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Table Of Contents

Journal Cover	1
Author[s] Statement	3
Editorial Team.....	4
Article information	5
Check this article update (crossmark)	5
Check this article impact.....	5
Cite this article.....	5
Title page.....	6
Article Title.....	6
Author information	6
Abstract	6
Article content.....	6

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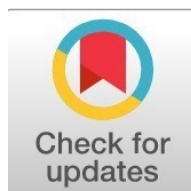
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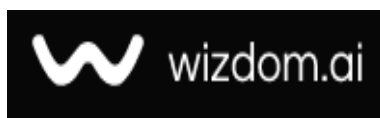
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Peunajoh Aceh as a Cultural Driver of Halal Tourism and Creative Economy

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Abstract

General Background: Halal tourism has emerged as a significant global trend combining religious observance with cultural experience, positioning regions with strong Islamic traditions, such as Aceh, to play a strategic role. **Specific Background:** Within this context, *Peunajoh Aceh*—a traditional culinary and cultural practice rooted in Islamic and communal values—holds potential as an authentic symbol for promoting halal tourism and strengthening the local creative economy. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite its cultural richness, the role of *Peunajoh Aceh* in advancing halal tourism and supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) has not been systematically examined. **Aims:** This study investigates how *Peunajoh Aceh* contributes to halal tourism promotion and its subsequent impact on the creative economy in Bireuen Regency, Aceh. **Results:** Using a mixed-methods approach involving policymakers, MSME actors, and tourists, findings reveal that *Peunajoh Aceh* significantly enhances halal tourism through culinary innovation, digital marketing, and community-based enterprise development, although challenges remain in certification access, managerial skills, and promotional integration. **Novelty:** The study uniquely links local tradition with economic innovation within the halal tourism framework. **Implications:** Strengthening cross-sector collaboration, digitalization, and halal certification accessibility is crucial for transforming *Peunajoh Aceh* into a sustainable cultural-economic driver and an authentic global icon of halal tourism.

Highlights:

- Strengthens Aceh's halal tourism through culture-based culinary innovation.
- Empowers MSMEs to enhance digital marketing and halal certification.
- Bridges tradition, religion, and economy for sustainable regional development.

Keywords: Peunajoh Aceh, Halal Tourism, Creative Economy, MSMEs, Cultural Heritage

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Introduction

Aceh is a region rich in history, culture and tradition that has been intertwined for centuries, becoming the center of Malay Islamic civilization in the archipelago. One important aspect of the Acehnese community

is the role of customs and traditions that not only shape the identity of the community but also serve as a medium for social and cultural bonding [1]. Among these traditions, Peunajoh Aceh occupies a strategic place as a representation of the cultural and religious values inherent in the life of the Acehnese people. Peunajoh Aceh functions as a custodian of customs as well as a facilitator of cultural communication that also supports the preservation of Islamic values that are the main basis in Aceh [2].

Among the various traditions that are still alive and continue to be preserved by the community, Peunajoh Aceh occupies a very strategic position. This tradition exists not only as a form of cultural heritage, but also as a concrete representation of Islamic values and local wisdom that are integrated into the social order of the community [3]. The existence of Peunajoh Aceh serves as a guardian of customs, a strengthener of social solidarity, and a facilitator of cultural communication that is able to bridge the older generation with the younger generation, so that noble values are not cut off by the flow of modernization. Furthermore, Peunajoh Aceh supports efforts to preserve Islamic norms, which have long been the main basis for the life of society, nation and state in Aceh [4].

In practice, Peunajoh Aceh is often realized through various traditional activities such as kenduri, gampong deliberations, and religious events that involve all levels of society. For example, in kenduri blang events held before the rice planting season, Peunajoh Aceh is evident in the role of traditional and religious leaders who jointly lead prayers, give advice, and remind people of the importance of togetherness and cooperation [2]. Similarly, in the event of a marriage, birth of a child, or commemoration of an Islamic holiday, Peunajoh Aceh becomes a forum for strengthening friendship, maintaining social harmony, and reinforcing the teachings of Islam within the traditional framework. In this way, Peunajoh Aceh does not only live as a tradition that is passed down, but also a real practice that encourages the creation of a balance between religious values, customs, and the social needs of society in the modern era [5].

