



Assessment of the Potential in Halal Tourism in the Philippines: The Case of The Islamic City of Marawi, Lanao Del Sur, The Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The absence of foreigners or local tourists in Marawi City makes the locals uninterested in tourism-related activities and experiences. Thus, the main goal of this assessment study is to evaluate the level of adherence to Islamic principles and values in tourism activities, ensure the availability of Halal food and prayer facilities for Muslim travelers, promote cultural understanding and respect for Islamic traditions, and improve the overall Halal tourism experience for Muslim travelers. It is the first study type in history that refers to itself as an original paper due to no prior literature.

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 18 Aug 2024

First Revised 21 Sep 2024

Accepted 27 Nov 2024

First Available online 28 Nov 2024

Publication Date 01 Apr 2025

Keyword:

Halal tourism,
Lanao del sur,
Marawi,
Mindanao,
Muslims,
Mëranaos,
Tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism refers to the activity of visitors. As such, it is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that involves individuals traveling to nations or locations beyond their typical environment for personal, business, or professional reasons. These people are known as visitors (tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents), and tourism refers to their activities, including tourism expenditure. Tourism has enormous benefits in Islam and even positively impacts one's faith (Kessler, 2016). Tourism is a part of "maqashid" shari'a, which consists of preserving religion, soul, reason, descent (honor), and property. Tourism can even cover all of these aspects of this "maqashid" because it is supported by the texts of the Qur'an and the Hadith, which show the virtues and benefits of the tour. Further, tourism recognizes the growing interest in halal tourism from both the perspectives of industry and research. Halal tourism can be summarized as any object or action that is permissible to use or engage in the tourism industry according to Islamic teachings. Therefore, the success of developing and marketing halal tourism destinations must be guided by the adoption of Islamic teachings and principles in all aspects of tourism activities (Battour & Ismail, 2016; Katuk *et al.*, 2021; Jia & Chaozhi, 2020).

Furthermore, halal tourism refers to halal travel or halal-friendly tourism. It is a subcategory of tourism in which services are provided for Muslim families, groups, or individuals following the rules of Islam. The accommodations in tourist destinations do not serve alcohol, have separate facilities for men and women, serve only halal foods, and provide prayer facilities. Travel agents, while designing travel packages for halal tourism, follow the guidelines of halal rules. Many countries offer facilities and services following Islamic religious beliefs to attract more customers, visitors, and clientele. Halal tourism industries provide flights, accommodations, and services where no alcohol or pork products are served. Usually, the times for the Islamic prescribed five daily prayers are announced, and Qiblah (the direction towards the Kaaba in the Sacred Mosque in Mecca) is provided. In halal tourism, accommodations in hotels, hostels, inns, and homestays serve halal foods and meat that is slaughtered following the teachings of Islam. Thus, halal tourism is becoming a trend. The increasing number of Muslim tourists in the world spending hundreds of billions of dollars provides opportunities for halal tourism destinations. Nevertheless, Marawi City has a great potential for halal tourism due to its rich Islamic culture. Despite its cultural appeal, current halal tourism offerings in Marawi fail to attract local and international tourists.

On the other hand, in the Sharia tourism book, it is stated that the scope of halal tourism is related to halal food (halal food), travel expenses (travel expenses), friendly services for providing the needs of Muslim tourists (Muslim Friendly Service), relaxation (relaxation), storage handling (lodging), tourist destinations (tourism destination), choice of tourist attractions (explore), restaurant atmosphere (restaurant atmosphere), hotel and aircraft financing (hotel and aircraft fees) and services while on board (airplane services).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Mindanao

Mindanao is the second-largest island in the Philippines (Stitt, 1949; Metillo & Garcia-Hansel, 2016). It consists of the southernmost territory of the Philippines and a chain of numerous islands in the Sulu archipelago. The island of Mindanao is inhabited by approximately one-fourth of the total population of the Philippines (Hill, 1982). Today, the whole area of the island of Mindanao is divided into six administrative regions: (1) the Zamboanga Peninsula, Region IX; (2) Northern Mindanao, Region X; (3) Davao, Region XI; (4)

South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and General Santos City, collectively called SOCCSKSARGEN, which is Region XII; (5) Caraga Region; and (6) the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (See **Figure 1**).

