

# **YOUTH HALAL TOURISM RESEARCH**

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*Guided by Faith, Inspiring Youth: Advancing  
Halal Tourism Through Insightful Research*

**SITI SALWA MD SAWARI**

# Youth and Halal Tourism Research

Editor

**Siti Salwa Md Sawari**

International Islamic University Malaysia

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to YOU, the seeker of knowledge, educator, and all readers who find this piece of academic work beneficial to your life.

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## PREFACE

This chapter book has been crafted through the collaborative efforts of several national and international universities, including International Islamic University Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi MARA. International collaborators include Universitas Muhammadiyah Sukarta, Indonesia; Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Türkiye; Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Indonesia and Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (UNISSULA), Indonesia. The book aims to provide valuable insights into current research on youth and Halal tourism, showcasing empirical trends in this field. It examines a diverse array of topics, including the demand for Halal tourism among youth, their travel intentions, satisfaction with Halal food and Muslim-friendly amenities, and preferences for Islamic tourism experiences. Readers will gain a thorough understanding of the evolving dynamics of Halal tourism and its appeal to younger generations.

### Chapter I: Demand for the Halal Market Among the Young Generation

In an era where the preferences of the younger generation are increasingly shaping market trends, understanding the demand for halal products becomes essential. This chapter delves into the key aspects of the halal market—Shariah-compliant hotels, halal food and beverages, and Shariah-compliant healthcare services—and their influence on the purchasing intentions of Malaysia's youth. By examining these factors through a quantitative approach, the study highlights how these elements cater to the specific needs and values of young consumers. The insights provided here are crucial for stakeholders in Islamic tourism and related sectors aiming to align their offerings with the evolving expectations of a new generation.

### Chapter II: An Overview of Halal Foods in The Economy

With a growing Muslim population, the significance of halal food in the economic landscape cannot be overstated. This chapter offers a comprehensive review of the awareness and economic impact of halal food in Malaysia. By examining the role of JAKIM's certification and the preferences of both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, this study underscores the importance of halal products in the broader economic context. The analysis of recent data highlights the growing consumer confidence in halal food and its implications for the market, providing a foundation for future research and industry practices.

### Chapter III: Youth Travelers' Intention in Selecting Muslim-Friendly Tourism

awareness of spiritual activities and the characteristics they seek in spiritual tourism experiences. The findings underscore the importance of integrating spiritual elements into tourism offerings to meet the evolving needs of young travelers. This research lays the groundwork for further exploration and development in the field of spiritual tourism.

#### Chapter VII: Analyzing Cognitive and Affective Responses in Virtual Reality Tourism with a Special Focus on Mosque Visits Among Generation Y

Virtual reality (VR) is revolutionizing the way tourists experience destinations, including religious sites like mosques. This chapter investigates the cognitive and affective responses of Generation Y to virtual reality mosque tours. By analyzing data from VR experiences, the study highlights how immersive technology can enhance engagement and learning about mosque destinations. The findings suggest that VR can significantly enrich the tourism experience, providing new opportunities for engagement and interest in religious tourism among younger audiences.

#### Chapter VIII: Young Backpackers' Satisfaction Towards Islamic Attributes of Destination

Young backpackers are a unique segment of the tourism market, often seeking destinations that align with their values and preferences. This chapter examines their satisfaction with the Islamic attributes of various destinations, highlighting the importance of these features in shaping their travel experiences. Through quantitative analysis, the study reveals high levels of satisfaction among young backpackers, emphasizing the need for destination managers to continue enhancing Islamic attributes to attract and retain this demographic. The findings offer practical insights for improving the backpacker experience and fostering repeat visits.

In sum, this book was written by academics for researchers, advanced undergraduates students, and other scholars; as it provides a research on various relevant topics in Halal Tourism.





# Chapter I

## DEMAND FOR THE HALAL MARKET AMONG YOUNG GENERATION

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### **ABSTRACT**

***Purpose:*** This paper aims to investigate the most vital aspects of the halal market (Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah healthcare services) that influence the young generation's purchasing intention in Malaysia.

***Methods/Design/approach:*** A quantitative research design with non-probability sampling. The data were obtained by distributing online questionnaire surveys to Malaysia's youth through social media platforms.

***Findings:*** Significant findings include accommodation, halal food and beverages, and Shariah compliance healthcare services.

***Implication:*** This study provides significance towards Islamic tourism, especially Islamic tourism in Malaysia, which covers an extensive range of interests among the Malaysian young generation's demand towards the Halal market.

***Keywords:*** Accommodation, Halal Tourism, Shariah compliance, Tourism.

## INTRODUCTION

The halal market is no longer limited to the food sector but has also prolonged its range by including medical devices, services, logistics, finance, cosmetics, toiletries, and many more. The meaning of 'halal' is allied with the concept of 'Toyyib', which means good, and halal is anything that is allowable in Islam and brings good to humankind. Azam and Abdullah (2020) emphasize the expanding Muslim population, rising economic development, and the emergence of prospective Halal markets in non-Muslim nations as the factors driving the rising demand for Halal products. The halal industry has extended not only in product sectors such as health products, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals but also in service sectors such as marketing, logistics, packaging, branding, financing and supply chain.