Peunajoh Aceh is a customary tradition that is very thick with Islamic values and local wisdom that lives as a social glue in Acehnese society. This tradition is a strong symbol that can be developed as an icon in halal tourism in Aceh, an area that has long been known as the center of Islamic Malay civilization and a society that implements Islamic law consistently [6]. In the context of tourism development, Aceh places halal tourism as a leading sector by strengthening culture and religious values as the main foundation. Peunajoh as a tradition has a strategic function not only in maintaining the continuity of customs and religion, but also as a cultural communication tool that is able to offer an authentic, educational, and spiritually valuable tourist experience for Muslim tourists [7].

The development of halal tourism in Aceh must be based on Islamic values while maintaining local culture in order to create harmony that distinguishes Aceh from other halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. The Peunajoh Aceh tradition is a manifestation of this, which includes activities such as kenduri, gampong deliberations, traditional wedding processions, and joint prayers that always integrate elements of Islamic law with customs. The value of togetherness, social solidarity, and spirituality contained in this tradition

provides a special experience for tourists, while strengthening Aceh's halal tourism identity which is not only about facilities, but also the nuances of community life [8].

Peunajoh Aceh offers economic potential through innovative industrial activities that promote the growth of community-based halal tourism, in addition to its cultural and religious characteristics. This custom incorporates a number of regional goods, including handicrafts, traditional attire, and Acehnese halal cuisine, all of which enhance the tourist destination. The growth of halal tourism in Aceh, which is founded on regional potential and culture, is crucial for boosting local economic sustainability, reaching a wider audience of tourists, and enhancing community involvement. Halal tourism management strategies that integrate Peunajoh can maximize Aceh's internal strengths and minimize tourism development challenges [9].

Furthermore, managing Peunajoh as a halal tourism icon is also a step in Aceh's cultural diplomacy at the global level. Foreign Muslim tourists visiting Aceh will get an intense spiritual and cultural experience, not just meeting the needs of halal consumption and worship facilities. This strengthens Aceh's image as a world halal destination that is authentic, friendly, and deeply rooted in the Islamic tradition of the archipelago [10].

In line with that, Aceh's halal tourism policy enshrined in Qanun No. 8 of 2013 and Qanun No. 6 of 2014 becomes a formal umbrella for sharia-based tourism development and local values, supporting the management of Peunajoh as a flagship halal tourism asset [11]. The concept of "The Light of Aceh" describes the vision of Aceh as a destination that brings an atmosphere of peace, security, and the beauty of Islamic culture inherent in the traditions and lives of the people.

Peunajoh Aceh is not just a cultural heritage but a vital icon in Aceh's halal tourism development that combines religious, cultural and social aspects. With regulatory assistance and development strategies that involve the community, this tradition is the key to Aceh's success in marketing itself as an authentic and sustainable world halal tourism destination [12].

In the context of tourism development in the global era, the concept of halal tourism emerges as a strategic opportunity for Aceh to integrate local culture, religious values, and economy as a synergistic unit. Halal tourism not only offers experiences that are in accordance with the principles of Islamic law, but also becomes a medium to promote local wisdom through various cultural activities such as halal culinary, handicrafts, and cultural festivals run by traditional communities such as Peunajoh Aceh [6].

As a halal tourism icon, Peunajoh Aceh can enrich travelers' experience by providing opportunities to interact directly with the community. For example, tourists can be invited to participate in a kenduri, witness a traditional procession, or enjoy the culinary specialties that are usually present in Peunajoh events. Experiences like these provide a different dimension than just a regular tourist trip. This is in line with the modern halal tourism trend, where Muslim travelers seek not only halal assurance in terms of consumption, but also spiritual, educational and cultural experiences that affirm Islamic identity [13].

