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CONCEPT AND MODEL OF SHARIA SALONS AND SPAS: MYTH OR REALITY?

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ABSTRACT

Currently, health issues have grown rapidly into Health Tourism segment to strengthen Indonesia's tourism. Ironically, the proliferation of salon and spa business as well as other forms of health tourism business is considered to cause negative effects in the form of destructive cultural penetration of foreign tourists. This study aimed to analyze the prospects of sharia salons and spas in safeguarding the health tourism in Indonesia. Furthermore, we examine the mix variables of sharia marketing as a marketing stimulus to encourage Muslim tourists in making the decision to visit and re-visit as well as their interest in the sharia salons and spas. This explanatory study uses the paradigm of quantitative research involved 13 informants of Muslim owner/staff sharia salons and spas in East Java, Indonesia. The results of this study indicate that stimulus of sharia marketing is needed to develop tourist visits, especially Muslim travelers in health tourism destination of sharia salons and spas.

KEY WORDS

Health tourism, sharia, salons, spas , Indonesia.

Thousands of years ago, people had to travel to distant places in order to heal themselves, so essentially a medical tourism is a phenomenon that has long existed. In its development, global competition has emerged in the health care industry. Countries that have advanced the tourism, such as Switzerland, Germany, France, UK, USA, Canada, Austria, Australia, Japan, China, Singapore, and even Malaysia have long organized forms of such health tourism for both domestic tourists and foreign tourists. This then led to the term of borderless patient for health tourists in developed countries and in developing countries. Wealthy patients from developing countries have long traveled to the developed countries for high-quality medical care. However, now many middle economic class patients from developed countries travel to developing countries to seek high quality medical care at affordable prices (Herrick, 2007).

Currently, health issues have grown rapidly into Health Tourism segment to strengthen tourism, not least for Indonesia, which has a lot of local knowledge in the field of health from the science of alternative medicine heritage. Health tourism activity generally refers to patients who travel for beauty, rehabilitation, care of themselves in their recreation. Health tourism emerged as a new form for the tourism industry which is diffusion between the needs of an individual to obtain health care and their wish to travel in the same time (Rollyson, 2010; Munro, 2012; Snyder *et al.*, 2013; Henema, 2014). The form of implementation of health tourism includes yoga, gym or fitness, dentistry, spiritual festivals, ayurveda, mud baths, cosmetic surgery, acupuncture and acupressure, and what has been popular in Indonesia is a salon and spa services business.

Tilaar (2011) state that the development of salon and spa in Indonesia and the world is growing rapidly. Factors causing the inner pressure or stress are increasingly high that many people, especially among metropolitan, require salon and spa as a means of treatment for relaxing therapy. Ironically, the development of health tourism in Indonesia also poses the threat of penetration of "wild west" (Macready, 2007; Cortez, 2008; Johnston *et al.*, 2010) brought by foreign tourists as foreign culture can lead to transformation of culture or even cultural amnesia, that will ultimately bring multiple effects on various sectors of public life and business industry.

Young (1973) suggests that tourism may give rise to an undesirable activity, such as prostitution, sex trafficking, and HIV and penetration of foreign culture that can have negative impacts for local communities. In public perception, spa and salon business is identical to the negative stigma (Narendran, 2011). This is evidenced by the emergence of 'plus-plus' salon and spa, erotic massage parlors, homosexual salon as well as prostitution under the guise of health and fitness business in Indonesia. Although it promotes itself as a spa and sauna with exclusive prices and services, in practice it is similar to prostitution and other hedonism.

The mindset of tourism businesses people tend to be oriented to economic advantages alone without strong commitment and awareness in maintaining cultural, social, and religious values; and this can be a threat to the nation and especially for the development of the tourism industry itself. On the other hand, Indonesia is a potential market of abundance domestic Muslim tourists. However, the limited variety of facilities and infrastructure of the health tourism and ethical fulfillment of sharia and affluence of 'plus-plus' spa and salon in Indonesia shows that the country is still weak in capturing the opportunities and potential of Muslim tourists even for domestic market needs.

On a variety of spa and salon areas in Indonesia, it is difficult to obtain standard service according to the value of sharia for Muslim women who keep the "*aurat*" according to the religious beliefs, for example in terms of a therapist of the same sex, no-pork raw materials, no eyebrow shaving or like-man hair, and so forth.

Recognizing the potential and opportunities of Muslim tourists, and keeping the noble values of the nation's culture as well as maintaining and increasing attraction for them, both domestic and foreign tourists, on health tourism in Indonesia, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy has started to promote standardization of sharia spa and salon (Ministry of Tourism, 2015).