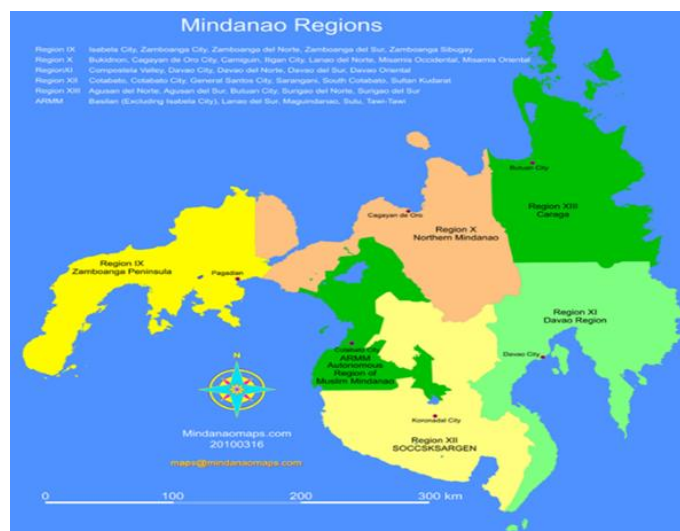


Figure 1. Map of Mindanao.

2.2. Islamization in Mindanao

Islam arrived in the Philippines before the colonization era. Islam was already a religion in the Philippines before Spanish colonization. Muslim missionaries arrived in the Philippines around the 14th century to spread Islam. After the influence of Sheik Karimul Makdum, an Arab missionary, native people from Sulu were the first to agree to accept Islam as their accepted religion. Islam ruled the entire country until colonizers subjugated it and spread Christianity throughout the Philippines.

In actuality, Muslim Filipinos have never been captured by colonizers and have never changed their religion due to their strong opposition to other beliefs. Muslim Filipinos of this generation currently reside in the southern part of the Philippines. They form the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, which is made up of five provinces where Muslims make up the majority of the population. Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan, and Lanao del Sur are among these provinces. The majority of people in these provinces are Maguindanaon, Mëranaos, and Tausug, the three largest ethnic Muslim groups in the Philippines.

The provinces of Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, and Marawi City are home to the majority of Mëranaos. They are known as the "people of the lake" because they live around Lake Lanao, which is regarded as one of the world's oldest lakes and the deepest and second largest lake in the Philippines. The Mëranaos are thought to be the last tribe to accept Islam as their religion ([Racman, 2022](#)).

2.3. Lanao del Sur

Lanao del Sur is one of the provinces in Mindanao, Philippines. It is situated in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The BARMM territories also include the Sulu Archipelago and Magindanao in central Mindanao. Marawi City is the capital of Lanao del Sur. The province has a land area of 13,494.37 km² or 5,210.21 mile². Its population as determined by the 2015 Census was 1,045,429. This represented 27.65% of the total population of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, 4.33% of the

overall population of the Mindanao Island group, or 1.04% of the entire population of the Philippines. Based on these figures, the population density is computed at 77 inhabitants per km² or 201 inhabitants per mile² 12.

2.4. History

Lanao del Sur has a long and vibrant history. The Darangen Epic of the Mëranaos relates to their events and people, and it defines the old towns during the pre-colonial period. Lanao is the home of the Mëranao Sultanate system now known as the four principalities or Pat a Pagampong sa Ranao namely Masiu, Unayan, Baloi, and Bayabao. The Sultanate governs independently yet it is still identified with the national community. Its political power and domain are equally recognized like those in Sulu and Magindanao.

The Mëranaos in Lanao are proud to have resisted the succeeding colonial powers, Spain, America, and Japan. The saga of Mëranao heroes who fought bravely in the Moro Wars during the Spanish colonization along with their Tausug and Magindanao brothers is living proof. The legendary battles of Bayang, Sultan Gumander, Ganassi, and Tugaya record Mëranao fighters armed with kris, spear, bow, and arrow faced the canons and rifles of the Americans, exhibiting Mëranao assertion for freedom and distinct political identity. The Japanese likewise failed following the fate of its predecessors.

The creation of Lanao del Sur was during the height of the Commonwealth government's campaign for settlement in Mindanao. The undivided Lanao was administratively part and a political unit of the Moro province by Philippine Commission Act No. 787. Thereafter, on May 27, 1959, by Republic Act No. 2228, the unified Lanao was divided into two distinct provinces, namely Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte. Lanao del Sur was officially chartered on 4 July 1959.

Lanao del Sur went through phases of political changes. As a result of the negotiated settlement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) Tripoli Agreement during the Martial Law years. President Marcos issued P.D. No. 742 which included Lanao del Sur in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The constituents of Lanao del Sur affirmed the province's inclusion in ARMM during the plebiscite on February 19, 1989. Although Marawi City refused to join first, it reconsidered its position later in 2001. Today, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has changed to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) which has a Prime minister and ministers with various functions. Lanao del Sur is composed of 39 municipalities and Marawi City. The province is currently composed of 1,159 barangays and is divided into two congressional districts. Marawi City is the only Islamic City in the Philippines.