On the other hand, Peunajoh Aceh is also in line with halal tourism principles that emphasize the balance between worldly benefits and spiritual values. This tradition teaches the importance of sharing sustenance, strengthening friendship, caring for nature, and respecting others. These values can be packaged as a cultural narrative in the promotion of Aceh halal tourism, so that tourists see Aceh not only “halal in facilities”, but also halal in the practices and values of the people's lives. It is this authenticity and depth of meaning that makes Peunajoh a strong, different and authentic icon [14].

The development of halal tourism in Aceh has a wide-ranging positive impact, especially in driving the growth of the local creative economy. MSME players engaged in the culinary, handicraft and tourism services sectors get greater opportunities to market their products and services with the added value of halal certification and a distinctive cultural image. The existence of Peunajoh Aceh as a customary community has an important role in providing assurance that tourism activities are carried out in accordance with local cultural and religious norms, which in turn strengthens the trust of domestic and foreign Muslim tourists [15].

In addition, Peunajoh Aceh is also part of the driving force in maintaining a balance between economic modernization and cultural preservation [16]. Thus, Peunajoh's role is not only limited to preserving traditions, but also as an agent of social and economic transformation that supports sustainable development in Aceh. The complexity of the relationship between religious values, local culture and creative economy makes Peunajoh Aceh an important element that contributes to the successful promotion and development of authentic and competitive halal tourism.

The role of typical culinary in the promotion of halal tourism has not been fully optimized. An important thing in tourism development is the involvement of the community around the tourist attraction or even the community directly involved with tourism. One form of community involvement is the traders in the tourist area [17]. The reality in the field that shows that some of these culinary entrepreneurs have difficulty developing and some entrepreneurs close their businesses needs special attention [16]. Promotion strategies that are still limited and not yet fully integrated with the development of the tourism sector make this potential less than optimal. In fact, the success of halal culinary promotion not only has an impact on increasing the number of tourists, but also makes a significant contribution to the local economy through the growth of MSMEs, employment, and economic turnover in the food and beverage sector [18].

Peunajoh Aceh and halal tourism have a significant impact on the economic development of Acehese society. Peunajoh Aceh as a heritage of Islamic cultural traditions not only strengthens the social identity of the community, but also becomes one of the main resources capable of driving the wheels of the creative economy. This is in line with Aceh's efforts in developing a halal tourism sector that is not only oriented towards sharia facilities and services, but also elevates the richness of local culture so as to create an authentic tourist experience and have added economic value [15].

According to qualitative research conducted in Central Aceh Regency, halal tourism including local traditions and culture has a positive impact on increasing community income, opening up jobs, and shifting land functions from previously unproductive to productive. This contribution provides space for local communities to develop new businesses related to the tourism industry including halal culinary, handicrafts, and other tourism support services [19].

In addition, the synergy between halal tourism and the creative economy in Aceh is focused on the harmonization of Islamic values, local arts and culture, and the use of digital technology to expand marketing and operational efficiency. This approach is able to create a sustainable ecosystem, not only economically, but also maintaining social diversity and environmental sustainability. Islamic values provide moral and ethical direction, while local culture enriches the traveler experience with authentic uniqueness that is hard to find elsewhere. Digitalization is also key in driving the marketing of Aceh's creative economy products and services to a wider market share.

In the context of implementation in Banda Aceh, the government and community together encourage the development of creative economy-based MSMEs that are closely related to halal tourism. Creative economy products such as culinary specialties, traditional crafts, and performing arts are increasingly being improved in terms of quality and digital marketing. This step has an impact on increasing income and reducing unemployment and poverty in the area. This effort shows how the Peunajoh tradition has become one of the entry points in the development of the local economy of tradition and sharia breasts [20].

This study aims to examine in depth the role of Peunajoh Aceh in the promotion of halal tourism as well as examine its impact on the development of the local creative economy in Aceh. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the synergy between custom, culture, religion, and economy in the context of sustainable halal tourism development.

Method

This research uses a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research in one study framework [21]. The use of mixed methods is considered relevant because research on the role of Peunajoh Aceh in the promotion of halal tourism and its impact on the creative economy requires a complete understanding, both in terms of experience, meaning, and empirical data that can be measured quantitatively. According to Sugiyono (2015), mixed research is able to provide more comprehensive, valid, reliable, and objective results because it combines the advantages of both approaches [22]. Thus, this research not only reveals socio-cultural phenomena in depth, but also presents a statistical picture that can strengthen conclusions.

