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## Improving the Economy of Local Communities Through Innovation of the Potential of Shariah-Based Natural Tourism in East Java

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# Improving the Economy of Local Communities Through Innovation of the Potential of Shariah-Based Natural Tourism in East Java

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An area will experience rapid progress if local government alongside the community is able to develop local potential with various innovations. This study aims to describe the potential of nature and innovation by the government alongside the community based on Shariah when creating tourism destinations with economic value. The research was conducted in the coastal environment of Santen Island of Banyuwangi district, East Java with a qualitative approach to the research and case study design. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. With interactive data analysis, it was found that the Shariah-based innovation conducted by the government of Banyuwangi together with the community in Santen island has the potential to create tourism that can improve the economy of the local society.

**Key Words:** community economy, beach, sharia innovation, Santen Island, nature tourism, local government, Java, Indonesia

## Introduction

Based on the Law of the Republic of Indonesia (Law number 10 of 2009 on Tourism), tourism is a wide range of tourism activities supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, business people, government and local government. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 2011 people who conduct tourism activities are referred to as tourists - these are people who travel more than 80 km (50 miles) from their residence for the purpose of vacation or recreation. Spillane (1987: 15) states that there are several factors that drive a person to travel far, but they can be summarized as: (1) the impetus for practical political and trade needs; (2) curiosity; and (3) religious encouragement.

Society's desire for tourism continues to increase from year to year. The increase in the tourism sector will affect the income and growth of the economy in a country. The Ministry of Tourism projected that by year 2020 tourism would be the largest contributor of foreign exchange in Indonesia - more than the oil and gas sector. Therefore, it seriously affects the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) revenue, employment growth and economic growth (LAKIP Ministry of Tourism, 2016). The increase of tourism contribution to the national GDP is at 10% according to the study of the Ministry of Tourism; the highest contribution in ASEAN. Tourism GDP growth is also above the

average growth of other industries. In addition, the development of the tourism sector also impacts employment by contributing 9.8 million jobs or 8.4% of employment. In the last five years employment grew by 30%, and this is one of the sectors that can create the cheapest jobs with a wage of \$US 5,000 per job. Development of the tourism sector does not cost much, because marketing costs only require 2% of the foreign exchange projection so that tourism is one of the most inexpensive drivers of economic growth (Ministry of Tourism, 2017).

The tourism product consists of three activities, namely conventional tourism, religious tourism, and sharia tourism. Conventional tourism is present in societies that generate large number of tourists and promote profit. The increasing demands of society leads to the alternative of tourism known as religious tourism. Religious tourism specialises in visiting holy sites, the tombs of great people or glorious leaders, to sacred hills or mountains, and the burial places of legendary leaders (Anwar *et al.*, 2017). In addition to religious tourism, has emerged another alternative - sharia tourism. Sharia tourism is the new industry that provides for all the needs of a Muslim while they are travelling (Chanin *et al.*, 2015).

At first the halal industry was limited to the sectors of food, beverage, medicine, and cosmetics. But now the halal industry has entered the field of finance (banking,

insurance, etc.) to the latest areas which are linked to lifestyle such as travel, hospitality, recreation, and health care (Andriani *et al.*, 2015). The shift of common lifestyle to a lifestyle that is based on sharia values is a rapid advance of the halal industry in the world. This is because the global community today has started using Islamic law as one of the lifestyle guidelines to help fulfil obligations as a Muslim (Sidano, 2017).

According to Pew Research Center's report on *Religion & Public Life* (2015), the growth of Muslim societies in the world from 2010-2050 is expected to be more than double that of other non-Muslim religious populations. The increasing number of Muslims in the world will affect all aspects of the economy globally. According to Reuters & Dinar Standard (2017), Muslim spending in 2021 is expected to increase rapidly, especially in the field of sharia tourism. The increase in expenditure provides a huge income opportunity for the people and government in Indonesia as the most populous Muslim country in the world. Taking advantage of existing opportunities, the government of Indonesia is now beginning to actively develop community-based sharia tourism. The main opportunity for the Indonesian government lies in the abundant natural resources and the thousands of beautiful islands with diverse ethnic, linguistic and customary tribes - these many areas have potential as sharia tourism destinations; areas such as Lampung, Riau, Aceh, Makassar and Yogyakarta (Asih & Asih, 2015). Recently the area that has begun to focus on developing sharia tourism is Banyuwangi, East Java.