2.5. People

“The Mëranaos predominantly inhabit Lanao del Sur and some parts of Lanao del Norte in Mindanao. The name is Mëranao translates to “people of the lake”. The Mëranaos are also found in other parts of the Philippines Archipelago in the Islands of Luzon and Visayas. The Mëranaos’ primary source of subsistence consists of dry rice cultivation in hilly areas via contour farming; and in rice paddies. They also cultivate corn, sweet potato, coffee, cassava, peanuts, and vegetables. To supplement their agricultural harvests, they also incorporate fishing in Lake Lanao”.

The earliest Mëranaos historical records, found in the salsila (oral traditions), are about the Kingdom of Bumbaran, from where came the ancestors of the present-day Mëranaos. Legend says that when the first Muslim missionaries came to preach Islam, the inhabitants of Bumbaran refused to be converted. The entire kingdom then sank into what is now Lake

Lanao. Only four people survived, and they became the ancestors of today's Mëranaos (see **Figure 2**).



Figure 2. Map of Lanao del Sur.

2.6. Marawi City, Lanao del Sur

Marawi City is the capital of the province of Lanao del Sur, Philippines. Locals often refer to it as the Islamic City of Marawi City because it is the city in the Philippines with the highest population of Muslims. The people of Marawi City are called Mëranaos, which means “people of the lake”. This is because the location of Marawi City is at the northernmost shores of Lake Lanao which also straddles the area where the Agus River starts. Marawi City City has a total land area of 8,755 hectares (21,630 acres). Thus, it is the premier urban center of the province of Lanao del Sur.

“Marawi” literally means a “place where things are inclined or centered.” (see **Figure 3**). The city is bisected by the Agus River, which is the only outlet of the lake to the sea to the north and which feeds the Maria Cristina Falls, now the major source of hydroelectric power throughout Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur. The Mëranaos language spoken in the Lanao provinces is part of a subgroup of languages called the Danao languages. The others include Ilanun, also Ilanum or Iranun, spoken by a group of sea-based people between Lanao and Maguindanao; and Maguindanao, spoken mainly in Maguindanao and North Cotabato.



Figure 3. Map of Marawi City, Lanao del Sur.

3. METHODS

The sources used in this research were primary sources gathered according to actual observations of the researcher on the current halal local tourism in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, Mindanao. This research uses ethnography. Ethnography describes the culture of an ethnic group or people. The ethnographer does fieldwork which includes participant observation, interviewing, and observing the customs and practices of the people including their lifeways.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Assessment of the Potentials in halal tourism in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur

Marawi City is the only Islamic city in Lanao del Sur, and it has a lot to offer for halal tourism. With its rich culture and beautiful Lake Lanao, Marawi has the potential to attract visitors from both near and far. Hence, it looks at how Marawi City can make the most of its halal tourism potential. By highlighting what makes Marawi special, the City Government of Marawi can also help other places in Lanao del Sur develop their tourism. Making the most of tourism can also bring in generated income for Marawi and the surrounding areas. Thus, Marawi City's cultural richness, combined with its natural beauty, makes it an appealing destination for both local and international travelers, presenting an opportunity for collaboration among stakeholders to elevate Marawi's status as a leading halal tourism destination.

4.2. Schools in Marawi

Marawi City is known to have many schools; there are 87 public schools and 45 private schools, for a total of 132 schools. Other than that, Marawi City is also home to different madrasa schools, and one of these is the Jamiatu Muslim Mindanao. It has also been teeming with faculty members who have qualified to complete their Arabic education courses abroad. As a result, sustaining halal tourism in Marawi City can be a long-term force in bringing on our ancestors' legacy. Thus, it is a private school, not just a Madrasah. It is a government-recognized Islamic institution of higher learning that offers not only a full Madrasah (Arabic School) but also full government-recognized courses in K to 12 Basic Education and Collegiate courses. The school is also authorized by the CHED to offer Graduate courses in Educational Management and Public Administration. They also provide a Certificate of Proficiency in English Language (COPEL) course.

Hence, the "Jamiatu Muslim Mindanao" is located at the base of the scenic Signal Hill, with views of the Sacred Mountain to the east and Lake Lanao to the south. It has a land area of 29,995 square meters and is surrounded by a concrete fence along the Marawi City-Iligan National Highway in Matampay, Marawi City [25]. Hence, increasing the number of schools that provide both Western and Arabic education is extremely crucial because many students come from far-flung areas or municipalities such as Maguindano, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and others to pursue Islamic and Western education. Many of the faculty force have even studied abroad in Arabic education. Also, one of the oldest schools can be found in Brgy. Moncado—the Marawi City Central Elementary Pilot School, where one of the former Vice Presidents of the Philippines, Teofisto Guingona, Jr., studied. And Marantao from Gomising of the World Army Crusaders name is Gen. Helario Cameno Moncado. The sense of sustaining Halal tourism in Lanao del Sur is continuously maintained (See **Figure 4**).