The research population consists of three main groups, namely tourists, MSME players, and policy makers consisting of the Tourism Office and the Cooperative & MSME Office of Bireuen Regency. Consideration of the selection of this population is based on the relevance of the role of each group in

supporting halal tourism promotion and creative economic development. Tourists were chosen because they are the main beneficiaries of the halal tourism experience, while MSME players are parties who directly contribute to the provision of culinary products and creative services [23]. Meanwhile, policy makers have the authority and strategy in supporting regulations and halal tourism development programs in the regions. Because the scope of the population is too broad, researchers use purposive sampling with certain criteria, so that 70 respondents are considered representative.

Data collection techniques were conducted through a combination of qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires [24]. Interviews were conducted face-to-face using an unstructured interview format. This technique was chosen so that respondents, especially MSME actors and related agency officials, could express their views, experiences and constraints extensively without being bound by a rigid list of questions. Information obtained from interviews was used to deepen understanding of the socio-cultural context of Peunajoh Aceh, promotional practices, and government policies in encouraging halal tourism. Meanwhile, quantitative data were collected using questionnaires distributed to MSME players and tourists, with the aim of obtaining measurable data on the level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to halal tourism.

The quantitative instrument used is a questionnaire with a Guttman scale, which is a scale that produces a firm answer in the form of two alternatives, "Yes" or "No". The use of the Guttman scale is considered appropriate because it can clearly describe the respondent's attitude towards the statements submitted, without any ambiguity. In scoring, the answer "Yes" is given a value of 1 and "No" is given a value of 0. Furthermore, the measurement result category is divided into three levels, namely high ($X \geq M + 1 \text{ SD}$), medium ($M - 1 \text{ SD} \leq X < M + 1 \text{ SD}$), and low ($X < M - 1 \text{ SD}$). With this approach, quantitative analysis not only shows the proportion of respondents who agree or disagree, but also categorizes the level of their tendency to support the promotion of halal tourism based on Peunajoh Aceh.

Data analysis in this study was carried out in two stages, namely qualitative and quantitative analysis which were then integrated [25]. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using the thematic analysis method, namely by identifying patterns, themes and categories that emerged from conversations with informants. Meanwhile, quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed descriptively with the help of the frequency distribution formula to see the percentage of respondents' answers in each category [26]. The results of the qualitative and quantitative analysis were then combined within a method triangulation framework in order to complement each other and strengthen the interpretation. With this strategy, the research is expected to provide a complete picture of Peunajoh Aceh's contribution to halal tourism promotion and its impact on the local creative economy.

Result and Discussion

A. Interview Results

In-depth interviews with officials of the Bireuen Regency Tourism Office revealed that Peunajoh Aceh has a strategic role as a cultural icon that can strengthen the identity of halal tourism in Aceh. The uniqueness of Peunajoh is not only reflected in the halal culinary offerings, but also in the spiritual values, togetherness, and traditional rituals that accompany it. According to the Tourism Office, the main attraction of Peunajoh for Muslim tourists lies in the authenticity of the experience offered, namely the combination of culinary flavors, the atmosphere of togetherness, and the practice of Islamic values in the daily activities of the Acehnese people. Promotional strategies include organizing cultural festivals, traditional activities, and digital promotion through social media to reach domestic and foreign tourists. However, they emphasized the need for selection and curation of the most representative types of Peunajoh to be able to adjust to tourist preferences while strengthening Aceh's halal tourism image in the global arena.