Sharia salons and spas is a model of spas and salons that offer beauty therapist and rooms based on gender, halal cosmetic materials as well as service, interior, equipment and other facilities that comply with Islamic law (Yemen *et al.*, 2012). Sharia salons and spas is expected to minimize the practice of adultery and other hedonism. Sharia salons and spas business continues to grow and is proven profitable and some has been using a franchise system. Until now, there are about less than a hundred sharia salons and spas in Indonesia. So far, the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) has not issued a special fatwa and sharia certification for the operation of sharia salons and spas, but many spas and salons are getting halal certification for its products.

Malang is a city in the province of East Java, Indonesia, which has a high potential to develop health tourism, especially with the support of domestic Muslim tourists. The high number of students, especially Muslim ones, poses potential for tourism in Malang City, Surabaya City and Sidoarjo City, East Java, Indonesia. They need to be accommodated and facilitated for health and fitness that meet the values and ethics of sharia, one of which is through sharia spas and salons. Furthermore, in the operation of sharia spa and salon, evaluation and assessment of the effectiveness of marketing and management variables is important to increase the number of users and encourage repeat visits, to increase the income of business, and to help develop the health tourism in Indonesia.

This study attempts to improve the health tourism segments through prospective sharia spas and salons in Malang, in encouraging domestic Muslim tourists. This study aimed to analyze the effect of implementation of sharia services marketing mix that has been applied to decision buying as well as revisit intention in sharia salons and spas.

Originality that this research offers is that it fills the gap of research on prospective sharia salons and spas in extending health tourism using a sharia marketing perspective that is still missing in Indonesia. Abroad, there are only a few researchers like Yemen *et al.* (2012) in Malaysia, conduct the same study. In Indonesia, previous research on sharia spas and salons is still in early stages of analyzing phenomena and behavior, in a study by Budiyanto (2015). While other researchers analyze the sharia salon spa business from various perspectives such as from the perspective of Islamic architecture in a study by Kusjuniardi (2014), Trison (2015), and Indry (2014) as well as from the perspective of human resource management, for example in research by Sari (2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Health Tourism. According to Pendit (1994), there are several types of tourism already known, such as Health Tourism, i.e. one's journey with the aim to exchange the circumstances and the environment in one's everyday life for the sake physical and spiritual health.

Health tourism is a blend of Medical Tourism and Wellness Tourism. Wellness or Healthy Lifestyle Tourism provides improved and preventive health services, and puts more emphasis on relaxation and good look, like beauty, weight loss, and fitness services. Medical tourism provides conventional and traditional medical services such as cosmetic surgery, organ transplantation, chemotherapy, physiotherapy, massage, and acupuncture.

Sharia Marketing. Alom and Haque (2011) state that sharia marketing can be defined as a process and strategy (*hikmah*) to meet the need through the halal products and services (*tayyibat*) by mutual consent and welfare (*Falah*) of both parties of buyer and seller to achieve material and the spiritual wealth in the world and the hereafter.

Sharia Salon and Spa. Sharia salons and spas are currently experiencing exponential and massive growth. This is similar and becomes the more popular development of modern Islamic hammam, which has long been growing, especially in the Umayyads. Nevertheless, at present, research on sharia salons and spas shows such poor trends as few researchers pay attention to the potential of innovation of sharia salons and spas compared conventional salons and spas especially in Muslim countries. Some researchers have initiated research on salons and spas in various countries, among others such as Malaysia (Bahaudin and Abdullah, 2010; Husain and Jamal, 2015), Indonesia (Bafadhal, 2017), Thailand (Chookaew et al., 2015), and Finland (Islam and Kärkkäinen, 2013). Even so, those researchers have put an important springboard for the development of the concept of sharia salons and spas.

Spa was originally defined as a medical treatment to ensure total relaxation for those who receive treatment using water vapor as its main element. Clark (in Bahanudin and Abdullah, 2010) shows that spas can be divided into four types, namely retreat spas, resort spas, day spas and salons or mini spas. Callen (2007) claims that in their development, spas are no longer just associated with mineral springs and therapeutic use of water. Spas now present in the form of chic services and products in a beauty salon, are available in a variety of department stores, and may also involve place to eat delicious and healthy food or even become the ultimate destination for a vacation.

It is similar to the development of services in the Islamic hammam as a forerunner of sharia salons and spas, as it also provided services such as guard baths (*ḥammamīān*), barber (*salmānīān*), masseur (*āsījānān*), therapists or cuppers (*ḥajjāmān*), and others (Mez, 1992). Islamic Practices Spa provides spa services, beauty therapists based on sex, the use of different rooms and different services for male and female clients, and services in accordance with Islamic law (Yemen et al., 2012). By applying Islamic values in the beauty business, it will realize Muslim needs to feel comfortable and relaxed, knowing that services for men and women are separated so privacy is maintained.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

This explanatory research uses qualitative research paradigm. The sample in this study was 13 owner/staff of sharia salons and spas in Malang City, Surabaya City and Sidoarjo City East Java, Indonesia. The data was collected for approximately 2 month from July 2017 until August 2017.

