



Assistance for Halal Based Tourism Object Management on the Banks of the Kampar River

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Abstract: Management of natural and culinary tourism along the banks of the Kampar River still suffers from low basic infrastructure, weak service quality, and a lack of understanding of halal tourism standards, making the destination unprepared for competition. This community service program aims to improve the capacity of managers to implement halal tourism principles through managerial mentoring, facility development, and community-based human resource development. The program uses an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach with the stages of Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny. Data were collected through facility condition observations, in-depth interviews with managers, focus group discussions (FGDs) to formulate destination needs and visions, and community asset mapping. Analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative methods, synthesizing the gap between existing conditions and halal tourism standards. The program resulted in standard operating procedures (SOPs) for halal tourism, increased understanding of halal certification, improved hygiene and prayer facilities, enhanced digital skills, and the establishment of tourism groups (Pokdarwis) and tourism police as sustainability institutions. These findings indicate a shift from spontaneous management to structured governance. Strengthening local regulations, ongoing monitoring, and further research based on impact evaluation are needed to measure improvements in service quality and destination competitiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the economic development sectors that plays a crucial role in the growth and development of a region (Jabeen dkk., 2025). One such sector is the concept of Halal Tourism, which has now become a trend and a necessity in the tourism industry (Effendi dkk., 2021a). Halal tourism is a concept tailored to the principles of Islamic Sharia to meet the needs of Muslim travelers (Ceti & Unluonen, 2020). This concept not only emphasizes religious aspects but also offers a comfortable, inclusive, and welcoming travel experience for all tourists (Keshavarzi & Siyavooshi, 2025). In other words, the concept of halal tourism emphasizes the provision of services and facilities that align with Islamic values without discriminating against non-Muslim travelers (Abd. Hakim dkk., 2019). This concept is built on the urgent need to address the growing Muslim population worldwide,

accompanied by a shift toward careful and selective consumption of services and products that align with Islamic sharia principles (Aulia & Azizah, 2023). This is evidenced by the Pew Research Center's (PEW) projections regarding the growth of the global Muslim population. The organization predicts that the number of Muslims will increase significantly over the next decade, rising from 23.4% in 2020 to 24.9% by 2030. Consequently, there will be a 6.41% increase in the global proportion of the Muslim population (Pew, 2017).

In this regard, Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, with a population of 282 million, ranking it first according to the Global Muslim Population report released on November 15, 2025 (*Global Muslim Population*, 2025). Thus, Indonesia has great potential to become both an agent and a hub for global tourism development, particularly in the field of halal tourism, which aligns with Indonesia's vision as a global halal tourism destination (Rafiqah, 2024). Therefore, every region must undertake planned, systematic, and sustainable development efforts to strengthen competitiveness and ensure the quality of services and products align with Islamic sharia values (Effendi dkk., 2021b). One region with a strategic position is Riau Province, as its social structure and interactions are deeply rooted in Islamic values that have become an integral part of the socio-cultural character of the Riau community, particularly the Malay community (BPS-Statistik Provinsi Riau, 2024).

Additionally, the number of tourist attractions in Riau Province is quite substantial, as recorded in the 2024 report by the Riau Provincial BPS, which includes 248 natural attractions, 118 man-made attractions, and 163 cultural attractions, totaling 529 attractions. The total number of tourist visits to Riau Province reaches 11 million people per year. Out of 10 regencies and 2 cities, Kampar Regency ranked first as the region with the highest number of tourist visits in 2024, totaling 3,299,139 visitors (29.87%). Moreover, the tourist attractions in Kampar Regency are also well-known internationally. Foreign tourists from various countries visit Kampar to enjoy its natural beauty, cuisine, and cultural richness. Consequently, Kampar Regency is a strategic region for enhancing the quality of halal tourism services and products. To support these efforts, one approach is through community service initiatives (BPS-Statistik Provinsi Riau, 2024).

Based on the situation analysis conducted by the service team, one of Kampar Regency's major potentials in the tourism sector is river tourism, as the river flows throughout the regency and possesses significant historical, ecological, and economic value (Rafiqah, 2024). The potential of Kampar River tourism includes the stunning natural scenery along its course. The river is surrounded by expanses of mangrove forests, riparian forests, and lush, green agricultural lands. The Kampar River is an ideal location for various water activities (Wati & Yusraini, 2024), such as canoeing, children's play areas, and swimming spots (Lin dkk., 2022).