Banyuwangi is one of the largest regencies in East Java and has an area of about 5,782 km<sup>2</sup>. Geographically, the district is bordered by the Bali Straits to the east and the Indian Ocean to the south. To the north Banyuwangi Regency adjoins Situbondo Regency and borders with Jember and Bondowoso districts to the west (banyuwangikab.go.id, 2017). This is a popular tourist destination in East Java, and the government of Banyuwangi in March 2017 inaugurated Santen Island Beach as the first sharia beach in Indonesia. Inauguration of Santen Island Beach as a new sharia tourism destination still requires a lot of investigation and input, especially to explore the readiness and completeness of tourism support facilities.

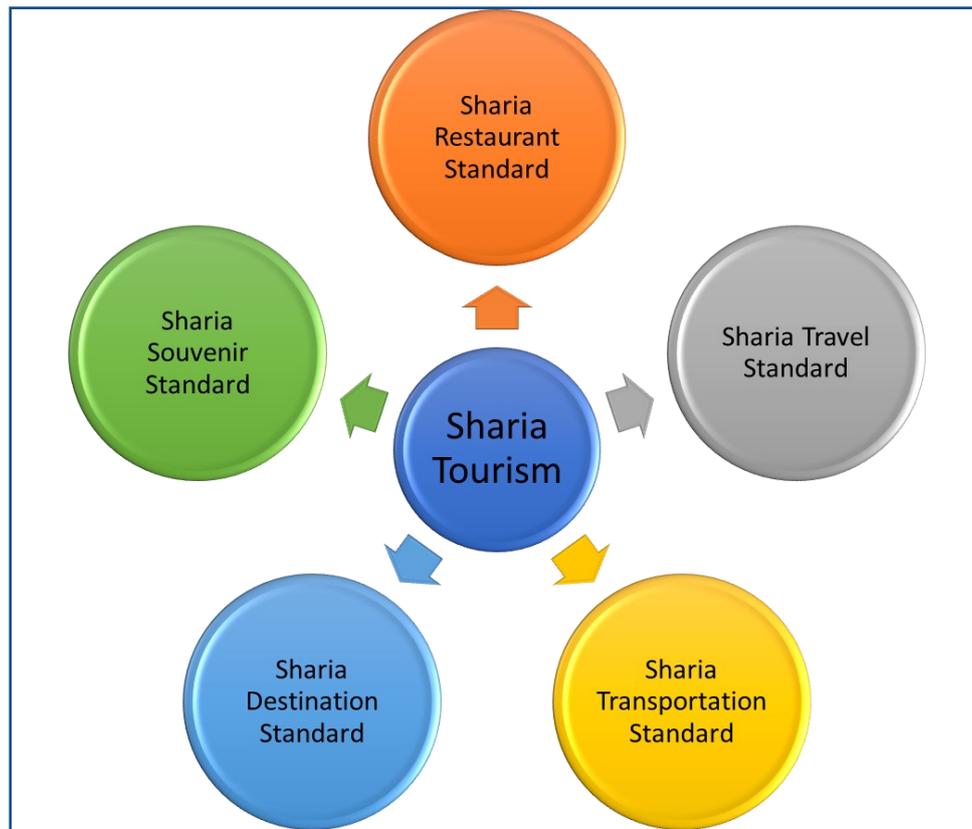
The better the support for tourism, the better the experience of the visitor. Means of tourism support include the various attractions, and facilities to serve the complete needs of the tourist, transportation and accommodation that provide convenience for everyone, and friendly guides who are able to provide satisfaction and loyalty to tourists (Soebiyantoro, 2009 and Yudi *et al.*, 2015). Tourism offerings are typically measured through the Four A's Framework Analysis of Tourism theory which consists of four factors that must be offered (Cooper, *et al.*, 1995: 81): attractions; amenities or facilities; accessibility and; ancillary or additional services. These four factors are typically used to determine the industry's success in increasing income and economic growth (Satria, 2017).

Banyuwangi as an area that exhibits uniqueness and innovation in the field of sharia tourism and thus, is an appropriate area to be examined as a case in this study. Moreover, in 2017 the Banyuwangi government

**Figure 1: Map of Indonesia, illustrating the location of Banyuwangi in East Java**



Based on [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a4/Indonesia\\_location\\_map.svg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a4/Indonesia_location_map.svg)

**Figure 2: Operational Standard of Sharia Tourism**

Based on frame of Literature Review

opened the first sharia-based beach in Indonesia that is Pulau Santen Beach which still needs a lot of development and investigation before it reaches its full potential.