Furthermore, the Tourism Office emphasized the importance of cross-sector integration in promoting Peunajoh Aceh. Currently, promotional efforts are still partial and not fully connected with travel agents, media, and international digital platforms. As a result, the great potential of Peunajoh as a halal tourism icon has not been fully optimized. In fact, the global trend of halal tourism shows that tourists are not only looking for halal products, but also a comprehensive cultural experience. In this context, the involvement of private institutions, media and local communities is urgently needed so that the promotion of Peunajoh can be expanded and better targeted. The Tourism Office also emphasized that the principle of halalness must be a non-negotiable basis, as this aspect is the main differentiator between Aceh and other halal tourism destinations in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

Meanwhile, interviews with the Office of Cooperatives and MSMEs showed a significant increase in the number of businesses engaged in the production of Peunajoh Aceh over the past five years. Community empowerment is carried out through various programs, such as product innovation training, modern packaging, and marketing strengthening. In addition, access to capital and financing has also been expanded so that MSMEs are able to increase production capacity. The role of cooperatives is strengthened as a shelter and marketing platform for Peunajoh products, including by utilizing digital distribution channels. Collaboration with universities, the private sector and state-owned enterprises was also carried out to improve the skills of MSME players in digital technology and business management. These efforts show that the local government is committed to connecting MSME players with the development of digital-based creative industries that are relevant to the needs of the modern market.

However, the interviews also showed that MSMEs still face serious obstacles. The biggest challenges include limited capital, lack of access to halal certification, and lack of managerial skills. Many MSMEs still have difficulty keeping up with the development of more professional digital promotion technology, so their

competitiveness in national and global markets is not maximized. The Office of Cooperatives and MSMEs realized this, so they planned concrete steps in the form of further training, facilitation of halal certification, and intensive assistance in marketing aspects. This strategy is expected to not only overcome the internal obstacles of MSMEs, but also increase the role of Peunajoh Aceh as a driving force for halal tourism that makes a real contribution to the creative economy and the welfare of local communities.

B. Results of Questionnaire Answers - MSME Perceptions

The results of the questionnaire distributed to 26 halal culinary MSME players in Bireuen Regency show a very high level of compliance with product halal standards. As many as 99.97% or 25 businesses have obtained halal certificates, an achievement that shows a serious commitment in maintaining product quality according to Islamic principles. This is important because halal is a fundamental prerequisite for halal tourism, where Muslim tourists need assurance that the products they consume are not only delicious and distinctive, but also meet sharia standards. The high ownership of halal certification also reflects the awareness of MSME players of the importance of business legality and product competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market, both at the local and national levels.

In addition to formal compliance, the level of knowledge and awareness of MSME players regarding halal tourism is also recorded very high, at 99.01%. This figure confirms that the majority of business actors have understood the strategic role of halal tourism in attracting Muslim tourists whose numbers continue to grow in the global market. This awareness is reflected in business management practices that consistently use halal raw materials, implement production processes according to Sharia, and provide transparency of information to consumers regarding the halal status of their products. Thus, halal culinary MSMEs in Bireuen not only run business as an economic activity, but also place religious values as an operational basis that guarantees trust for tourists.

The positive view of Peunajoh Aceh as the main attraction of halal tourism is also very prominent, with an achievement of 99.04%. This data indicates that MSME players realize the great potential of Peunajoh not only as a culinary specialty, but also as a cultural symbol that can be developed into a regional halal tourism icon. This perception is very important because it shows that there is congruence between business actors and the direction of government policies that make Peunajoh part of cultural promotion and halal tourism. With the support of MSMEs, Peunajoh has the potential to be processed into superior products that have added value, both in the form of menu diversification, packaging innovation, and digital-based marketing strategies that can reach wider consumers.

Despite the high level of optimism shown in the questionnaire answers, practically all MSME participants continue to face difficulties and hurdles. Up to 99.10% of those surveyed said they continue to encounter challenges in the form of expensive certification fees, convoluted administrative procedures, and

inadequate training. If these challenges are not methodically addressed, they may impede the growth of MSMEs. The fact that 99.07% of companies asked the government and other organizations for full support—from streamlining the certification process to offering training programs to assisting with product marketing—still shows hope, nevertheless. The commitment and hope of MSME players to develop with halal tourism reached 99.03%, showing their strong enthusiasm to contribute to strengthening the local wisdom-based creative economy ecosystem in Aceh.