Visitors can explore the Kampar River while enjoying the fresh air and the surrounding natural scenery. The Kampar River holds significant historical value, particularly due to its role as a trade route in the past. Tourism development in this area has the potential to provide economic benefits for the local community, such as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), souvenir vendors, river fish sellers, and restaurant owners. Thus, tourism activities can contribute to improving the well-being and economic development of communities living along the river. This is evident from the presence of various food stalls and restaurants along the Kampar River, which serve local specialties,

including fresh river fish, a variety of traditional dishes, fruits, and other natural products, all of which can be enjoyed while admiring the river's scenic beauty. With such diverse tourism potential, the Kampar River has become one of the premier destinations in Kampar Regency and the surrounding areas. Therefore, with proper and sustainable management, the Kampar River can continue to be a major attraction for tourists.

Preliminary analysis also indicates that the banks of the Kampar River are currently developing into a hub for nature and culinary tourism in the region. There are many food stalls, eateries, and restaurants offering local specialties, particularly fish dishes, which can be enjoyed along the riverbanks amidst a lush natural setting and stunning river views. While enjoying the culinary experience, visitors can directly observe fish ponds, artificial lakes, and hydroelectric power plant installations. Along the riverbanks, many children can also be seen swimming. The Kampar River holds great potential for tourists who enjoy fishing, as the area is home to various aquatic species, such as giant river prawns, baung fish, and selais fish, which also serve as signature culinary ingredients and the main attractions in Kampar Regency.

Although it offers various advantages and tourism potential, the Kampar riverside area still has a number of shortcomings that need to be addressed. Based on the results of discussions and analysis by the service team, the management of tourist attractions is considered to be poorly organized, and there is a lack of clean facilities that meet Islamic hygiene standards. Facilities such as sanitation areas, sanitation systems, and public services do not yet fully meet these Islamic-based eligibility criteria. Worship facilities also need to be a top priority so that Muslim tourists can perform their religious duties more easily. MSME operators in the Kampar Riverbank area still require capacity building regarding the implementation of hygiene concepts and the use of halal raw materials in production processes, and they are required to obtain halal certification under the auspices of the Indonesian government. Therefore, the service team considers it important to carry out community service activities by offering beneficial solutions to managers, particularly through halal-based management mentoring for the Kampar Riverbank tourist sites.

Based on the above description, we selected managers of natural and culinary tourism sites (SMEs) as the subjects of this community service initiative. This is because they play a strategic role in determining the quality of services and the tourist experience. Consequently, this community service initiative is designed as a sustainable mentoring effort for managers of natural and culinary tourism sites (SMEs) in the Kampar Riverbank area. This mentoring activity is expected to enhance understanding, skills, and the practical and contextual implementation of halal tourism principles. It also aims to strengthen local community participation through the empowerment of halal SMEs, the enhancement of tourism human resource capacity, and the development of digital-based halal tourism promotion strategies.

Based on a literature review, three relevant studies were identified: first, the community service project conducted by Rachman et al. (2023) focused on assisting SMEs in completing the SJPH manual, filling out the SiHalal application, and verifying data for the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI). As a result, SME operators successfully obtained halal certification and increased the value of their products by meeting documentation standards and certification processes (Rachman dkk., 2023). Second, Malabar et al. (2023) emphasized outreach and mentoring for SMEs regarding production processes, packaging, digital marketing, and product ingredient documentation for halal certification. This community service initiative led to an improved understanding among business owners regarding the technical stages of certification and their readiness to apply

for halal certification (Malabar dkk., 2023). Third, the community service by Saefullah (2023) indicates that SMEs still have limited understanding regarding the application for SEHATI certification, face difficulties in adopting technology, lack understanding of the self-declaration mechanism, and are hindered by insufficient program outreach and the absence of halal oversight functions. These results underscore the weak halal literacy at the SME level (Saefullah dkk., 2023).

However, all existing research is limited to programs that focus solely on MSME certification and have not yet addressed the integration of halal principles into tourism destination management. There are no studies or community service initiatives that link the improvement of tourism facilities, Sharia-compliant hygiene standards, the provision of places of worship, and the strengthening of MSMEs within a single framework for a halal tourism ecosystem in the context of management. Our community service initiative addresses this gap by integrating management assistance for tourist attractions and SMEs, thereby promoting the comprehensive application of halal principles at the service, facility, and governance levels of the Kampar River tourism area.

Overall, this community service initiative aims to identify management issues at tourist sites along the Kampar River, assess the extent to which managers have received awareness training regarding the concept of halal tourism, and understand the management practices currently in place. This community service initiative aims to evaluate the outcomes of the halal tourism management guidance provided, thereby strengthening managers' capacity to implement sharia-based principles of cleanliness, service, and operations at the Kampar River tourism destinations. By adopting a participatory and collaborative approach, this initiative makes a tangible contribution to enhancing the competitiveness of Kampar River tourism and supports Indonesia's vision as a global hub for halal tourism destinations. Through this initiative, the involvement of higher education institutions in regional development can be concretely realized through the transfer of knowledge, technology, and values of empowerment.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