Figure 4. Jamiatu Muslim Mindanao.

4.3. Mindanao State University-Main Campus

The most notable attraction in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur is the Mindanao State University campus which draws the greatest number of visitors within Lanao del Sur. Mindanao State University is located that serves as an educational institute and a center of social and cultural integration, which overlooks the serenity of Lake Lanao, one of the world's oldest lakes. The lake receives water from nearby rivers. These waters then flow into the Agus River in Lanao del Norte and into Iligan Bay, as well as providing water to Iligan's resorts. The Mindanao State University – Marawi City, commonly known as MSU Main, is the flagship campus of the Mindanao State University System. It offers the greatest number of undergraduate and graduate degree programs including programs in the fields of sciences, environmental studies, and Islamic studies (see **Figure 5**).



Figure 5. Mindanao State University's main campus, Marawi City.

4.4. Marawi City Gulf Course

Marawi City's Gulf is one of Mindanao State University's tourist attractions. It has a view, and fresh air, is peaceful, and has smooth grass. Most Mëranaos visit the Gulf course to de-stress and enjoy the fresh air with their families (see **Figure 6**).



Figure 6. Marawi City's Gulf.

4.5. Mosques

In the early times of Islam, mosques were at the center of the city, along with cultural, social, political, and economic activities. They were the focal point of public settlements and also the center of all social life. Masjid an-Nabawi, also known as the Prophet's Mosque, sets an example for the construction of many mosques, and it is not only a place of worship, but also a management and education center where legal, commercial, and social issues are discussed, diplomatic receptions and meetings are held, the state treasury is protected, and religion is taught. The marketplace, which is thought to be an effective tool for inviting masses to Islam, is located close to the mosque at an appropriate distance ([Koçyiğit, 2013](#)).

Mosques are the spatial equivalent of Muslims' culture, belief, and worship. As a structure, they have undergone considerable change throughout history in terms of material, space organization, plan elements, and understanding. The existence of the mosque is a holy place for Muslims. Apart from being a place of worship, it also functions as a center for Muslim activities in regulating the life of Muslims.

Nevertheless, Markaz Abubacar Mosque is the most important holy place in Marawi City Lanao del Sur; its square meters are wide, and it is one of Mindanao's most beautiful mosques. Every Thursday, many people sleep in order to worship, especially the Mëranaos youth to pray called ihtikaf; this is also where the international Islamic Juhor takes place, accompanied by various types of believers from all over the world. It is also surrounded by a large number of stalls selling imported goods. Because Marawi City had limited lodging, it also became a destination for travelers from other countries. As a result, the "tableghs" can also decide who will take part in the four-month, 40-day, three-day journey carrying the Islamic religion from a local or international destination. Furthermore, the parking has been greatly improved and expanded. Hence, during Friday prayer, there are many people praying, and the mosque is well maintained on the inside, with adjacent rooms for visitors to relax and rest. There are also restaurants near the Mosque and if you want to buy men or women's Muslim dresses, there are many stores around (see **Figure 7**).



Figure 7. Markaz Abubacar Assiddiq Mosque.

The Marawi City Grand Mosque is the Philippines' largest mosque, with three floors, a roof deck, and a basement and a total floor area of 9,845 square meters. One of Asia's most popular dishes. Taraweeh and Friday prayers will be permitted beginning on the first day of Ramadan, March 23, 2023. Marawi City City's Grand Mosque, officially known as Jameo Mindanao Al-Islamie worship in the Philippines, has been rebuilt in better condition, with management leadership restored to the founding Pangarungan clan (**Figures 8 and 9**).



Figure 8. Marawi City's Grand Mosque.



Figure 9. Inside of Marawi City's Grand Mosque.

The Mëranaos are basically Sunni Muslims, although traces of minor Shiite and Sufi influences can also be found. Islamic religious roles include those of the imam or the kali, which are affiliated with bangsa titles. Markaz Karguzari is from the Philippines. Tabligh Markaz (Markaz Fayl Khayr) is located in Marawi City and is run by World Markaz Nizamudidin. In the Philippines, Marawi City is known as an Islamic city. MSU's main campus houses the mosque. A short walk from MSU Commercial Center. It was convenient to pray if you were near (see **Figure 10**).



Figure 10. Ramadhan Taraweeh in Markaz Fayl Khayr.

4.6. Aga khan Museum

These museums, a tourist will see the old things and handcrafts made by the ancestors of Mëranaos which will bring memories to the culture. Mëranaos ancestors were proud and loyal to their homeland. A tourists will also see there their cultural attire, their old images, the different kinds of animals and other species, and other things that the Mëranaos owned (see **Figure 11**).



