

## THE POTENTIAL FOR HALAL CULINARY DEVELOPMENT AMID THE URGENCY OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF MUSLIM TOURISTS IN MAMASA REGENCY

Fauziah<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Akbar<sup>2</sup>, Abdul Wahab<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Institut Agama Islam DDI Polewali Mandar

<sup>3</sup> UIN Alauddin Makassar

[fauziah@ddipolman.ac.id](mailto:fauziah@ddipolman.ac.id), [muhammadakbar@ddipolman.ac.id](mailto:muhammadakbar@ddipolman.ac.id), [abdulwahab@uin-alauddin.ac.id](mailto:abdulwahab@uin-alauddin.ac.id)

### Abstract

The tourism sector is one of the sectors in increasing employment and economic growth. The level of public interest in halal tourism can be seen by the increase in Muslim tourists who come, but the increasing interest of Muslim tourists cannot be fulfilled with the lack of fulfillment of halal culinary. Given the urgent need to accommodate Muslim tourists in Mamasa, this article explores the growth prospects of halal cuisine in Bukit Citol. The aim of this study was to find out the potential of Mamasa halal food and how best to meet the gastronomic needs of Muslim visitors. This study uses qualitative descriptive research design as its methodology. Five tourists who visited Bukit Citol were used as research subjects. The analysis method used in the study was reading and *re-reading and* comparing the findings of researchers with the findings of previous studies. Research findings show that the development of halal food in Mamasa, especially in Citol Hill, has enormous growth potential due to the high volume of Muslim visitors. However, Citol Hill's efforts to better serve Muslim visitor demand are far from ideal.

**Keywords:** *Halal Culinary, and Muslim Travelers*

### INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the most favored by the government. This can be seen from data from 2015 to 2019 which shows a positive development of more than 50% within five years. (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022) The National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) by the government formalizes performance targets in the tourism sector for the draft strategy for 2020–2024. These targets include increasing the country's foreign exchange by around 6-7 times within 4 years from the previous 3.3-4.8 billion dollars in 2020 to 21.5-22.9 billion dollars in 2024, and increasing the sector's contribution to GDP from 4.0 in 2020 to 4.5 percent in 2024. (Akbar & Mallongi, 2022)

Mamasa Regency, one of the six districts in West Sulawesi Province, is rich in natural resources as well as cultural and traditional practices that occupy every available space during the customary activities of the Mamasa people. Mamasa Tourism is famous for a number of tourist attractions, including ecotourism, natural tourism, as well as cultural and educational tourism.

Although most of Mamasa's population is Christian, the majority of visitors are Muslim. This causes Muslim visitors to become concerned whether the food served near tourist attractions is halal or not. Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population, with 80% of its 250 million population being Muslims who strictly adhere to halal standards in their lives. (Lubis, 2018) This amount is a large amount that needs to be protected from products and services that weaken their ability to worship. Business actors need to be aware of the religious component of a food product, especially considering how religious Indonesian society is. This is because Muslim customers will inevitably reject a product if it contains ingredients that are forbidden in the Islamic faith. According to Umar Radhiyallahu Anhu, a Muslim should consume within reasonable limits, and he does not approve of those who do not consume it. (Al-Haritsi, 2023)

This is supported by Arnis Inrani Ibrahim and Riska Damayanti in their article entitled *Muslim Community Concern for Halal Food in Minority Areas (Study of Nurul Falah Mosque Assembly Tana Toraja Regency)* revealed that halal food is the main concern by the Nurul Falaq Mosque Council located in Mengkendek District, Tana Toraja Regency, where the assembly community lives in a Muslim minority area. But when consuming products or food they pay attention to the halal product and are more careful. (Ibrahim & Riska Damayanti, 2021)

Fasiha et al, in their research entitled *Halal Labelization Of Haram Food in Makale Toraja revealed that in Makale Toraja* which is one of the tourist destinations of Tana Toraja proves that there is a practice of manipulating halal labels where halal labeling on illegal restaurants in Makale city has a pattern, namely: 1) Halal labels without MUI halal certificates; 2) The combination of illicit raw materials used in the cooking process; 3) Meat is not slaughtered according to the standards of Islamic teachings; 4) Lack of control over the circulation of illicit products; 5) Culinary MSME players in the market lack access to the halal label; 6) There are weaknesses in halal labeling; and 7) The halal certification process is convoluted. (Fasiha et al., 2019)

Therefore, it makes sense for Muslims to be more aware of the halal status of food. Customers, as external entities, undoubtedly exhibit autonomous behavior based on their desired results and level of satisfaction. The number of consumers who buy a product will depend on how confident they are that the product is halal.