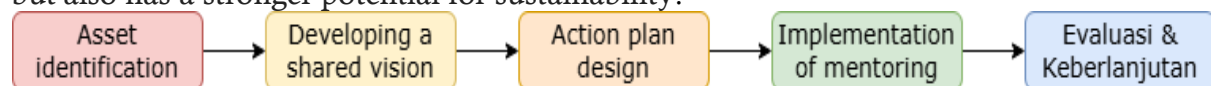
This community service activity employs the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), an empowerment approach that emphasizes the utilization of assets, local potential, and community strengths as the foundation for program development (Al-Kautsari, 2019). This approach was chosen because it is relevant to the needs of halal tourism development, which requires active community participation, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and the sustainability of actions (Battour & Ismail, 2016a). The subjects of the community service project are the managers of natural and culinary tourism sites along the Kampar River (SMEs) (BPS-Statistik Provinsi Riau, 2024). Meanwhile, traditional leaders, local communities, the village government, the Head of the Tourism Marketing Division at the Kampar Tourism Office, the Kampar MUI, and the Kampar Halal Facilitator were involved as key informants and stakeholders. Their involvement aimed to strengthen the asset identification process, validate information, and foster collaboration in the development of an ABCD-based program (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). The study site was located along the banks of the Kampar River in Kampar Regency, Riau—specifically in Kuok Subdistrict.

The instruments and materials used included: observation sheets (field notes) for mapping physical assets and tourism facilities, interview guidelines to gather information on management, asset mapping forms, photo and video documentation (Sugiyono, 2021), halal tourism guidance modules, including Sharia hygiene SOPs, service SOPs, and halal

digital marketing materials. Data collection utilized: field observations to assess the condition of facilities, sanitation, and tourism service flows; in-depth interviews with managers of natural and culinary tourism sites (SMEs) regarding management and knowledge of halal tourism; focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather collective perspectives and develop joint development plans; and participatory asset mapping, including tourism potential, SMEs, places of worship, and development opportunities. The collected data was analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis (reduction, display, conclusion drawing/verification), combined with the ABCD-specific asset mapping approach to map local strengths, development opportunities, and gaps between existing conditions and halal tourism standards (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

The planning and organization of community service activities are carried out through a joint community action planning mechanism that involves all local stakeholders. First, the Discovery phase, which involves the joint identification of community assets and strengths through site observations, tourism asset surveys, and focus group discussions (FGDs) involving tourism managers, traditional leaders, MSME operators, religious leaders, and village officials. In this phase, the community helps determine priority issues, support needs, and potential areas worthy of development within the context of halal tourism. Second, the Dream phase, which involves formulating a shared vision and goals through participatory workshops. During this phase, the community is guided to develop an ideal vision for a halal tourism destination along the Kampar River, including setting short-term and long-term targets. Community involvement is substantive because all ideas, hopes, and development directions are formulated through the results of collective deliberation.

Third, the Design phase focuses on the development of an action plan collaboratively drafted between the service team and the community. This plan includes the development of a support program, the division of roles among stakeholders, and the creation of a roadmap for halal tourism development. At this stage, the local community plays an active role in determining the types of activities, mentoring methods, and intervention priorities, ensuring that the planning process is not merely top-down but grounded in local needs. Fourth, the Destiny phase involves organizing the implementation and strengthening the sustainability of the program. The community, together with the service team, carries out the planned activities, such as training, on-site mentoring, developing SOPs for halal tourism services, and monitoring and evaluation activities. In this stage, a local community or a halal tourism-aware community is also formed to serve as the driving force for the program's sustainability after the community service activities conclude. Through this series of stages, the entire community service process operates based on participatory principles, where the community acts as planners, organizers, and implementers of the activities. This structure ensures that the program is not only responsive to local conditions but also has a stronger potential for sustainability.



Source: Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. ACTA Publications, hlm. 3-36. Interpreted and visualized by the author.

Figure 1: Implementation Process Flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Initial Conditions of the Management of Natural and Culinary Tourism Sites Along the Kampar River

Based on the results of field observations and focus group discussions (FGDs), it was found that the management of culinary tourism sites along the Kampar River has not been optimally organized. Supporting facilities remain very limited; for instance, there are no trash bins at the culinary tourism site, leading to litter scattered about; there is a shortage of handwashing sinks—only one unit is available—resulting in lines of tourists; and there are no entertainment facilities such as music or local songs to enhance visitors' comfort. Additionally, the availability of tables, chairs, teapots, and glasses remains limited; there is only one restroom located in the restaurant owner's house; and the parking area is still cramped.

