack of a legal framework has resulted in institutional fragmentation among the Tourism Office, religious agencies, MSME associations, and local village governments.

From the perspective of Islamic Economics and *Maqashid Sharia*, this lack of regulation and coordination serves as a primary obstacle to safeguarding the community's wealth *(hifz al-mal).* Coastal tourism in Selat Baru has not distributed its economic benefits inclusively or sustainably because integrated policy interventions are lacking. This reinforces the premise put forward by Sofiah & Khumaidah (2023) that, without integrated institutional support (integrated governance), tourism destination development proceeds in a fragmented manner. Consequently, as outlined by Nugraha (2025) and Razal (2024), the absence of a unified design not only thwarts the realization of an inclusive economy but also undermines the essential values of halal tourism. Ultimately, uncoordinated development hinders the acceleration of a regional economy grounded in the principle of distributive justice *(al-'adalah al-ijtima'iyyah)* for the welfare of communities in peripheral areas (Kasmawati, 2025; Sujianto, 2023).

Analysis of Halal Tourism Development Strategies

To address the regulatory void and institutional fragmentation in outlying areas, the Bengkalis Regency Government must take the fundamental step of formulating an affirmative legal framework—in the form of a Regional Regulation or Regent's Regulation—governing the implementation of Muslim-friendly tourism. This policy serves as both a normative foundation and an operational roadmap (providing legal certainty) that integrates the regional tourism master plan with Sharia principles through a Pentahelix collaboration scheme. Under this scheme, government agencies (the Tourism Office and the Regional Development Planning Agency/Bappeda) act as regulators and budget providers, synergizing with local university academics—who serve as research hubs and Halal Center facilitators—as well as coastal business operators, mass media, the Riau Malay Customary Institution (LAMR), and Tourism Awareness Groups. This institutionalized multi-stakeholder collaboration ensures that tourism governance possesses legal certainty *(hifz al-nizam)*, is planned in an integrated manner, and is oriented toward the public good in a sustainable way.

Regarding the physical dimension and visitor comfort, interventions focus on improving transport accessibility and standardizing Muslim-friendly amenities. Local government must prioritize upgrading the main access road to the Selat Baru Beach area to improve mobility and ease logistical constraints that have historically limited visitor potential. Beyond road infrastructure, coastal area development must incorporate adequate facilities for ritual purification (*thaharah*) and sanitation; this includes providing clean, separate restrooms with a continuous supply of fresh water and ensuring the absence of accumulated impurities (*najis*). Furthermore, constructing proper coastal prayer rooms (*mushala*) with verified *Qibla* orientation and implementing family-friendly zoning are crucial steps to uphold public propriety in accordance with Malay-Islamic etiquette, while simultaneously safeguarding the preservation of life *(hifz al-nafs)* and facilitating religious observance *(hifz al-din)* for tourists.

To address the lack of product certification and limited understanding among business operators, capacity-building strategies should accelerate mass halal certification and transform human resources through a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) approach. Proactive outreach programs for free halal certification (the *Self-Declare SEHATI* scheme) must be vigorously implemented through strategic partnerships between the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH) and local university-based Halal Centers to assist coastal MSMEs in the food sector; this enables local culinary offerings to transition from being merely culturally halal *(halal by nature)* to legally certified *halal* (*halal* by law) that meets high standards of hygiene and wholesomeness (*halalan thayyiban*). At the same time, periodic training in Sharia-compliant hospitality is essential to instill business ethics (*muamalah*), transparent pricing free from exploitation (*anti-tathfif*), and the etiquette of honoring guests (ikram al-dhayf) among vendors and tourism service providers. This transformation of intellectual capacity and skills (*hifz al-'aql*) is crucial for dispelling the public misconception that halal tourism is exclusive, reframing it instead as a universal service standard that prioritizes integrity, hospitality, and hygiene.

To address seasonal economic volatility and expand market reach, promotional strategies must shift to a structured approach that includes creating an annual calendar of events, optimizing cross-border halal tourism potential, and supporting Sharia-compliant financial inclusion. Local governments and community stakeholders need to package maritime festivals, Malay cultural traditions, and religious activities into a regular agenda and aggressively market it through a digital ecosystem centered on narratives of Islamic coastal beauty. Selat Baru's strategic geographic position—facing the Strait of Malacca—must be fully leveraged through the Bengkalis–Malaysia international sea-crossing route to attract Muslim tourists from the region who seek maritime tourism with a religious dimension. Finally, coastal communities' resilience should be strengthened by optimizing Islamic social finance instruments—such as interest-free revolving funds (qardhul hasan) and Sharia micro-financing—to achieve tangible economic equity and protect wealth *(hifz al-mal)* for communities in outlying areas.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, this study shows that developing halal tourism in non-central regions has significant potential an accelerate regional economic growth, particularly by leveraging local assets—such as nature, culture, and religious tourism—that align with Sharia principles. Furthermore, this sector can generate a multiplier effect on the local economy, including increased MSME activity, job creation, and stronger community-based creative industries. From an Islamic economic perspective, developing halal tourism not only contributes to economic growth but also supports the realization of *Maqasid Sharia* (objectives of Sharia) goals, specifically the preservation of wealth (*hifz al-mal*) and the equitable enhancement of community welfare.

However, halal tourism development in non-central regions still faces challenges, including limited infrastructure and accessibility, low-quality human resources, limited public awareness of the halal tourism concept, and poor coordination among stakeholders, which results in weak policy and institutional support. Therefore, a comprehensive, integrated development strategy is required, encompassing infrastructure upgrades, human resource capacity building, increased public awareness, and stronger stakeholder synergy through sustainable policies. Furthermore, a community-based tourism approach is crucial to ensure active participation by local communities, allowing economic benefits to be realized sustainably.

Thus, developing halal tourism in non-central regions has the potential not only to drive the local economy but also to support equitable development aligned with the Sharia economy.

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