Figure 11. Agakhan museum.

Lanao People's Park and Public Library is the city's first park with a playground, where every Mëranaos student enjoys spending time because of the breathtaking views. It also houses the city's public library (see **Figure 12**).



Figure 12. Provincial Public Library, Lanao People's Park.

The new Mindanao State University Mëranaos Cultural Heritage Center as a means to preserve what is legit in Marawi City for its Mëranaos Cultural Heritage and artifacts. The Cultural Heritage's main attractions are its vast collections of indigenous art, displayed ethnic artifacts, native folk dances from various regions of Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan, native tools and weapons used by Muslims, and various artistic house designs (see **Figure 13**).



Figure 13. Mëranaos Cultural Heritage Center.

4.7. City Sports Complex

The Philippines's most Scenic stadium is found in Marawi City is one of the prominent variations of the Mëranaos s OKIR is the Sarimanok, others involve the use of Naga or serpent motif. The Majestic Sarimanok Sports Stadium are also inspired in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur has four- hectare Sarimanok Sports Stadium a multi-purpose project that has 3,700 seating capacity and can serve as a venue for holding different sports activities both local and national level. Its amenities include track and field, football field, basketball court, volleyball court, tennis court, indoor badminton court, shower and locker area, and offices (see **Figure 14**).



Figure 14. Sarimanok Sports Complex Stadium in Marawi City.

4.8. Coffee Shop

Marawi City has recently open the largest coffee shop in Marawi City that is truly a pride of the Mëranaos community, to have the biggest and largest branch of BO's Coffee ever built in the Philippines. Cebuano entrepreneur Steve Benitez's coffee chain opened its largest store in the country in war-torn Marawi City City. Its 250-seater café will serve signature coffee sourced locally from coffee farming communities in the mountains of Sagada, Benguet, Mt. Kitanglad, Mt. Matutum, and Mt. Apo.

The aesthetics of the store were inspired by the Sarimanok, a ubiquitous symbol of Mëranaos art, which was reflected in the color of the interiors; the Malong, the traditional garment of Mindanao's mainland, which was reflected on the ceiling and walls instead of the usual furniture cover; and the Torogan House, traditionally symbolizing high social status, which was reflected in the ceiling and bar counters.

It has an 882.56-square-meter floor space, and the store concept and design were carefully considered to embrace "Marawi City's notable sense of connectedness to its community, which is rich in spiritual and cultural histories" (see **Figure 15**). Twist your buds as we shake delightful experience of your favorite foods and tea (see **Figure 16**).



Figure 15. Largest Coffee Shop in the Philippine.



Figure 16. Black Scoop Café C&D MSU Marawi City.

Make sure to grab your favorite Infinitea drinks with the new store and chill at peace in Marawi City (see **Figure 17**).



Figure 17. Infinitea C&D Plus Marawi City City.

4.9. Mëranao customs and traditions

Aretes Style is proud to introduce Mëranao's creativity to local and international tourists, so it decided to open a small shop where people can have a hands-on experience with Mëranaos Crafts (see **Figure 18**).



Figure 18. Aretes Style in Awar Street.

4.10. Mëranao Traditional Dances

Mëranaos in Marawi City have many cultural dances. Mëranaos dance forms can be classified into two: those which are reenactments of some episodes in Darangen, and those which are adaptations from the epic. Examples of the former are kaganat sa darangen, sagayan, and sadoratan; and of the latter, kapemalomalong. Other types include those that deal with life-cycle rituals and, in particular, with spirits or souls of the dead. One example of this last type is the kadaolat sa miatai. Mëranaos dances include kakini-kini (Mëranaos women's traditional way of walking), kadsadoratan (a dance that shows graceful walking, turning, and balancing while covering their faces), kanggarotaya (a dance that uses a knot to show men's strength), and kapmalo-malong (a dance that uses a knot to show men's strength) (a cultural dance performed by men and women showing the different ways to use malong). Other Mëranaos dance is kasingkil or singkil, in which the women step in and out of the clipping or clashing bamboos, is one of the most famous royal dances of the Mëranaos. It was inspired by an incident in Darangen in which the princess was escaping the rolling stones and bamboo clippings that tonongs (evil spirits) did to mock her.