In terms of service, the quality of service remains relatively low. This is evident from the many dining tables that have not been cleaned when tourists arrive. Furthermore, there are no established service standards in place, so service tends to be spontaneous and conducted in the local dialect, which often leads to confusion in communication with tourists. Regarding cleanliness, on-site conditions also require improvement. In the dining area for tourists, there are chickens roaming freely and even climbing onto tables. The dining area is open-air, but glasses, spoons, and forks are left uncovered, making them vulnerable to dust from the street. Furthermore, from a management perspective, significant improvements are urgently needed. This is due to the absence of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that have been established and implemented, whether regarding tourism services, hygiene management, parking areas, kitchen areas, safety aspects, or services for Muslim and non-Muslim tourists. In terms of human resources (HR), the limited number of staff is also a problem, leading to long lines for orders, with tourists having to wait anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours to enjoy their meals.

Table 1: Findings on Issues in Managing Tourism along the Kampar River

No	Aspect	Problem Findings	Description
1	Cleanliness	There are no trash cans; trash is scattered around; the dining tables are often not cleaned; chickens roam around the dining area; tableware is left out in the open and covered in dust	There are no hygiene protocols; hygiene oversight is minimal
2	Sanitation	There is only one sink, so there are lines; there is only one toilet, and it is located in the owner's house; it does not fully meet sanitation standards for tourism	Limited basic facilities; no tourism sanitation standards yet
3	Supporting Facilities	No entertainment (local music/songs); tables, chairs, teapots, and glasses are in very short supply; the parking lot is small	Facilities do not yet meet tourists' needs; low capacity
4	Tourism Services	Slow service; many tables hadn't been cleared when the tourists arrived;	No service standards; no tourism service training

		communication was in the local language, which confused the tourists	
5	Service Communication	There is no standard means of communication; the use of local dialects makes it difficult for out-of-town visitors	There is no standard operating procedure for customer communication
6	Management	There are no standard operating procedures (SOPs) for service, cleanliness, parking, the kitchen, safety, or services for Muslim and non-Muslim tourists	Managers have not yet grasped standards-based governance
7	Human Resources	Labor shortage; resulting in long queues (30 minutes to 2 hours) to get orders	Limited and untrained human resources; unbalanced workload

Source: Compiled from the results of observations and focus group discussions (FGDs)

Regarding outreach and understanding of halal tourism, interviews with tourism site managers revealed that they have never received formal guidance or outreach, including monitoring and evaluation. So far, the information they have received has been limited to theoretical presentations by experts, with no follow-up or practical application after the sessions. Regarding the implementation of halal tourism, they have not even received any outreach or guidance from local governments or other relevant agencies. They are also unaware of the existence of the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI). A small number of managers have indeed heard of the program, but do not yet understand the requirements or application procedures. This lack of knowledge and understanding results in a low level of readiness among destinations to meet halal tourism criteria.

Table 2: Level of Halal Tourism Socialization

No	Aspect	Findings
1	Formal socialization	Most managers stated that they had never received any formal outreach, guidance, monitoring, or evaluation regarding halal tourism.
2	Follow-up activities	The information provided is limited to theoretical instruction, with no follow-up or practical guidance.
3	Knowledge of SEHATI	Only a small number of business owners have heard of the Free Halal Certification Program (SEHATI), but they do not yet understand the requirements or the application process.
4	Readiness for halal tourism	Limited knowledge and understanding result in a low level of readiness to meet halal tourism certification standards and requirements.

Source: Based on in-depth interviews with managers of natural and culinary attractions along the Kampar River

Thus, it is clear that prior to the implementation of the mentoring program, the management of natural and culinary tourist attractions was carried out spontaneously without reference to any service standards. No standard operating procedures (SOPs) had been developed or implemented. The management of culinary tourism at the site still relies on a simple production model without considering or sorting the entire process according to the halal standards set by the government, and it has not yet obtained halal certification.

The managers of the Kampar Riverbank tourist site have also not yet arranged prayer facilities, qibla direction markers, wudu areas, or adequate sanitation facilities, particularly toilets and the cleanliness of the tourist area. In terms of promotion, most managers rely solely on word-of-mouth and have not yet utilized social media or digital marketing strategies in a systematic and structured manner. Consequently, these overall conditions indicate that the readiness of the tourist destination to meet halal standards remains low and requires comprehensive strengthening and guidance.