Nowadays, the Muslim population is 2.18 billion, representing 28.26% of the total population and increasing by 1.84% yearly. As the number of consumers increases, the market size for the halal industry is also increasing at an annual rate of 20%, with a value of US\$560 billion a year (Pacific, 2010). In addition, due to the increasing demand for the halal market by Muslim people, non-Muslim countries have recognised the chances and potential growth of the halal market and are putting efforts to lead this sector to the world's economy. In 2017-2018, according to Latif (2017), Brazil, Australia, and Singapore were in the top ten countries with the highest GIEI (Global Islamic Economy Indicator) score in the halal food market despite being non-Muslim. New Zealand and Australia are leading worldwide to the largest market in the halal food industry, which is meat and poultry, by exporting halal meat, and surprisingly, these countries are non-Muslim countries. The same goes for Brazil and Argentina, where they are the biggest poultry producers (Nor Ai'han Muijar, 2015, cited in Azam et al. 2019). According to the Wonderful Malaysia website, Malaysia is located in the southeast of the Asian continent and is often referred to as Southeast Asia. Malaysia consists of two parts: Peninsular Malaysia, located north of Thailand and south of Singapore, and the two provinces, Sabah and Sarawak, located on Borneo. Malaysia's capital city is basically Kuala Lumpur, consisting of 13 states and three federal territories administered under the auspices of the elected sultan. The purpose of this research is to investigate the most vital aspects of the halal market (Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah healthcare services) that influence the Malaysian young generation's purchasing intention, and the study will be held within Malaysia country as it is to know the demand from the Malaysian young generation itself and what are they looking for in Halal market, either in

term of the accommodation, halal food and beverages or Shariah compliance services and facilities when it comes to tourism.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The concept of halal, as outlined by Asy-Syaukani, is deeply rooted in Islamic law, which regulates various aspects of life including food and drink. According to Asy-Syaukani (1994), Allah has designated certain items as haram (forbidden), such as intoxicants and pork. This is reflected in Surah Al-A'raf (7:22), which suggests that consuming haram items can lead to negative physical and moral consequences. Surah An-Nisa (4:43) further instructs Muslims to avoid prayers while intoxicated. The prohibition extends to trading and gifting haram substances, including khamr (intoxicants), as reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and Tirmidhi. Qardhawi (2002) emphasizes that Islam permits only wholesome and good food, thereby categorizing intoxicants and certain animals like pork as haram.

Halal certification has become a critical aspect of the halal market, with several studies addressing its complexities. Buang (2012) highlights the challenges faced in halal certification in Malaysia, including issues related to licensing and historical development. Abdullah (2021) provides an overview of the certification process and the evolution of halal standards in Malaysia. Moreover, research by Henderson (2016) explores the intersection of halal certification with tourism, focusing on Malaysia and Singapore.

The halal market's growth in industrial and economic sectors is significant. Manan (2016) identifies four key themes in the halal industry: halal food, halal cosmetics, governmental structures, and JAKIM's Halal certification. Hasan (2019) addresses halal food and halal trade finance, emphasizing the sector's economic implications. Battour (2018) explores non-Muslim tourists' perceptions of halal, contributing to the understanding of market dynamics beyond the Muslim consumer base. This literature review will particularly focus on the demand for halal products among the younger generation in Malaysia. Given the diverse trends and challenges identified in the halal market, understanding the preferences and behaviors of younger consumers is crucial. This demographic's unique needs and perspectives will provide valuable insights into the future trajectory of the halal market.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a quantitative research design, which evaluates the research variables using IBM SPSS version 26 questionnaires. The survey was distributed to the young generation in Malaysia. Research methodology is a complete step researchers employ before moving to the next step, research work. Quantitative is one of the methods to gain data, and it can be defined as a research method that deals with quantifying and analysing variables to gain results. Quantitative can be defined as an intensification of the issues or a phenomenon by gathering numerical data and exploratory with mathematical methods, mainly in statistics. Furthermore, it also contains data collection to measure the information gained and subjected to statistical action to identify whether it could support or refute the alternative knowledge claims. The researcher used a cross-sectional study in terms of collecting the data. The cross-sectional method could be defined as a type of observational study that examines the data from a population at a specific point in time and may serve to calculate relative risks from prevalence (Schmidt and Kohlmann, 2008). Hence, by using this method, the researcher could gain the data quickly and help attain a current snapshot of behaviour (Lim, 2013). In this study, the researcher distributed questionnaires through online platforms that were formed using Google Forms and received 179 respondents from Malaysia's young generation.