A resident theater company of MSU-Marawi is the multi-awarded Sining Kambayoka that received in 1997 the Gawad CCP para sa Sining for their cultural contributions to the region. “Sining” is the Tagalog word for “art,” and “kambayoka” is the Mëranaos poetical joust. Its primary objective when it was founded in 1974 was “the inclusion of Mindanao theater traditions in mainstream consciousness” and its concerns were national in scope. Hence, its plays are in Filipino, that is, Tagalog and Bisaya or Cebuano, with a few Mëranaos interjections. It is a multiethnic group, with Mëranaos students making up 20% of its membership, which includes the Tausug and Maguindanao, besides Christian settlers from Luzon and the Visayas. Foremost of this group’s productions that are derived from Mëranaos literature are plays in Tagalog: *Pilandok*, 1974; *Mga Kuwentong Mëranaos* (Mëranaos Tales), 1975; and *Maharadia Lawana*, 1977. *Halik sa Kampilan* (Kiss on the Sword), 1978, is Frank G. Rivera’s original play depicting the Mindanao people’s displacement and struggle for land. MSU-Marawi is also host to the dance group Darangen Cultural Dance Troupe founded by dancer, trainer, and professor Henrietta Ele in 1966. The group’s mission is to preserve indigenous dance, music, and rituals in the so-called MINSUPALA (Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan) region (see **Figure 19**).



Figure 19. Group of youth performing a singkil.

4.11. Mëranaos Music

Mëranaos music forms can be classified into two: boni-boniyan (instrumental) and kaplogo (vocal). Mëranaos boni-boniyan applies to the whole range of the instrumental repertoire produced by various musical instruments. One of these is the isa ka daradiat, a kulintang ensemble composed of a pair of big gongs with a buzzle or claves, a pair of cylindrical sticks called mamales; eight graduated gongs laid horizontally on a stand called langkongan; the debakan, a drum made from goat or deer skin; and babendir, a small flat gong. Other musical instruments include the gandingan, a horizontal war drum; tabo, a “call-to-prayer” drum hung horizontally in the mosque; a very small kulintang called alotang but known as saronai if manufactured from metal; a bamboo instrument scraped and struck called tagotok, also called sirong a ganding when plucked and beaten; insi, an end-blown lute; kubing; and oni-oniya, a rice stalk resembling an oboe.

4.12. Mëranaos Cuisine

Marawi City’s is mainly populated by Mëranaos people, thus, Mëranaos cuisine is very unique in terms of its appearance and taste. Apart from the culture, natural attractions, and historical tourist attractions. Mëranaos cuisine is intertwined with the life cycle rites and rituals of all aspects in Mëranaos Society and culture. Thus, Mëranaos Cuisine was greatly influenced by other neighboring Asian Countries like Malaysia and Indonesia. Mëranaos Cuisine has no exact measurement in many recipes and the top three most commonly tried native Mëranaos foods are Koning (Yellow Rice), Palapa, and Dodol. Mëranaos s also prepares desserts during celebrations and events. Their most famous desserts is dodol, which is a sticky dessert made with “malagkit” rice, a special type of rice, coconut milk and brown sugar slowly cooked until becomes sticky. Other desserts include barubed, tiyatag, pakbol, pabrot, dalog, palitaw, tamokonsi, browa, amik, tiompe, balolon, tapay and lokatis. As enumerated, Mëranaos food is considered as the following: 1) Rahma (Mercy) from Allah; 2) Riskih (Gift); 3) one of the pnabi-nabian (prophets); 4) as satisfying hunger; 5) as rasa (nutrients); 6) as bolong (medicine); 7) as having social value (keeps family and community united and cohesive); 8) as having niawa (spirit) as in the case of the rice; 10) as having soul; 11) as an appetizer; 12) as having the capacity to beautify; as a source of strength and as a symbol of rank and social status.

4.13. The Torogan: The House of Power

There are three types of Mëranaos houses: the lawig, small house; mala-a-walai, large house; and the torogan, ancestral house of the datu. Some Mëranaos houses have posts resting on rounded boulders; these “floating foundations” prevent the structures from collapsing during earthquakes. The mala-a-walai is a single-room and partition-less structure. It stands 30 to 220 centimeters above the ground and rests on nine to 12 bamboo or wooden poles. A fenced porch serves as the front of the house; the kitchen, which is 50 centimeters lower than the structure, is at the back. The main space is the sleeping area, which doubles as a living and working area in the morning. Storage space can be found underneath the main house and the kitchen. The widowed line flooring of the house is of split bamboo tied with rattan. The torogan is a partition-less structure, housing many families. Each is given a “sleeping space,” provided with mats and sleeping pads, and divided from each other by cloth partitions. Each sleeping space also serves as the family’s living room, working space, and dining room.

Marawi City's cultural treasures, such as its architecture, have been preserved. The bombings did not affect the Torogan houses because they were located far from the (ground zero) central business district. The house is raised above the ground by heavy wooden pillars, as is typical of Mëranaos architecture. The boulders' foundation is hidden from view. The iconic sarimanok or mystical bird adorns the roofline, while okir patterns, or sinuous patterns adorn the rest of the exteriors (see **Figure 20**).