The research in this paper is conducted to describe the potential of nature and sharia-based innovation by the government, with the community, in creating tourism destinations with economic value. Analysis can be done by looking at the potential carrying capacity of the product ranging from attractions that are presented (attraction), access to tourism (accessibility), the needs of tourists provided (amenities), and marketing activities of tourist destinations conducted by related parties (ancillary). This analysis will be done to examine tourism's contribution to the economic welfare of local communities around Pulau Santen Beach, Banyuwangi. This research is very important because it can be used as a source of reference for the policy stance that will be taken by the Government of Banyuwangi in aiming to improve people's welfare and economic growth. It is believed by the government that through the tourism sector, this can be achieved significantly.

## Literature Review

As a country with a majority of Muslim communities, and the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia does not make enough effort to study sharia tourism. This is evident from the lack of research on sharia tourism in Indonesia. While research on sharia tourism is found in many other countries including Malaysia, Japan and some Middle East countries. Research on sharia tourism in Malaysia uses different terms, such as 'Shariah Compliant Hotels' (Sahida *et al.*, 2011; Salleh, 2014), 'Halal Standards for Malaysian Hotel Industry' (Samori & Sabtu, 2014), 'Halal Logistics' (Talib & Hamid, 2014) and 'Halal Tourism' (Aziz *et al.*, 2015). In Turkey, research on sharia tourism has been conducted by Akyol & Kiliç (2014) on 'Halal Tourism Marketing'. 'Muslim Friendly' is discussed by Salleh & Nor (2015) and Takumi (2015) conducts research on the 'Halal Industry' in Japan - a similar study being conducted in Thailand by Chanin *et al.* (2015) on 'Guidelines on Halal Tourism Management' and in New Zealand on 'Halal Food' by Hassan & Awang (2009). The Middle East is familiar with the term 'Islamic Tourism', as used by Kovjanic (2014).

From the brief overview of research provided above, it is evident that authors generally discuss the problem of supporting facilities for sharia tourism. The supporting facilities of sharia tourism is an indicator of whether a hotel is sufficiently Muslim friendly to attract Muslim tourists (Sahida *et al.*, 2011; Henderson, 2003; Salleh & Nor, 2015). Not only do hotels improve facilities to attract Muslim tourists - such as halal food provision, prayer time announcements, procurement of mosques in non-Muslim countries - there is also active development of new destinations that are more family oriented (Takumi, 2015 & Hassan & Awang, 2009). Thus, standards and case studies regarding sharia tourism are well documented in the literature, and this is illustrated in the review framework presented in Figure 2.

Based on the previous research, sharia travel standards require the provision of holiday packages with family oriented nuances for the community (Takumi, 2015). In addition to the family oriented focus, it can also provide facilities such as visiting Islamic tourism destinations, historical tourism destinations, giving time to pray, and making sure employees wear clothes according to Islamic teachings. In addition to the travel packages that are offered, standard sharia travel also need to pay attention to the standard of transportation used. According to Akyol & Kiliç (2014) standard sharia transport should be clean both the transit areas and the used vehicles, should not serve alcoholic beverages and not serve unclean food for consumption. In addition to avoiding items that are haram, standard sharia transportation also needs to arrange for seats to be separated between women and men, play chant verses of the Qur'an at times, and generally play music that does not conflict with Islamic law.

A sharia destination is one that has achieved a standard and has become the benchmark of a region so that it becomes one of the tourism destinations that can be visited by tourists both local and foreign. According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) in 2017, the standard of sharia destinations is characterised by the presence of Islamic tourism objectives, tourist security, cooperative society towards the implementation of sharia tourism and the availability of facilities that support a well cared for tourism objective. If the environmental criteria are met, representatives of community leaders and local government can jointly discuss the rules of local regulations and the wisdom (local policy) to regulate the tourists who come to visit the community. The regulation that will be formulated are expected to maintain the local culture of the

community so that it can become one of the characteristic sharia tourism destinations in the area.

In addition to regulating the standards of sharia hotels, sharia restaurants, sharia travel, sharia transportation, and overall standards of sharia destinations, the government can also establish regulations on the standard of souvenirs that can be sold to the visiting tourists. Souvenirs should be nuanced as Islamic, cannot violate the Islamic Sharia, cannot promote polytheistic ideas and contain a uniqueness that highlights the tourism destination.

