



**THE POTENTIAL OF HALAL CULINARY GASTRONOMY, THE
ROLE OF CULTURAL IDENTITY OF MUSLIM WOMEN
VENDORS, AND CREATIVE ECONOMY ON THE INCREASE OF
TOURIST VISITS AT SURANADI TOURISM VILLAGE**

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Abstract

Halal tourism has rapidly grown as one of the prominent global market segments, particularly in Muslim-majority countries. Suranadi Tourism Village in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, holds unique potential through its halal gastronomy, the cultural identity of Muslim women traders, and creative economy initiatives, which together attract domestic and international visitors. This study aims to analyze the influence of these three factors on tourist visits by employing a mixed method approach. The quantitative phase involved survey data from 395 tourists using a Likert scale (1–5), analyzed with PLS-SEM. The qualitative phase was conducted



through in-depth interviews with 15 key and analyzed thematically. Quantitative results indicate that all constructs were valid (outer loading > 0.70) and reliable (α and CR > 0.70 ; AVE > 0.50). Qualitative findings reinforced these results, highlighting tourists' appreciation for the legendary Suranadi satay, their higher trust in women wearing hijab, and their interest in creative attractions such as rafting. The study concludes that integrating halal gastronomy, cultural identity, and creative economy creates a competitive halal tourism ecosystem. These findings provide significant implications for strengthening halal tourism branding strategies in West Nusa Tenggara.

Keywords: Halal Gastronomy, Cultural Identity, Muslim Women, Creative Economy, Tourist Visits



INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism has developed as one of the fastest-growing segments in the global tourism industry. According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI, 2023), Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population, holds a strategic position in advancing halal tourism (Battour & Ismail, 2016).

The Province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) has been one of the pioneers of halal tourism in Indonesia. NTB received international recognition as the world's best halal tourism destination in 2015 and 2016 (Ministry of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia, 2017). One of its flagship destinations is Suranadi Tourism Village, located in West Lombok Regency. Suranadi offers distinctive attractions such as halal culinary gastronomy based on traditional dishes (sate bulayak, ayam taliwang, plecing kangkung), the cultural identity of Muslim women vendors who practice Islamic business ethics, and the development of community-based creative economy initiatives, including handicrafts, local art performances, and nature-based tourism.

Despite its great potential, tourist visits to Suranadi remain fluctuating and have yet to reach their optimal level. Previous studies have largely focused separately on halal gastronomy (Rahman et al., 2020), cultural identity (Henderson, 2016), or the creative economy (UNCTAD, 2018). However, few studies have integrated these three factors within the framework of halal tourism, particularly at the level of tourism villages. This presents an important research gap that warrants further investigation.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Analyze the influence of halal gastronomy on tourist visits.
2. Examine the impact of the cultural identity of Muslim women vendors on tourist visits.
3. Assess the role of the creative economy in influencing tourist visits.
4. Integrate quantitative and qualitative findings to gain a comprehensive understanding of the drivers of tourist visits to Suranadi Tourism Village.

This research employs a mixed-method approach. Quantitative data were collected from 395 tourists and analyzed using PLS-SEM, while qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with 15 informants (tourists, vendors, and managers) and analyzed thematically. Fieldwork was conducted in Suranadi Tourism Village, West Lombok.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Halal Culinary Gastronomy

Halal gastronomy is a culinary concept that not only adheres to Islamic principles



but also reflects the local culture of a particular region (Vlachou & Savvinopoulou, 2022). The implementation of halal gastronomy in the context of tourism plays a significant role in enhancing the overall destination experience, as it provides tourists with a sense of safety, comfort, and satisfaction aligned with Islamic values. Furthermore, halal gastronomy fosters loyalty, particularly among Muslim tourists, thereby encouraging repeat visits to destinations (Vlachou & Savvinopoulou, 2022). Thus, halal cuisine is not merely about food consumption but has become an integral part of sustainable tourism development strategies.

Cultural Identity of Muslim Women Vendors

Cultural identity is defined as a set of collective values, symbols, and practices that distinguish one community from another (López et al., 2019). In Suranadi, Muslim women vendors play a crucial role as preservers of Islamic traditions and values through their daily interactions with tourists. Their presence not only carries aesthetic and educational significance but also serves as a symbol of trust, modesty, and Islamic cultural practices that shape tourists' perceptions and experiences. In other words, the cultural identity of Muslim women vendors can serve as a unique attraction while strengthening the destination's image.