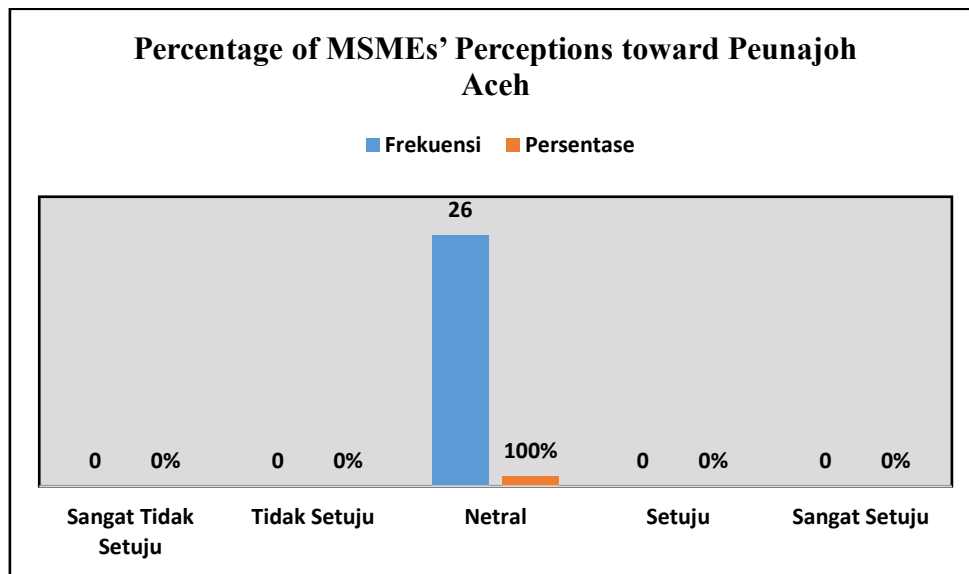


Figure 1. Percentage of MSMEs' Perceptions toward Peunajoh Aceh

C. Discussion

The results of the study show that Peunajoh Aceh is not just a living cultural heritage in the community, but has developed into a major driver of halal tourism development in Bireuen Regency. This tradition combines strong religious and cultural values, providing a unique experience for Muslim tourists. The uniqueness of Peunajoh is not only evident in the halal cuisine served but also in the spiritual meaning, togetherness, and social values embedded in every traditional activity. This aligns with Adistira's (2022) findings that halal tourism in Aceh relies on the integration of culture and religion as its main attraction, not merely on the provision of sharia-compliant facilities. Thus, Peunajoh Aceh can be positioned as an authentic tourism icon with added value compared to other halal destinations.

The promotional strategies implemented by the Tourism Office through cultural festivals, event organization, and the use of social media are in line with modern halal tourism trends that emphasize the importance of authenticity of experience. Muslim travelers from throughout the world typically look for experiences that are more significant than halal certification, such as memorable cultural and spiritual encounters. The promotion initiatives are still dispersed and incompletely cross-sectoral, nevertheless. This causes a disconnect between Peunajoh's enormous potential and its real visitor attractiveness. In order to

solidify Aceh's reputation as a halal travel destination in both domestic and foreign markets, more concentrated efforts are required to curate Peunajoh's products.

Peunajoh has significantly aided the expansion of MSMEs in the culinary, handicraft, and tourism support services sectors from the standpoint of the creative economy. The fact that the number of firms has increased over the last five years is evidence that this practice can generate long-term economic prospects. Product innovation training, contemporary packaging, and digital marketing are examples of empowerment initiatives that have assisted MSMEs in raising the caliber of their output. This is consistent with the creative economy idea, which holds that local knowledge can serve as a source of inspiration for the development of new, high-value goods. As a result, Peunajoh promotes economic diversification within the Acehnese community while simultaneously upholding tradition.

MSMEs still confront several obstacles, nevertheless, especially when it comes to funding, halal certification, and managerial abilities. Due to the high expenses and intricate administrative procedures, halal certification—which ought to be a competitive advantage—is frequently viewed as a burden. This situation makes it difficult for some businesses to compete in a wider market. In addition, limited digital literacy hinders the ability of MSMEs to utilize online platforms as a medium for product promotion and marketing. Therefore, local governments need to strengthen structured and sustainable assistance programs so that these obstacles can be effectively overcome.