Results of the Mentoring Program for the Management of Halal-Based Natural and Culinary Tourism Sites Along the Kampar River

The implementation of the mentoring program using the ABCD approach has yielded a number of positive outcomes, as evidenced by the increased understanding, participation, skills, and managerial capabilities of the managers of natural and culinary tourism sites along the Kampar River in applying the principles of halal tourism. The main achievements include:

1. The service team, together with the managers of the Kampar Riverbank tourism sites and the resource persons, successfully formulated a vision and mission for the development of halal tourism sites oriented toward the international stage;
2. Development of SOPs: The managers of the Kampar Riverbank tourism sites, together with the service team, successfully formulated and developed a number of SOPs, including service SOPs (for Muslim and non-Muslim tourists), hygiene SOPs, facility usage SOPs, and safety and security SOPs. All of these SOPs were drafted in accordance with the principles and standards of halal tourism;
3. The service team successfully provided guidance to the managers of the Kampar Riverbank tourist attractions who were seeking halal certification for the products they offer. The guidance was comprehensive, covering the entire process from the initial registration stage to the issuance of the halal certificate, with full assistance from the service team;
4. The service team also successfully enhanced participants' understanding of the use of halal ingredients, particularly regarding the process of sorting halal raw materials, recording production ingredients, and preparing documentation for halal certification applications. All these activities were carried out through mentoring sessions featuring two competent speakers: a representative from the Kampar MUI and the Kampar Halal Advisor;
5. The service team, together with the managers and speakers, successfully reorganized several facilities, such as the wudu area, prayer room, qibla direction indicators, restrooms, and trash disposal areas. Additionally, the team introduced several innovations to enhance the destination's competitiveness in accordance with minimum halal tourism standards;
6. The service team also successfully improved the understanding of tourism site managers along the Kampar River regarding the creation of Sharia-compliant digital content and halal marketing strategies based on social media. This achievement was realized through presentations by relevant experts, namely the Head of the Tourism Marketing Division at the Kampar Regency Tourism Office;
7. The service team, together with the managers of tourist sites along the Kampar River and the experts, successfully formed a halal tourism awareness community named Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Group), as well as established a tourism security unit or tourism police. The formation of this group represents the sustainability of the

program, where the community forms a working group that serves as a driving force in the management of halal tourism.

Table 3: Forms of Assistance Intervention and Their Results

No.	Activities	Objectives	Achievements
1	Formulation of the vision and mission of halal tourism	Setting the direction for the development of internationally oriented halal tourism destinations	Formulation of the vision and mission of the Kampar Riverbank halal tourist attraction
2	Preparation of SOPs for halal tourism	Establishing operational standards for service, cleanliness, safety, and facility usage in accordance with halal tourism principles	The formulation of SOPs for service, cleanliness, use of facilities, as well as security and safety
3	Halal certification assistance	Supporting managers in obtaining halal certification for the products offered	The manager receives full assistance until the halal certificate is issued
4	Increased understanding of halal ingredients	Improving competence in sorting halal raw materials and preparing certification documents	Participants understand the sorting of raw materials, production recording, and preparation of certification documents
5	Arrangement of halal tourism facilities	Providing facilities that meet the minimum standards for halal tourism	Reorganized the wudu area, prayer room, qibla direction, toilets, and waste management system
6	Halal digital marketing training	Improving digital content creation and Sharia-based marketing strategy capabilities	The manager understands sharia content creation and social media marketing strategies
7	Establishment of Pokdarwis and tourism security units	Building sustainable community-based halal tourism management	The formation of Pokdarwis and tourism security units as sustainability working groups

Source: Based on the results of observations, in-depth interviews, and mentoring sessions documented by the author in a table.

Emerging Social Changes

The results of community service through mentoring using the ABCD approach have revealed several social changes, including:

1. Changes in Management Behavior: Mentoring has encouraged more structured work practices. Management has begun implementing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for service, hygiene, and safety that were previously absent. Attention to hygiene has increased, including the arrangement of dining areas, control of wild animals, and the storage of dining utensils to meet hygiene and Sharia principles;

2. **Capacity and Knowledge Enhancement:** There has been an increase in managers' capacity regarding the understanding of halal tourism, including the certification process, the selection of halal raw materials, production record-keeping, and the preparation of standard documents. Digital marketing skills have also improved, particularly in creating Sharia-friendly content and using social media for promotion;
3. **Establishment of New Institutions:** The mentoring program has led to the creation of previously nonexistent institutional structures, namely the Halal Tourism Community Group (Pokdarwis) and a tourism security unit. These two institutions strengthen community-based governance and create more systematic coordination in destination management;
4. **Improvements in Governance and Tourism Facilities:** The arrangement of worship facilities (ablution areas, prayer rooms, qibla direction), restrooms, and sanitation facilities demonstrates a shift toward governance that is more responsive to the needs of Muslim tourists. The formulation of the destination's vision and mission also provides a clearer direction for development;

Increased Collective Awareness of Halal Standards: Managers demonstrate heightened awareness of the importance of halal standards and service professionalism. Understanding of halal certification programs, which was previously limited, has now grown, enabling the destination to be better prepared to meet halal tourism standards.