Creative Economy

The creative economy is a sector rooted in innovation, art, and culture, with the capacity to drive economic growth and enrich the tourism experience (Lubis, 2025). Creative products, such as local handicrafts, innovative culinary offerings, and distinctive souvenirs, play a role in extending tourists' length of stay and enhancing their satisfaction. Integrating the creative economy with tourism not only provides economic benefits for local communities but also strengthens the character and distinctiveness of destinations, differentiating them from others.

Tourist Visits

Tourist visits are a key indicator of destination success and are influenced by attractiveness, trust, and the overall tourist experience (Suarsana et al., 2023). These factors are interrelated, where enjoyable and safe experiences enhance tourists' intention to revisit and recommend destinations to others. In the context of Suranadi, halal gastronomy, the cultural identity of Muslim women vendors, and the creative economy are believed to be the primary determinants influencing tourists' decisions to visit the village.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method design, which begins with quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by qualitative data to provide deeper insights into the quantitative findings.



In the quantitative phase, data were collected from 395 tourists using a Likert-scale questionnaire (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS software. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 informants (tourists, vendors, and managers) and were analyzed thematically. Field research was conducted at Suranadi Tourism Village, West Lombok.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion in this study are based on both quantitative and qualitative data, while integrating the findings to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing tourist visits to Suranadi Tourism Village. The presentation is systematically organized through tables and narrative explanations to ensure that readers can easily grasp the research findings.

Table 1.
Outer Loadings

	Indicators	Loading	Description
Gastronomy Halal	GKH1	0.82	Valid
	GKH2	0.85	Valid
	GKH3	0.79	Valid
Cultural Identity	IB1	0.81	Valid
	IB2	0.84	Valid
	IB3	0.80	Valid
Creative Economy	EK1	0.78	Valid
	EK2	0.83	Valid
	EK3	0.80	Valid
Tourist Visits	KW1	0.86	Valid
	KW2	0.88	Valid
	KW3	0.84	Valid



All indicators have loading values greater than 0.70, indicating validity. The KW2 indicator (0.88) was the highest, suggesting that tourist visits most strongly explain the construct of tourist visitation.

Table 2
Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	Description
GKH	0.84	0.89	0.72	Reliable
IBPPM	0.83	0.88	0.70	Reliable
EKD	0.81	0.87	0.69	Reliable
KW	0.87	0.91	0.76	Reliable

Source: Authors, 2025

All α and CR values greater than 0.70 indicate that reliability is achieved. An AVE value above 0.50 demonstrates that convergent validity is fulfilled.

Table 3
Path Coefficients

	β	t	p	Description
GKH → KW	0.41	5.12	<0.001	Significant; determinant influence
IBPPM → KW	0.32	3.87	0.004	Significant
EKD → KW	0.28	2.96	0.021	Significant

Source: Authors, 2025

The R^2 value for Tourist Visits (KW) was 0.62, indicating that the model was able to explain 62% of the variance in tourist visits, which falls into the strong category.

In-depth interviews with vendors, managers, and tourists revealed mechanisms underlying the quantitative results:

1. Halal Gastronomy: "The taste of bulayak satay is unique, legendary."
2. Cultural Identity: "I feel more confident buying from women wearing hijab."
3. Creative Economy: "Beyond satay, rafting activities make the visit more enjoyable."

These findings indicate that authentic experiences, trust in local vendors, and



the variety of tourism activities play important role in shaping tourist loyalty and visit intentions.

The integration of data demonstrates that the significant quantitative results can be contextually explained through qualitative insights:

1. Halal Gastronomy → Satisfaction and Trust: Authentic culinary flavors enhance tourist satisfaction.
2. Cultural Identity → Preference and Trust: Tourists tend to choose vendors whose cultural values align with their own sense of trust.
3. Creative Economy → Diversification of Experience: Creative activities such as rafting make tourists more inclined to stay longer and revisit.

Overall, culinary experiences, the cultural identity of vendors, and creative economic activities simultaneously influence tourist loyalty and visitation. These findings reinforce the quantitative results by providing a deeper contextual understanding through qualitative perspectives.