In addition to paying attention to the developing operational standards of destinations, visitor satisfaction is a main and most important indicator. Therefore, the tourism stakeholders must also establish criteria from time to time that need to be in place for tourism demand to continue developing. The criteria consist of three points (Heriawan, 2004):

- (1) *something to see* - this is something that can be seen or watched or enjoyed by tourists. A tourist attraction must have its attractions so as to attract tourists to visit;
- (2) *something to do* - this is an activity that can be undertaken by tourists. These activities can be a recreational facility or a place to eat that gives you a happy and relaxed feeling. The food served is also based on local culinary so that tourists are comfortable and stay longer in the place;
- (3) *something to buy* - this is a facilities for tourists so they can spend their money to buy items that are the hallmark of the area. Items purchased by tourists can then be used as souvenirs that can be brought home.

In addition to these basic criteria of tourism destinations, there is also the Four A's Framework which can be used in the analysis of Tourism, and thereby analyse and determine the success and achievement of tourism goals in a country - i.e. a common goal for a country is increasing income and economic growth (Satria, 2017).

To do this, the four A's Framework can be examined via indicators, that can be used as a benchmark of tourism offerings. According to Cooper, *et al's* (1995: 81) model, these four factors must be clearly possessed by a tourism destination.

- (1) *Attraction* is the most significant component in attracting tourists. There must be an attraction

present which is then referred to as the key element of tourism capital;

- (2) *Amenities* or facilities constitute all forms of facilities and infrastructure needed by tourists. The facilities and infrastructure can be in the form of lodging, restaurants, transportation, travel agents, electricity, water, roads and various facilities that support the facilitation of tourism;
- (3) *Accessibility* is identified as the ability of travellers to move from one area to another. Accessibility can be provided by airports, highways, railway stations and other transportation support and;
- (4) *Ancillary* or supplementary services are facilities usually provided by the Local Government for tourists or for the tourism actors to provide better service. Usually these additional services can be in the form of marketing, repair of physical facilities and infrastructure, often coordinated through existing laws and policies, and the provision of institutional services such as Tourist Information.

The development of tourism in several regions in Indonesia aims to create an independent economy and improve the welfare of society by optimising the existing resources through sustainable community empowerment, and not neglecting the aspect of environmental sustainability. Therefore, community-based tourism emerges as one of the empowerment approaches that involve and engage the community as stakeholder in this new paradigm of sustainable tourism (Sastrayuda, 2010). By positioning the community as the key actors in tourism, it is expected that the welfare of the community can increase in accordance with the criteria of the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics, whose benchmarks are:

- (1) the level of household income;
- (2) the composition of household expenditure i.e. comparison of food and non-food expenditure;
- (3) the level of household education;
- (4) household health level and;
- (5) housing condition and facilities owned in the household.

The concept of empowerment of local communities is an important factor, and their position should be equivalent to the government and the private sector when it comes to tourism development (Wearing & Donald, 2001; Adiyoso, 2009). To stimulate the participation of local communities, a top-down

approach must be replaced with a bottom-up approach, so that people can accept the failures and successes of a program by participating in the exploration of problems and needs, planning, implementation and monitoring (Sayogyo in Mawardi 2007). The involvement of the community is expected to have an impact on the local economic development in the tourism destination. The impact of economic changes can be seen from the development of economic activity, increasing employment, increasing investment, and encouraging growth in other sectors (Nizar, 2011 and Aryunda, 2011).

## Methodology

The research undertaken in the environment of Pulau Santen Beach of Banyuwangi district, East Java used a qualitative research approach and case study design. The data collected in this research are participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary analysis. These three techniques are commonly used qualitative research methodologies (Ulfatin, 2017).

In-depth interviews were conducted with nine informants consisting of the leader of Pulau Santen Beach neighbourhood, the village secretary of Karangrejo, staff of Banyuwangi Tourism and Culture Office, Sub-Department head of Tourism and Capital Investment of Bappeda Banyuwangi as well as interviews with tourists and the community. Further field observation and document studies were undertaken to check the validity of data that were collected, and thus to assist in formulating the overall conclusions.

## Results

Based on the research that was undertaken, there are fourteen supporting facilities in Pulau Santen Beach which is still under development: these include an inn, a tour and travel company, tour guides, souvenir, and institutional services.