Discussion

Initial Conditions of the Management of the Kampar Riverbank Natural and Culinary Tourism Destination

Field findings indicate that the destination is at a very low level of basic infrastructure. This is based on the Tourism Infrastructure Level theory, which states that a tourism destination must minimally possess: sanitation facilities, sanitation infrastructure, accessibility, amenities, and safety support facilities (Inskeep, 1991). Meanwhile, the conditions of the Kampar Riverbank tourism area have not optimally met these criteria because (Butler, 2006):

1. The lack of trash bins, adequate toilets, and sinks indicates that the destination is still in the pre-development phase.
2. Exposed dining utensils without protection from external exposure and open dining areas without animal control reflect an unsafe environment that could potentially harm visitors' health.
3. The limited parking area and lack of supporting facilities such as local music or cultural decorations indicate the destination lacks the supporting amenities that signify a developing destination.

Thus, from the perspective of tourism infrastructure theory, this destination falls into the category of an underdeveloped tourism site (Butler, 2006).

Regarding service aspects, the author employs the SERVQUAL theory and the 7P framework of Service Marketing. First, on-site service conditions indicate that nearly all SERVQUAL dimensions are at a low level (Parasuraman dkk., 1985):

1. **Tangibles (physical evidence):** Minimal facilities, scattered trash, utensils left exposed to the elements, and roaming chickens indicate inadequate physical evidence;
2. **Reliability:** Orders take a very long time to arrive (up to 2 hours), and tables are not cleaned, demonstrating a lack of service reliability;

3. Responsiveness: Slow service due to a shortage of staff reflects low responsiveness to tourists' needs.
4. Assurance: The absence of SOPs and training results in low assurance of service quality;
5. Empathy: Communication using the local dialect without standardized communication protocols indicates interactions that are not inclusive for out-of-town tourists.

From this analysis, the destination fails to meet almost all service quality indicators based on SERVQUAL theory.

Second, the initial conditions revealed serious issues with key elements of the 7Ps, namely: People: limited, untrained staff who do not understand halal tourism. Process: lack of standard operating procedures (SOPs), resulting in non-standardized and inefficient processes. Physical Evidence: an inadequate and disorganized physical environment. Product: tourism offerings are limited to culinary experiences, without any added experiential value. Promotion: Relying solely on word of mouth makes the destination non-competitive. Place: A strategic location (riverfront), but not managed to safety standards. Price: The lack of service readiness means the price may not align with the experience. Consequently, this destination fails to meet the ideal service marketing mix required for tourism competitiveness (Booms & Bitner, 1981).

From a management perspective, the author employs the Destination Management Framework theory, which states that a destination must at minimum have Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the following areas: cleanliness, service, security, kitchen and sanitation, religious facilities (for halal tourism), and customer communication (Battour & Ismail, 2016b). The complete absence of SOPs indicates that this destination is in a state of being a non-managed destination—that is, a destination operating spontaneously without a formal management system. This has several managerial implications, including (Morrison, 2019):

1. The absence of SOPs leads to service uncertainty, resulting in inconsistent tourist experiences;
2. There is no quality control to ensure standards for cleanliness, service speed, or food safety;
3. The lack of role assignment causes unbalanced workloads and long queues.
4. Consequently, this explains why wait times can range from 30 minutes to 2 hours, which is a classic indicator of manpower misallocation.

Meanwhile, regarding halal readiness, the author employs the Halal Tourism Readiness Components theory (amenities, services, hygiene, worship facilities, halal guarantee, communication), which indicates the destination is in the “unready” phase. The following are indicators of a destination's unreadiness (Battour & Ismail, 2016a):

Table 4: Analysis of Results Using the Halal Tourism Readiness Components Theory

1. Amenities	2. Hygiene & Sanitation	3. Halal Guarantee
- No private musholla room	- Chickens roaming around the eating area	- No SOP for the kitchen
- No trash cans	- Equipment not covered	- No understanding of halal standards
- Only one sink	- Potential exposure to dust from the road,	- No halal certification yet.
- Small parking area	- posing a risk of contamination.	
- Limited and inadequate toilets.		

4. Service Quality	5. Communication	6. Summary
- No training on halal tourism - No understanding of the differences between Muslim and non-Muslim needs.	- Standard Indonesian language is not used for tourists from outside the region - There is no information board about halal certification, menus, or hygiene SOPs.	Being in the unready phase, which is a condition where an organization or destination does not yet have the structural, operational, knowledge, or resource readiness to implement a program, standard, or change that has been determined.

Source: Based on the author's analysis using the Halal Tourism Readiness Components theory, presented in a table.

Furthermore, the finding that tourism site managers have never received formal training, guidance, or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reinforces the notion that the destination is in the pre-adoption stage of halal tourism (Rogers, 2003). Lack of awareness regarding the SEHATI Program (free halal certification) also indicates a knowledge gap between government policy and on-the-ground practices. Finally, in the analysis of the Destination Readiness Model, this destination is in the immature readiness phase (Dwyer & Kim, 2003)—a phase characterized by: untrained human resources, inadequate facilities, undeveloped managerial processes, unstructured promotion, and the absence of service standards. Destinations like this cannot compete and have the potential to lower tourist satisfaction levels as well as diminish the positive image that has been built.