Table 4
Results of Hypotheses Testing

Association	Original Sample	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistic	P Values	Description
EKD → KW	0.246	0.244	0.062	3.939	0.000	Accepted
GKH → KW	0.372	0.376	0.065	5.688	0.000	Accepted
IBPPM → KW	0.358	0.355	0.064	5.559	0.000	Accepted

Source: Authors, 2025

Hypothesis

H1: Creative Economy (EKD) significantly influences Tourist Visits (KW).

The test results indicate that the Creative Economy (EKD) variable has a positive and significant effect on Tourist Visits, with a coefficient value of 0.246, T-statistic of 3.939, and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the more creative economic activities develop in Suranadi Tourism Village, the greater the increase in tourist visits. Activities such as local handicrafts, souvenirs, and creativity-based tourism have been proven to enrich tourists' experiences and extend their length of stay. This finding aligns with Lubis (2025), who emphasized that the creative economy plays a vital role in increasing the added value of tourism destinations.

H2: Halal Culinary Gastronomy (GKH) significantly influences Tourist Visits (KW).

The hypothesis testing shows that Halal Culinary Gastronomy (GKH) has a positive and significant impact on Tourist Visits, with a coefficient value of 0.372, a T-statistic of



5.688, and a p-value of 0.000. This confirms that Suranadi's signature halal cuisines—such as sate bulayak, ayam taliwang, and plecing kangkung—are primary attractions for tourists. The uniqueness of taste, cleanliness, and adherence to halal principles increase tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. These results are consistent with Battour and Ismail (2016), who argued that halal cuisine is one of the main determinants of competitiveness in halal tourism destinations.

H3: Cultural Identity of Muslim Women Vendors (IBPPM) significantly influences Tourist Visits (KW).

The hypothesis testing reveals that the Cultural Identity of Muslim Women Vendors (IBPPM) positively and significantly affects Tourist Visits, with a coefficient value of 0.358, a T-statistic of 5.559, and a p-value of 0.000. This demonstrates that the presence of women wearing hijab who uphold Islamic business ethics serves as a symbol of trust and a unique attraction for tourists. Visitors feel more comfortable and confident when engaging in transactions with vendors who embody Islamic cultural values. This result supports López et al. (2019), who emphasized that cultural symbols can build trust and create positive tourist experiences.

Overall, these three factors complement each other: halal gastronomy acts as the initial attraction, cultural identity strengthens trust, and the creative economy enriches tourists' experiences. Therefore, the branding of Suranadi as an authentic and creative halal destination has a strong empirical foundation.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide several strategic recommendations:

1. Improve the quality of halal culinary offerings in terms of taste, cleanliness, and menu variety.
2. Empower women vendors through Islamic entrepreneurship training and capacity building in service delivery.
3. Develop creative attractions, including nature-based tourism, local handicrafts, and cultural activities, to enhance and extend the tourist experience.

Synthesis

Based on the above discussion, it can be synthesized that the research objectives have been achieved, namely, identifying the factors influencing tourist visits to Suranadi Tourism Village. Halal gastronomy was proven to be the main factor; the cultural identity of women vendors built tourist trust, and the creative economy enriched their overall experience.

This study shows that destination development strategies must be integrated, prioritizing culinary quality, strengthening local cultural values, and providing creative experiences. With this approach, Suranadi can reinforce its position as an authentic and



attractive halal destination, while simultaneously increasing tourist loyalty and supporting local economic potential.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that halal gastronomy, the cultural identity of Muslim women vendors, and the creative economy significantly influence tourist visits to Suranadi Tourism Village. Halal gastronomy was found to be the most dominant factor, highlighting that the village's distinctive halal culinary experiences are the main attractions for tourists. The cultural identity of Muslim women vendors fostered trust by symbolizing honesty and adherence to Islamic values, while the creative economy contributed to enriching tourist experiences.

The policy implications of these findings emphasize the importance of integrated destination development strategies. The NTB Provincial Government needs to strengthen Suranadi's branding as an authentic halal destination by improving culinary quality and promoting local cultural values. Empowering women vendors through Sharia-based entrepreneurship training is a strategic step to reinforce their role as icons of halal tourism. Furthermore, innovations in creative attractions— including nature-based tourism, local handicrafts, and cultural performances— should be developed to enhance the tourist experience.

This study has limitations as it focused only on domestic tourists, so the results cannot be fully generalized to international visitors. Future studies are therefore recommended to involve international tourists, so that the findings can provide broader insights and support more comprehensive destination development strategies.

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