Figure 20. The Torogan in Tuca, Marawi City City.

4.14. Iqra The Book Corner

The store sells Islamic books in Iqra A to Z at a very reasonable price, with a large selection of books with translation and Tafseer (An interpretation or explanation of the Qur'an, usually done by scholars to understand the deeper meanings of its verses), Islamic wall hangings or Azaan (it's the Islamic call to worship, traditionally recited by a muezzin from a mosque's minaret to announce the five daily prayers) clocks, Islamic books for kids and adults, and prayer mats for kids and adults (see **Figure 21**).



Figure 21. IQRA Islamic Book Store in Marawi City.

4.15. Hotels in Marawi City

Tourists can choose from a variety of accommodation types depending on the type of tourist trip they are taking, their budget, and the composition of the traveling party. Therefore, the hotel is an important part of Marawi City's growing halal tourism industry. The success of tourist visits is frequently determined by how acceptable the hotel is, where they are staying following Muslim norms, and whether they have facilities for performing ibadah (worship) such as Salah (prayer).

There are numerous hotels in Marawi City where tourists can stay. Lake View Hotel in Marawi City; MSU- Ayala Hotel on the MSU main campus; The Ridge Hotel and Restaurant on the Sagonsongan diversion road in Marawi City; Ragayan Training Center in Marantao, which is also close to Marawi City; and many others are available. Aside from that, MSU has a large number of lodgings or apartments that provide room-only accommodations, though breakfast and meals are sometimes available at a nearby restaurant. Regardless of location, the hotel provides a standard bedroom that is furnished to the same standards (see **Figures 22 and 23**).



Figure 22. Marawi City Resort Hotel.



Figure 23. The Ridge Hotel and Restaurant.

4.16. 0.0 Kilometer

The KM 0.000 or KM 0 (also known as km Zero) is the original reference point for all roads on a particular island. The KM 0 in Luzon can be found in Luneta Park, across from the Rizal Statue. It can be found in Cebu beside the flagpole on the grounds of the Cebu Capitol. And, of course, in Mindanao, you can find it in Marawi City. You will also see the 0.00 km marker

near the Marawi City National High School. In Marawi, you will see the original reference point of all the roads in Mindanao. It's a landmark of the city that it is one of the earliest and most famous cities located in central Mindanao. If you enjoy traveling and are fascinated by following yellow road signs. Then, in Marawi City, KM 0 will greet you with its colorful, okir-patterned KM 0.000 Marker on Datu Akader Street (see **Figure 24**).

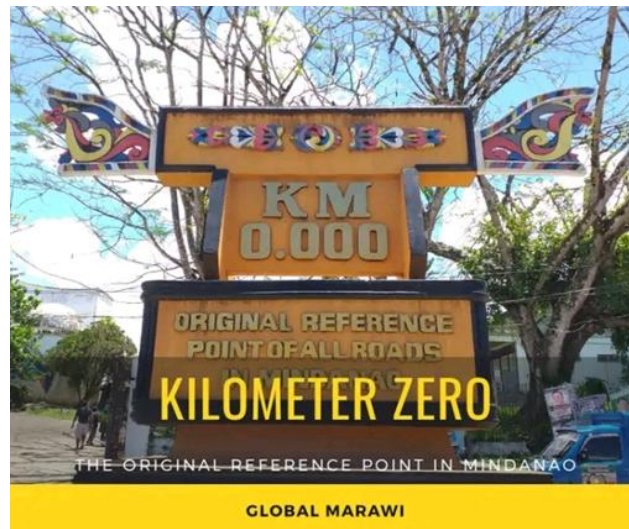


Figure 24. 0.000 KM in Marawi City.

4.17. Stalls and shops

Marawi City has a wide variety of business stalls and shops selling imported items such as clothing, men's and women's Islamic clothing, utensils, appliances, and so on. The rest stalls sell school supplies, shoes, sandals, furniture, building materials, and so on.

4.18. The Rural Transit Bus in Marawi City

The rural transit bus starts on the route from Marawi City to Cagayan de Oro City, going to Davao City, and vice versa. Because of the direct route from Cagayan to the city, it will be easier for people from Davao City to go to Marawi City City, which will be a big help for tourism and the economy. Indicate the time frame and schedules of transporting (see **Figure 25**).



Figure 25. Rural Transit Bus, Marawi City.