Based on the above discussion, the author draws the conclusion that there is a logical relationship among all the theories, namely: 1) a lack of facilities indicates an underdeveloped infrastructure phase, 2) the absence of SOPs results in non-standardized service processes, 3) limited and untrained human resources result in low service quality, 4) poor hygiene reduces tangible service quality, 5) lack of knowledge about halal tourism means the destination is unprepared to meet halal standards, and 6) minimal promotion prevents the destination's reach from expanding. Therefore, based on theories of tourism management, service, and halal tourism, the initial management conditions of the Kampar Riverbank tourist site can be categorized as an "unready" destination—consistent with a low destination readiness level—and "non-managed"—consistent with poor service performance. All aspects—facilities, services, cleanliness, sanitation, management, human resources, communication, and halal readiness—indicate conditions requiring systematic and sustainable intervention. Consequently, comprehensive assistance is an urgent and legitimate need, supported theoretically, to improve service quality, meet halal standards, and strengthen the destination's competitiveness.

Results of Assistance in the Management of Halal-Based Natural and Culinary Tourism Sites Along the Kampar River and Social Change

Assistance based on the ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development) approach has yielded tangible results: 1) formulation of a halal vision/mission, 2) development of operational SOPs in accordance with halal tourism principles, 3) full assistance until the issuance of halal certificates for local products, 4) improvement of worship facilities and sanitation, 5) capacity building for human resources (hygiene, halal ingredient sorting, documentation, digital marketing), and 6) the formation of a Tourism Community Group

(Pokdarwis) and a tourism security unit to ensure sustainability. These achievements demonstrate a shift from spontaneous management toward structured, standardized management.

Logically, this intervention was successfully implemented by the service team due to several factors:

1. Utilization of local assets (ABCD) accelerates adoption: ABCD focuses on activating local capacity (knowledge, groups, physical resources) so that the intervention is more accepted and sustainable; “engaged” managers tend to internalize the vision/mission and SOPs because they helped formulate them and feel a sense of ownership;
2. SOPs + certification = standardization and legitimization mechanisms: SOPs provide operational guidelines (work instructions) that transform routine behaviors into standardized practices; halal certification and assistance from MUI/BPJPH provide external legitimacy that boosts tourist confidence and managers’ motivation to maintain these practices;
3. Capacity building (training + practical mentoring) addresses the knowledge–skill gap: Technical materials (material sorting, record-keeping, document preparation) combined with field practice reduce operational uncertainty, thereby improving service responsiveness and assurance;
4. Facility improvements alter physical evidence, which enhances perceptions of quality (tangible);
5. Community formation and security units create a sustainability framework — Pokdarwis and tourism police serve as mechanisms for social oversight and cross-stakeholder coordination, ensuring that change does not rely solely on the dedicated team.

Thus, simultaneous interventions (standardization of procedures + certification + facilities + human resources + community) bridge the gap between knowledge, ability, and institutional support—thereby systematically improving outcomes (halal readiness and service quality).

The SERVQUAL theory evaluates service quality through five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The outcomes of the direct mentoring directly improved these dimensions: facility management (tangibles), SOPs and certifications (reliability & assurance), human resource training (responsiveness, assurance, and empathy through more inclusive communication), as well as the formation of Pokdarwis (empathy and community relations) (Parasuraman dkk., 1988). Therefore, the intervention closed the service quality gap previously observed at the Kampar Riverbank tourist site. The Tourism Area Life Cycle theory describes the stages of a destination’s evolution (exploration → involvement → development → consolidation → stagnation → decline/rejuvenation) (Butler, 2006). Preliminary findings indicate the destination is in the exploration–involvement stage (unready & unmanaged); the intervention promotes a transition toward the development stage by building basic infrastructure, managerial capacity, and policy coordination—actions appropriate for managing the destination’s growth to avoid stagnation. Planned mentoring can help incorporate crucial planning elements during the development phase. Meanwhile, from the perspective of the 7P Services Marketing theory: The achievements address three additional critical Ps for services: People (staff training, communication), Process (SOPs, service flow, queue management), and Physical evidence (worship facilities, sanitation). Simultaneous improvements in these three elements explain a destination’s competitive enhancement—without improvements in any one P, the tourist experience remains

vulnerable to failure (Booms & Bitner, 1981). This analysis confirms that holistic (rather than partial) interventions are a prerequisite for improved service outcomes. Finally, the availability of halal certification and Muslim-friendly facilities (certified food, prayer spaces, qibla indicators) is a key determinant in indices like the GMTI for attracting Muslim tourists; addressing this gap enables destinations to enhance their appeal in the rapidly growing Muslim market segment. Certification also serves as a quality assurance signal in the market (Mastercard & CrescentRating, 2022).