In addition to internal aspects, external challenges also arise in the form of a lack of coordination between institutions. Promotion of Peunajoh is still mostly carried out sporadically by government agencies without significant involvement from travel agents, the tourism community, or international media. In fact, cross-institutional promotion is essential to reach an increasingly competitive global market. According to Fahlevi (2018), the branding of Aceh's halal tourism through the concept of The Light of Aceh must be supported by multi-sector collaboration so that it does not stop at just a slogan, but truly becomes a real force in attracting Muslim tourists from around the world.

Peunajoh Aceh, on the other hand, has enormous potential as a tool of cultural diplomacy that can improve Aceh's standing as a global halal travel destination. Participating in traditional activities like kenduri or gampong discussions offers foreign visitors a profound cultural and spiritual experience that extends much beyond only eating halal food. Peunajoh can be marketed as a representation of harmony between local Acehnese wisdom and Islamic law with the correct cultural story. Compared to other halal locations in Southeast Asia that prioritize physical amenities, this will be a powerful point of differentiation.

Peunajoh's blending of religion, economics, and traditional values further illustrates how relevant these ideas are to the ideas of sustainable development. In addition to preserving culture, this custom gives local communities the chance to prosper economically. In addition to enhancing quality of life, active

community involvement in Peunajoh-based tourism activities strengthens social ties. Community-based halal tourism has the potential to boost local company innovation, generate jobs, and raise community income, claim Nazar and Amri (2025). Peunajoh therefore acts as a link between economic progress and cultural preservation, which are complementary to one another.

A more methodical approach is required to improve Peunajoh's standing in Aceh's halal tourist industry. To make halal certification more accessible to MSMEs, the government must fortify it, increase collaboration with travel agencies, and create a digital-based promotion strategy aimed at the global market. In addition, integrated training emphasizing product innovation, digital technology mastery, and business management must be a priority. With these steps, Peunajoh can transform from a local tradition into a world-class halal tourism icon and a driving force for Aceh's creative economy.

Conclusion

This study concludes that Peunajoh Aceh not only functions as a living cultural heritage, but also as a major driver in the development of halal tourism in Bireuen Regency. The uniqueness of Peunajoh lies in the combination of religious, cultural, and halal culinary values that provide an authentic experience for Muslim tourists. Research findings from interviews and questionnaires indicate Peunajoh's significant contribution to strengthening Aceh's halal tourism identity, particularly through culinary innovation, digital promotion, and empowerment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). From the standpoint of the creative economy, this tradition has promoted more business actors, more job opportunities, and higher local community income. Peunajoh's promise hasn't been fully realized in the worldwide market, though, due to a number of obstacles that still need to be overcome, such as a lack of cross-sector promotional integration, insufficient finance, access to halal certification, and internet literacy.

Based on these findings, this study provides strategic recommendations for local governments and stakeholders to strengthen cross-sector coordination in promoting Peunajoh Aceh through cooperation with travel agencies, international media, and digital platforms. In addition, an integrated training program is needed that focuses on product innovation, modern packaging, digital marketing, and business management to improve the competitiveness of MSMEs. Financial support, administrative help, and affirmative action policies that benefit small enterprises are also necessary to streamline the halal certification process. These initiatives will enhance Peunajoh's standing as a valuable economic product with international appeal in addition to its status as a cultural icon.

According to theory, this study supports studies on culturally based halal travel, which confirm that regional customs can be a useful tool for creating sustainable halal travel. Peunajoh Aceh demonstrates how combining religious, cultural, and economic principles may provide uniqueness that sets Aceh apart from other halal travel destinations. Practically speaking, the study's findings give guidance to local communities,

MSME actors, and the government on how to use traditions to support the creative economy. SME actors can boost innovation and digital literacy, the government can use these findings as a foundation for integrated promotion policies, and local communities will learn that maintaining traditions has a direct influence on economic welfare in addition to its spiritual value. Thus, Peunajoh Aceh has great potential to become a global icon of authentic halal tourism as well as a driving force for the creative economy based on local wisdom.

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