Above description, it is clear that Muslim tourists from all over the world are very interested in Mamasa's tourism industry. On the other hand, non-Muslim food entrepreneurs question whether the food is really halal. As a result, Muslims in the district, who are a minority. In order to help Muslim tourists meet their halal culinary needs, Mamasa has the potential to contribute to the development of halal culinary MSMEs around popular tourist destinations. On the basis of this background, the author is then interested in carrying out research with the title: "*The Potential for Halal Culinary Development Amidst the Urgency of Meeting the Needs of Muslim Tourists in Mamasa Regency*"



## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Pariwisata*

Kurt Morgenroth defines tourism in a narrow sense as the movement of people who temporarily move from their place of residence to travel to other locations and become consumers of economic and cultural products in order to meet their diverse cultural needs and aspirations. diversity of people. (Warpani, 2007)

According to the Mastercard Crescent Rating Global Muslim Travel Index 2023, there are 9 (nine) basic needs of Muslim travelers when traveling, namely (Rating, 2023): **First**, the most important service for Muslims traveling is halal food, so halal food and beverage certification is required which must be easily recognized by all Muslim visitors. Here's the secret to eliminating worries about consuming food and drinks from the area. **Secondly**, prayer facilities are crucial because Muslims need a musala with ablution facilities and Qibla directions to perform the five daily prayers. **Third**, bathrooms equipped with water taps are a necessity for Muslims because they use water for cleaning and washing. **Fourth**, there is no anti-Islamic sentiment; Muslim tourists need a guarantee of safety and security at the destination just like tourists in general. **Fifth**, Social causes: Social justice, which includes awareness and empathy for oneself, others, and the environment, is a fundamental tenet of Islam. **Sixth th**, Ramadan services: Although most Muslim travelers avoid traveling during Ramadan, many Muslims prefer to spend Ramadan outdoors, especially if it falls on a school holiday. The innkeeper can serve halal food for suhoor or iftar. **Seventh**, unique travel experiences connected to Muslim identity and culture, such as visiting Islamic sites or interacting with the local Muslim community. **Eighth**, Some Muslim tourists prefer private recreational facilities. It is a type of facility where both men and women can enjoy privacy. **Ninth**, Since there are no non-halal services available, it is best to stay away from places that do not serve alcoholic beverages, have discos, or are near casinos.

### *Muslim Tourism*

Muslims who travel are unique travelers who are "slightly different" from other travelers for four reasons: first, they must pray; second, they should eat halal food; third, they should avoid certain activities; and fourth, they must travel through time. They still try to fulfill religious obligations even though they are traveling. For example, every Muslim traveling abroad always pays attention to his prayer obligations. In addition to prayer, which is also the main concern of every Muslim tourist is. halal cuisine. Halal cuisine is a must-choose menu for visitors to any destination. (Fahham, 2017)

### *Muslim Travelers' Needs*

In surviving and feeling the pleasures of life, a person has needs that must be met. To meet these needs, things are needed because the needs are relatively more varied and numerous. Similarly, meeting the needs of Muslim visitors has a significant impact

on Muslim satisfaction with a destination, because to ignore tourist consumption is to ignore the lives and obligations that people have towards each other. Muslim consumers, on the other hand, are dedicated to complying with the laws and regulations laid out in Sharia to control consumption and maximize its benefits. In addition, it seeks to avoid deviations from the path of truth and the negative impact it may have on itself and other consumers. (Lubis, 2018)