These findings are consistent with those of Hefriansyah dkk. (2020), who identified issues related to hygiene, access, services, and communication as barriers to the development of halal tourism in North Sumatra. Our findings in Kampar confirm a similar pattern in the rural context of Riau, thereby reinforcing the generalization regarding infrastructure and human resource capacity issues at the regional level. There is alignment with a local study (Pramana & Zamaya, 2021) on Belimbing Island (Kampar), which highlights significant potential if supported by government and stakeholder interventions. The results of the mentoring along the Kampar River provide empirical evidence of the concrete actions required (SOPs, certification, facilitation), thereby complementing Pramana & Zamaya's findings with evidence of implementation. Additionally, this study offers a new contribution, as many previous studies took the form of needs or potential analyses; this study fills an empirical gap by documenting the mentoring process—for example, reduced waiting times (if quantitative data is available), SOPs developed, halal certificates issued—providing evidence that an integrated intervention package (standardization + certification + capacity building + facility development + digital marketing) is effective in the context of local communities. Micro-level findings (e.g., separation of raw materials, production documentation, formation of Pokdarwis) provide practical contributions that can be replicated.

The implementation of the program still faces a number of limitations and risks. Scalability is a major challenge because the success of the initial phase is highly dependent on intensive assistance; without sustained resource support—both in terms of funding and field staff—there is a risk of reverting to old practices. Furthermore, the measurement of long-term impacts remains inadequate, as the available evidence currently covers only processes and outputs—such as the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) or the issuance of halal certificates—while outcome data—for example, changes in visitor numbers, tourist satisfaction levels, and increased revenue for small and medium enterprises (SMEs)—has not been systematically collected (Katz & Kahn, 1966). Reliance on external legitimacy also poses a potential vulnerability; a weakening of institutional support from local governments or certification bodies could reduce managers' motivation and compliance. On the other hand, cultural and behavioral changes still face resistance, as the implementation of SOPs demands a new level of consistency that is not easily maintained without a sustained behavioral change approach, monitoring mechanisms, and clear incentives.

The resulting policy implications emphasize the need to institutionalize halal tourism SOPs into local regulations to improve service consistency in accordance with the principle of reliability in SERVQUAL (Parasuraman dkk., 1985). Local governments are encouraged to provide micro-incentives for the improvement of basic facilities so that the tangible aspects of the destination are enhanced, thereby directly improving tourist perceptions. Additionally, continuous training and service performance monitoring must be implemented to strengthen the people and process dimensions. Strengthening Pokdarwis as a micro-managerial unit is necessary to ensure continuity in management,

while monitoring based on local GMTI indicators helps destinations assess their readiness level toward global halal tourism standards in a measurable way (Mastercard & CrescentRating, 2022).

Thus, to strengthen the claim of effectiveness, we propose future studies using a quasi-experimental design or a before-and-after evaluation that measures: 1) changes in tourist satisfaction (adapted SERVQUAL survey), 2) changes in the number of visits/revenue of MSMEs, 3) the level of SOP compliance (structured observation), and 4) the sustainability dynamics of Pokdarwis (network analysis). These quantitative results will complement the existing process evidence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This community service project concludes that the natural and culinary tourism destinations along the Kampar River, in their initial state, suffer from underdeveloped infrastructure, low service quality, and an immature level of halal tourism readiness; as a result, they are categorized as unmanaged and unprepared destinations; an intervention based on the ABCD approach—which integrates the formulation of a halal vision and mission, the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs), assistance with halal certification, the arrangement of worship facilities and sanitation, human resource capacity building, digital marketing training, and the formation of Pokdarwis and tourism security units—has proven capable of shifting management from a spontaneous pattern toward a more structured and standardized governance model. Theoretically, these findings confirm and enrich the SERVQUAL theory, the 7P Services Marketing framework, the Destination Management Framework, the Tourism Area Life Cycle, and the Halal Tourism Readiness Components, demonstrating that improvements in service quality and halal readiness are only effective when implemented through a comprehensive intervention package addressing the aspects of people, process, physical evidence, community institutions, and certification legitimacy. Socially, this mentoring has spurred changes in work behavior, increased knowledge and awareness of halal standards, the formation of new local institutions, and strengthened collective awareness of service and hygiene standards that are more responsive to the needs of Muslim tourists. Recommendations from the results of this community service initiative emphasize the need for program sustainability, as it still faces challenges related to scalability, reliance on external support, and the absence of longitudinal data regarding economic impacts or tourist satisfaction levels. Therefore, future quasi-experimental studies or pre-measurably assess changes in service quality, tourist visits, MSME revenue, compliance with SOPs, and the sustainability dynamics of Pokdarwis as recommendations for a future research agenda.

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