In terms of attractions, Pulau Santen Beach has a variety of potential attractions that can be presented ranging from natural attractions to cultural attractions, and from artificial attractions to educational attractions. Currently the new attractions that have been provided rely heavily on the natural attractions. The artificial attractions are built on the strengths of the natural landscape, and capitalising on the 'brand' of the island of Bali and the beauty of adjoining sea at sunrise and sunset. Artificial attractions are highlighted with good photography, placing umbrellas on the coast

and attractive murals in residential areas. There are also potential attractions that could be presented such as the *Sedekah Laut* and *Rebu Pungkasan* festivals, educational turtle breeding, education and training of visitors in the process of making dodol jenang (traditional local jam), and water based tours. Although Pulau Santen Beach does not have the Islamic tourism as its main focus, religious values are highlighted at this main attraction by separating male and female tourists. In addition, Pulau Santen Beach has also been equipped with good quality sacred spaces and facilities for worship.

There is very little lodging currently available at Pulau Santen Beach. Current provision is mini homestay in two houses. However, facilities have not been provided such as qibla direction and halal certification. For a place to eat there are ten 'tent shops' that provide snacks and beverages without providing illegal food or drinks. As for other services and facilities such as tour and travel facilities, staff for serving food and souvenirs, when this research was being undertaken, none of these were yet provided.

The location of Pulau Santen Beach is strategic. It is close to downtown Banyuwangi, and this proximity to the city makes it easy for tourists to visit the site using various means of transportation at affordable prices. Although the halal certification support system at Pulau Santen does not yet exist, promotion is already done by the government through social media and websites with proper branding (Figure 3).

All of the operations in Pulau Santen Beach have also empowered local people as the main actors in carrying

out tourism under the management of KODAM TNI AD (regional military command) Banyuwangi. However, development is considered slow because there is still fear from the community. This is because there is still no memorandum of understanding between KODAM TNI AD Banyuwangi and the local community in Santen Island Beach so that people are worried about a dispute with the army.

Before establishing the community as the main actors of tourism, the government has conducted various socialisation and training exercises with the community. Training provided by the government, includes guidance on fish processing into grilled fish, shell craft training, English language training, and tourism service training. From this training, the government hopes that the community can develop to provide comfort and good service for tourists visiting Pulau Santen Beach.

### Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that according to the Four A's Framework for Analysis of Tourism, the level and operational capacity available at Pulau Santen Beach is not adequate for the site to be promoted as sharia tourism. While the significance of tourism support tools is being felt by the public, namely the increasing standard of public facilities and the availability of employment, the economic aspect has not yet been felt and there is no significant difference in community income since this introduction of Islamic tourism. On the other side, government effort to develop tourism in Pulau Santen Beach is most likely stunted by the possibility of dispute related

**Figure 2: Marketing Images of Pulau Santen Beach**



[https://banyuwangitourism.com/Detail\\_destination/destination\\_detail/deb11bce582ff10bdeedfdd82624f8ea](https://banyuwangitourism.com/Detail_destination/destination_detail/deb11bce582ff10bdeedfdd82624f8ea)

to the tourism assets that are creeping in, while locals who have participated as subjects of tourism, there are possible issues related to social carrying capacity. As the foremost subject in dealing and interacting with tourists, the effects of asset disputes and carrying capacity will be felt mostly by the locals.

There are a number of suggestions that can be offered to the Government of Banyuwangi, in order to complete and improve the instruments needed in developing the whole concept of sharia tourism and its promotion. The government should establish institutional systems that support halal certification; this would be important for ensuring that all support facilities in Pulau Santen are in accordance with Islamic Sharia and certified as halal. Developing training programs to maintain the security of tourists is important. Guide training in accordance with Islamic sharia standards is also needed to complement the sharia facilities.

At a local level, the government need to act as a third party between the community and the National Army Command Banyuwangi to calm the sense of concern about potential disputes and provide clarity regarding tourism management and responsibilities in relation to Pulau Santen.

Better promotion also must be carried out (by the government). The branding of Pulau Santen Beach as a sharia tourism product must be supported first by optimising the potential of the beach itself as general tourist destination - leveraging potential capital such as turtle breeding, mangrove tree plantation, and Islamic local events, as educational and unique attractions. The promotion should not be limited only to government websites and social media, but stakeholders should also invite social media influencers, such as bloggers and vloggers, to celebrate and advertise the beauty of the area, and actively participate in promoting Pulau Santen Beach to the public.

The community around Pulau Santen Beach also has their role in developing better tourism. This includes maintaining the cleanliness of the environment and providing better hospitality. The lodgings run by the locals must offer facilities including meals that are in accordance with Islamic Sharia, while still showcasing the uniqueness of Pulau Santen and Banyuwangi in general. This should also be applied to the souvenirs and products which are produced and sold in Pulau Santen Beach.

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