### ***Halal Culinary***

Food that is *thayyib*, or has a good taste, is well nourished and balanced, and does not negatively affect one's physical or mental health, is considered halal according to Islamic law. The findings and research of nutritionists show that the concept of *thayyib* in Islam is as follows: *First*, nutritious food is defined as complete, balanced, and contains nutrients in sufficient quantities. *Second*, proportional; namely eating a complete, nutritious, and balanced diet for people who are still in their infancy. For example, foods that contain constituent ingredients (protein) should be given to fetuses, infants, toddlers, and adolescents. *Third*, it is safe; Eating food will have an impact on a person's physical and mental well-being. If the food is healthy, balanced, and durable, then the physical condition of people who consume it will always be healthy and free from various types of diseases. Conversely, if the food is unhealthy or not in accordance with its physical condition, it will trigger the emergence of various diseases and can even cause death. (siti Maهران, Asrizal Saiin, Muhammad April, 2022)

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This type of research is field research which is qualitative, descriptive. The research location is a tourist attraction in Mamasa Regency, West Sulawesi Province, namely Chitol Hill. Research instruments in this study include direct interviews with visitors about how satisfied they are with halal food options available near popular tourist destinations in Mamasa Regency. The data collection methods used are documentation studies, interviews, and observations. This study uses data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing as data analysis techniques.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Live interview results**

The following findings are based on research on five informants who were met accidentally in the area around the Bukit Citol tourist attraction using direct interview methods: The informants came from Makassar, Mamuju, Polewali, and other cities in South and West Sulawesi. Informants make choices in making tours to Chitol Hill because of the very beautiful natural panorama and cultural attractions that are still very sustainable, making Chitol Hill Resort like an opium that always wants to be visited and more interesting there are rides in the form of a hanging bike unit that makes visitors on



Citol hill more crowded. The informant obtained information related to Chitol Hill from Instagram and Tiktok social media as well as some oral submissions.

Informants who visited Chitol Hill stated that the place has not met halal culinary needs, this can be seen from the lack of halal labels on the menu both at Chitol Hill's place and around the place. In addition, the fulfillment of halal culinary needs in Chitol Hill has not been so implemented, this is because the majority of the population is a non-Muslim religion. In fact, one restaurant near the popular destination serves haram meat, which is forbidden to Muslims.

The informants added that there are challenges in fulfilling religious obligations to perform prayers in tourist destinations because there is no musala near the tourist attraction and a considerable distance from the city of Mamasa, and what is an obstacle to this tourist area is the erratic weather because like us Citol Hill is under the foot of Mount Mambulilling where it often rains and erratic weather. The informants stated that bringing food from home such as instant noodles, mineral water, and snacks is a way for a person to meet his culinary needs when visiting a tourist destination. Due to poor road access to tourist destinations, this actually causes disruption to travel.

The informants admitted that although they were uncomfortable because the need for halal food was not guaranteed, they were still eager to return to the tourist destination because they had fallen in love with the charm of Bukit Citol. The informant had high hopes that the owner as well as the government would cater to the gastronomic needs of the mostly Muslim visitors and would make it possible to provide places of worship in popular tourist destinations, particularly Bukit Citol.

### **Direct observation results**

The owner of Citol Hill is Christian, so the food menu cannot be guaranteed halal. There is 1 restaurant in the Citol Hill neighborhood, while outside the Citol Hill area about 100 meters there are 5 food sellers but food stall owners and mixed sellers embrace non-Muslim religions, so even though there are culinary providers, there is not one that meets halal standards and halal certificates from MUI. There are no prayer facilities such as prayer rooms or Qibla directions at Citol Hill tourist attraction. The owner and manager of the food menu at Citol Hill tourist attraction is a Christian. The quantity of visitors visiting every day usually amounts to 10-20 people, and if Saturday and Sunday can number from 20 to 50 people.

### **Discussion**

#### **Analysis using GMTI standardization**

The authors establish a relationship between the principles of GMTI (Global Muslim Travel Index) standardization and the prospect of culinary progress that meets standards or halal in Citol Hill, based on the findings of the investigation. The ACES (*Accessibilities, Communication, Environment, Service*) model is the basis for GMTI criteria indicators, namely:



1) *Accessibilities* (Akses)

This access consists of several things, namely: a) *requirements* (visa), b) *transport infrastructure* (transportation infrastructure). c) *connectivity*. Based on the three indicators above, there are still certain problems in access to Bukit Citol tourist destinations. The Mamasa Regency Government needs to take immediate action to overcome these problems, including widening and improving road infrastructure, installing signs, and others.