This research was conducted by distributing questionnaires to domestic Muslim tourists as visitors the sharia salons and spas in Malang City, Surabaya City and Sidoarjo City East Java, Indonesia. Respondents were identified based on informant name, informant position, age of company, business types, especially for woman, non-Muslims as seen as Table 1 below. Qualitative analysis technique such as interview and literature study was used in this study.

Table 1 – Description of Informants

No	Area	Company Name	Age of Company	Business Types	Esp. for Woman	Esp. for Non-Muslim
1	SBY	Alesya	9 years	Private	Yes	Yes
2	SBY	Alfafa	4 years	Private	Yes	Yes
3	SBY	Noura	6 years	Private	Yes	No
4	SBY	Nayyara	7 years	Private	Yes	No
5	SBY	Kayla	8 years	Private	Yes	Yes
6	SBY	Deva	10 years	Private	Yes	Yes
7	MLG	Fatimah	13 years	Private	Yes	No
8	MLG	Almira	2 years	Private	Yes	No
9	MLG	D'Mutia	4 years	Franchise	Yes	Yes
10	MLG	Yasna	5 years	Private	Yes	No
11	SDA	Sholika Yahya	3 years	Private	Yes	Yes
12	SDA	Jasmine	2 years	Private	Yes	Yes
13	SDA	Dhila Jasmine	6 years	Private	Yes	Yes

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on literature study and interview, the author states that sharia salons and spas are a form of business that provides promotive and preventive wellness services and products combining aesthetic, cosmetics, and spiritual treatments of the body, face, hair, and soul for both men and women, especially Muslims in conformity with Islamic law as the main determinant.

Muslim consumers, managers of Muslim-friendly salons and spas as well as the government must coordinate as to play the important role in setting up education and training, regulation, accreditation, quality standards, and marketing of sharia salons and spas. Through a review of various sources, the author has developed a standard concept for sharia salons and spas, i.e. the Salient Traits of Sharia Salon and Spa in table 2 and figure 1.

Tabel 2 – Salient Traits of Sharia Salons and Spas

No.	Category	Salient traits
1	2	3
1	Services	Forbidden to shave the eyebrows, beard, facial hair
		Forbidden to do hair coloring with black color, preferred red and yellow color
		Forbidden to show <i>aurat</i> especially the body secara vulgar
		Products must free from haram ingredients
		Forbidden to treat wig and <i>konde</i>
		Therapist must be of the same sex with the clients
		Tersedia layanan mencabut bulu ketiak, dada dan betis
		Suggested (<i>sunnah</i>) to shave the pubic hair and trim the mustache for man but not for woman
		Forbidden to have hair extension
		Suggested to trim the nails (pedicure and manicure)
		Suggested to have a face mask and gulp down the body with blossom mask or halal materials
		Forbidden to mencukur atau menggundul rambut wanita hanya boleh memotong
		Forbidden to <i>dogoza</i> (cut some hair and leave some other)
		Women are forbidden to cut all their hair resembling men
		Forbidden to have tattoos
		Forbidden to pull out grey hair
		Allowed to wear nail polish for women during their period
		Forbidden to wear nail polish as it causes <i>wudhu</i> or ablution not perfect form inai
		Allowed massage using oils; the treatment must not evoke lust and not torture the body
		Allowed to use aromatherapy with natural ingredients and non-intoxicating
		Allowed to have mud bath
		Allowed to have spice bath / herb
		Allowed to make the eyes up using kohl; the makeup must be simple
		Hair and nails of the female clients must be collected when they are having their period during treatment; the hair and nails must be included during <i>junub</i> bath
		Allowed to make up the hands and feet with <i>henna</i>
		Allowed to do dental spa and with <i>siwak</i>
		Allowed to style and to comb the hair
		Allowed to use perfume during treatment
		Allowed to treat acne and boils in particular with <i>dzairah</i> perfume.
		Braid is allowed, yet <i>konde</i> is prohibited
		Not allowed to bath in warm water pool
		Allowed to use steam shower or sauna dengan ruangan terpisah antar klien
		Allowed to use ice water for treatment
		Allowed to provide traditional services or modern ones as long as the services are not prohibited by Quran, Hadith, <i>Ijma</i> , and <i>Qiyas</i>