4.19. Mëranaos Marriage

Another tradition followed by the Mëranaos is "parental" marriage. In that case, it will be up to the parents to decide who will marry their son or daughter. The parents of both sides will agree on how much dowry the parents of the groom's side will give to the parents of the bride's side. Aside from that, Dowry is the amount of money given by the parents of the male side before marrying the bride in our culture. After the agreement is reached, there will be a "kandialaga," or one-week celebration before the official "kakawing," or wedding ceremony. The kambitiara, a public recitation of the lineages of both the bride's and groom's families by the pananalsila, precedes the kakawing (wedding proper). One motive for the kambitiara is to make public both families' "noble" genealogies, so confirming that they are of the same class. The kambitiara can also be used to glorify and praise both families. The kakawing takes place after the kambitiara. This is generally dramatic since the groom must face numerous hurdles before he can meet his wife and batal (first touch her). The imam performs the wedding ceremony and advises on the duties and responsibilities of married life. After this, the groom looks for his wife, but he can't just walk into the chamber where she's hiding until he meets the expectations of the wedding party. The groom and his entourage must frequently bargain for whatever is demanded, the completion of which allows him to enter the room. Another challenge awaits him: he must perform the procedures of leka sa gibbon (chamber opening). The groom must pay a charge to open the door and dine with his wife. The kalawian is the last obstacle that the groom must overcome. The ceremony of bringing the bride to the groom's residence for the first time comprises a fee, and this must be paid. Failure to do so can lose the wedding (Baradas, 1997). This is probably done to preserve the family's pride, especially if the family comes from a royal or large family (see **Figure 26**).



Figure 26. Mëranaos Wedding.

4.20. Lake Lanao

Probably not on everybody's checklist of places to go for tourism activities, but Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, has been open and excited to welcome tourists to visit and explore its rich culture and beautiful sites in recent years. Among these is Lake Lanao, the world's second-largest lake and one of the most ancient lakes in the Philippines. Around the lakes also are

beautiful mosques since almost 100 percent of Mëranaos are Muslim and when you see the lake from Marawi City you will see the mountain that looks like a sleeping lady. Lake Lanao is the single most important source of livelihood for the Mëranaos. It provides the principal source of protein diet for the Mëranaos and satisfies their water and energy needs. Aruan (mudfish), katipa (catfish), popoyo (climbing perch), kasili (eel), bongkaong (carp), mampawi (tilapia), gorami (plasalit), tamban (black bass), kadurong (goby), and arid bangos (milkfish) are among the economically important fish species in Lake Lanao. From 1963 to 1964, total fish output in Lake Lanao was just 1,986,330 kg, whereas total fish consumption in Lanao del Sur was 8,132,156.22 kg. Lake Lanao is the single most important source of livelihood for the Mëranaos. It provides the major source of protein diet for the Mëranaos and supplies their water and energy needs. Economically important species of fish in Lake Lanao include the aruan (mudfish), katipa (catfish), popoyo (climbing perch), kasili (eel), bongkaong (carp), mampawi (tilapia), gorami (plasalit), tamban (black bass), kadurong (goby), arid bangos (milkfish). From 1963 to 1964, fish production in Lake Lanao was only 1,986,330 kg for the entire lake, while fish consumption of the entire population of Lanao del Sur was 8,132,156.22 kg (see **Figure 27**).



Figure 27. The Ancient Lake Lanao.

4.21. Challenges in the halal tourism in Marawi City

As of now, except for the various museums, no halal tourism businesses in Marawi are registered with the City Government of Marawi's treasurer's office. The halal tourist business owners in Marawi do not have the necessary abilities to promote their halal enterprises, products, and services, nor do they have the necessary halal certification to promote halal tourism. As a result, this will also find the innately fresh fish that were there before but no longer exist, ensuring that Lake Lanao is the way the contemporary generation learned about what the forefathers witnessed. This can also be used to curse the Department of Agriculture's decision to pay attention to and protect the problem in Lake Lanao. On the other side, the National Commission for Muslims will appreciate Marawi's halal tourism by supporting and advertising it in other regions throughout the Philippines. In terms of land conflict issues, this will also be addressed to the National Housing Authority and Local Government Units (DILG) to promptly propose a solution to these difficulties and Mëranaos worry about what the best course of action will be.

5. CONCLUSION

Marawi City presents promising opportunities for halal tourism, anchored in its rich Islamic heritage. However, it faces several challenges. Despite its cultural appeal, current halal tourism offerings in Marawi fail to captivate both local and international tourists. Moreover, the absence of registered businesses complicates revenue estimation and deprives the local government of essential tax income, overwhelming these obstacles is crucial for Marawi City to fully benefit from halal tourism economically and culturally. The Marawi, Lanao del Sur local government unit must encourage halal tourism business owners to register with the local government office. Marawi's local government unit must provide seminars on developing halal tourist services and products in Marawi City to boost halal tourism in Marawi City. Marawi's local government unit must promote a new strategy for Islamic tourism at the local and international levels. Islamic tourism sector covers a wide range of services; mostly in food and beverage, hospitality, and leisure. However, the feature of Islamic tourism differs from conventional tourism.

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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