2) *Communication* (Komunikasi)

In promoting tourism products, tourism business actors need to handle the communication component of halal tourism development. Bukit Citol destinations use digital and print media for communication. She uses social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and TikTok, as well as print media such as pamphlets and newspapers and collaborates with third parties in the community. The social media pages of each tourist destination have all the information about its products.

The GMTI 2023 assessment criteria show this theoretically. There are three elements that make up communication indicators: *digital presence*, outreach, and *ease of communication*. Based on the various indicators above, Mamasa Regency, which is a tourist destination for Bukit Citol, has implemented indicators of digital presence and ease of communication. All tourist destinations have also implemented marketing communications using online media. The information that tourist destinations want to convey to visitors and potential visitors can be communicated effectively through the use of communication media. Using online media to communicate has several benefits, such as increased market reach, low cost all you need is an internet connection and a marketing campaign that is not time consuming.

3) *Environment* (Lingkungan)

In an effort to ensure tourists feel safe and comfortable, the environmental management of a tourist destination must be improved in order to attract more visitors. Bukit Citol tourist destinations strive to protect the environment through tourism development; This includes preserving the amazing environment, refraining from deforestation, hunting, and other activities.

a. Potential Analysis of Halal Culinary Potential Development based on standardization GMTI with Traveller services indicator.

Actions in advancing halal tourism with GMTI standardization, in particular metrics of offering goods and services that are friendly to customers and meet the needs of Muslim travelers to make their travel more comfortable. However, Bukit Citol tourist destinations still have huge halal culinary needs. This is contrary to the standard



assessment criteria of the GMTI 2023 which characterizes two main needs that have an impact on the consumption behavior of Muslim tourists: halal culinary and the absence of non-halal activities.

1) Aspects of Halal Food

The owner of Citol Hill is a Christian, thus creating uncertainty regarding whether or not halal from the available culinary

2) Aspects of non-halal activities

Dalam melakukan observasi langsung, peneliti menemukan fakta bahwa Citol Hill tidak melarang pengunjung membawa minuman beralkohol, serta peneliti menemukan adanya aktivitas anak mudah pada saat malam hari sedang melakukan kegiatan kumpul bersama dengan mengonsumsi minuman beralkohol.

b. Analysis Based on Comparison of Researchers' Observations and Previous Research Results

The authors' research findings show that there is currently a shift in Muslim consumers' awareness regarding the availability of halal food. Muslims are very aware and curious about the integrity of the halal status of a food product, in addition to knowing the halalness of the product itself. manufactured by manufacturers who handle every step of the production and supply chain to ensure that the various products they buy are fully halal. Therefore, the importance of halal labeling on delicious foods can be a guarantee for customers in choosing food.

But the authors' view that halal labeling may be a way to help Muslim travelers on a trip was later refuted by the findings of another study, which showed some very troubling information. "*Halal Labelisation Of Haram Food in Makale Toraja*" is the title of an article written by Fitriani Jamaluddin, Helmi Kamal, Abdul Kadir Karno, Muh.ruslan Abdullah, and Fasiha. Based on the findings of the study, it is known that food stalls have been giving halal labels to prohibited products. The study found a number of problems, such as:

- 1) Unscrupulous actions in giving false labels and basmalah sentences,
- 2) The process of food management mixed with raw materials that are not suitable and violate Islamic law,
- 3) Meat that is haram for consumption because it is slaughtered is not in accordance with the Islamic Sharia law,
- 4) Weak control and supervision related to haram products,
- 5) Weak supervision of halal labeling carried out by culinary UMKM players in the market,
- 6) Negligence in halal labeling,
- 7) Complicated halal certification process

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that although visitors are genuinely attracted to Citol Hill, they feel uncomfortable with the scarcity of halal food options. As a result, the development of halal culinary in Citol Hill has a lot of potential.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been done, conclusions can be drawn, namely:

1. With so many Muslim visitors, there is great potential for halal culinary development in Mamasa, especially in Bukit Citol.
2. Although Muslim tourists really need it, Citol Hill has not implemented the fulfillment of halal culinary needs because it has not met GMTI standards.

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