1	2	3
2	Facilities	Providing the waiting room for the husband or <i>mahram</i> who accompanies the female customers
		Separating the service rooms between male and female
		Reciting of the Al-Quran verses
		The equipment used do not violate Islamic law and is free from any haram materials
		Availability of prayer room, prayer mat, and the Qibla direction
		No music expressing seductive and controversial messages
		Non-figurative decoration pattern (no pictures and <i>statues</i> , figurines of human and animal form)
		Bed, toilets, and therapy room facing Mecca
		Water friendly restroom or toilet
		Build-in <i>wudhu</i> facilities located outside the prayer room
3	Management	Therapists and staffs diutamakan beragama Islam
		Prohibited from providing services that lead to negligence of the prayer time
		Not hiring transgender as the staff
		Therapists and staff wearing descent clothes covering the <i>aurat</i>
		Providing special time for prayers for Muslim workers
		Special arrangement for Muslim workers during Ramadhan
		Ethical marketing and promotion
		Conducting corporate social responsibility
		Paying tax
		Conducting <i>philanthropic donation</i> based on <i>zakat</i> principles, giving <i>infaq</i> and <i>sodaqoh</i>
		All transaction using the network of Islamic financial institution such as sharia banks
		Management and ownership preferably by Muslim individual
		If possible, sharia supervisory boards are available within the organizational structure of the company

There are also controversies and conflicts related to halal haram for a woman to open their *aurat* in front of non-Muslim women. Some scholars declare that this is haram except for emergency and life-threatening conditions such as a medical operation or accident and treatment of diseases. However, when it comes to health care that is not urgent, most scholars agree that Muslim women should not open their *aurat* in the presence of non-Muslim women. Therefore, it is better that Muslim women go to a salon and spa managed and owned by Muslims. Meanwhile, for non-Muslims interested in opening up a salon and spa targeting Muslim users, they are suggested to provide Muslim therapists and staff. The development of beauty and spa treatments in various countries is because people are looking for new and unique experience. The main problem in dealing with beauty treatments and spa operations from the perspective of Islam is the issue of mahram, *aurat*, and separation of different sexes.

Figure 1 – Standard Model of Sharia Salon and Spa

The Quran commands, "...and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women...." (An-Nur: 31). This shows the prohibition for a Muslim woman to appear without *hijab* in front of a non-Muslim female, fearing that the non-Muslim woman will be able to explain to her husband or other strangers (non-*mahram* of the Muslim woman) regarding the physical condition of the Muslim woman so as if the man sees the Muslim woman directly. Actually, Muslim women are allowed to get salon and spa treatments, as long as the treatments are not too much and not to show off. Muslim women should keep their beauty only for their husband (or future husband). It is necessary for married Muslim women to ask for husband's permission before going to the salon; the husband must also allow the treatments. It is also important not to miss any prayers during the treatments. The treatments must not torture the body, such as shaving and embroidering eyebrow, hair extension, and tattoos.

CONCLUSION

Although Islamic marketing concept is relatively new in comparison with Western marketing, it does not mean that Islam has not been familiar with the marketing concept. Muslims have been trading for over a thousand years, have made contact with the various local cultures, and have adjusted their approach in the context of Islam in order to market their goods and services (Wilson and Grant, 2013). As part of the competitive tourism industry, sharia salons and spas not only provide facilities and products but are also required to execute a sharia marketing strategy to allocate their resources well to increase the number of customers. Although sharia salon and spa business is currently very promising, without sharia marketing management strategy, the value will certainly lose in the competition. In addition, there are differing opinions of managers in the implementation of standard operating procedure of sharia salons and spa. Evaluation and assessment on the effectiveness of sharia marketing management run by managers of sharia spas and salons is necessary in order to increase the number of service users, to increase revenues, and to help develop the health tourism in Indonesia.

The exponential growth of sharia salons and spas marks a positive trend; they have even grown into a franchise business. However, the development of sharia salons and spas in some countries has not been formalized by a *fatwa* of the authorities. Malaysia has issued a special *fatwa* on Islamic Spa Practice by Majelis Fatwa Kebangsaan. Indonesia, on the other hand, has not done so. A *fatwa* is a religious order issued by a leader of a Muslim scholar. As there has been no such *fatwa*, differences in the implementation of sharia salons and spas exist, both in Indonesia and in various countries around the world. Many salons and spas claim to work on sharia, but they have not uniformly applied Islamic values in both service and management.

Muslim scholars are expected to consider the importance of the *fatwa* specifically for sharia salons and spas, so the *fatwa* can become a technical reference in the implementation of the business in the near future. With the *fatwa*, sharia salons and spas have standards in meeting the health care needs of domestic and foreign Muslims. In addition, the *fatwa* must also be reinforced with the regulations of the government legally and obligatory binding all sharia salons and spas.

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