## **FINDING**

Based on regression analysis, the findings related to the study's objective are to investigate the highest aspect of the halal market (Shariah-compliant hotels). Halal food and beverages and Shariah healthcare services) that influences the Malaysian young generation's purchasing intention

Table 1: Model Summary of Malaysian's young generation purchase intention and independent variables

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of Estimate
1	.795 <sup>a</sup>	.632	.625	.63403

a. Predictors: (Constant), SCHS, SH, HFB

Table 1 displays the model summary of purchase intentions of Malaysia's young generation on the halal market and independent variables, which consist of Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah-compliant healthcare services. The model shows the correlation between the dependent and independent variables, which produced the value for R<sup>2</sup> of .632 and the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of .625, indicating three independent variables.

Table 2: ANOVA of Purchase intention on Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages and Shariah-compliant healthcare services

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	120.566	3	40.189	99.973	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	70.349	175	.402		
	Total	190.916	178			

The ANOVA output table shows that the F-ratio is 99.973, indicating that the regression analysis was statistically important overall. Besides, it is vital to examine the *p*-value to determine whether the regression model shows a good determinant of the relationship between the halal market (dependent variables) and three aspects of independent variables: Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages and Shariah healthcare services. Table 3 shows that the Sig. (*p*) value result is .000, which is less than .5. Thus, this indicates that there is a significant linear regression between halal market demand among Malaysian's young generation (dependent variable) and three aspects (independent variables), namely Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages and Shariah-compliant healthcare services.

Table 3: Coefficients of Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages and Shariah-compliant healthcare services on Purchase intention.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std.Error	Beta		
SH	(Constant)	1.028	.243		4.231	.000
	Shariah HealthCare	.294	.061	.315	4.851	.000
HF	Halal Foods	.364	.061	.406	5.932	.000
SCHS	Shariah compliance Hotel Services	.162	.071	.180	2.288	.023
a. Dependent Variable: HM						

The coefficient output result shows the highest contribution to the dependent variable (Malaysian young generation aspects of demand). Table 3 demonstrates the results of coefficients among three constant variables. The first hypothesis suggested that Shariah-compliant hotels influence Malaysian's young generation's purchase intention towards the halal market. Findings show that Shariah-compliant hotels significantly influence Malaysian's young generation's purchase intention where the  $p$ -value is .000 ( $\beta=.315$ ,  $p<.05$ ). According to Frost et al. (2019) the variable is significant when the  $p$ -value is less than .05 and as the result H1 is supported. Moreover, the second hypothesis proposed that Halal food and beverages influence the Malaysian young generation's purchase intention on the halal market, and the results show that halal food and beverages significantly influenced the Malaysian young generation's purchase intention as the  $p$ -value is .000 ( $\beta=.406$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Hence, the H2 is supported. Lastly is Hypothesis 3, which proposed that Shariah-compliant healthcare services influence Malaysian's young generation's purchase intention on the Halal market. Findings show that Shariah healthcare services also significantly influenced Malaysian's young generation's purchase intention in the Halal market where the  $p$ -value is .000 ( $\beta=.162$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Therefore, H3 was also supported. In conclusion, all of these three aspects (independent variables), namely Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah healthcare services, significantly influenced the Malaysian young generation's purchase intention towards the Halal market.

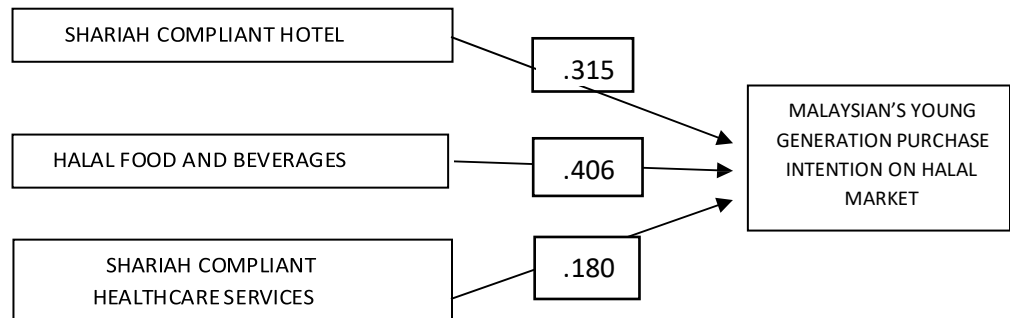


Figure 1: Summary of Coefficients of Independent variables on Dependent variable

The results of this research offer significant contributions to our understanding of the determinants that impact the expenditure intentions of the younger demographic in Malaysia with regard to halal products. Significant effects of Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal cuisine and beverages, and Shariah-compliant healthcare services on purchase intentions are revealed by the findings. The purchasing intention of the younger generation in Malaysia is significantly impacted by the most critical elements of the halal market—Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah healthcare services—Halal Foods ( $\beta=.406$ ,  $t=5.932$ ,  $p=.000$ ). This is comparable to the current adolescent trend of placing a premium on halal products, particularly beverages and food. This result is consistent with previous research indicating that young Malaysians have a generally favourable perception of Halal food (Alam & Sayuti, 2011.; Aiedah & Sharifah, 2023.).Furthermore, in order to appeal to Muslim and international students seeking tertiary education in Malaysia, the availability of Halal cuisine and beverages is considered essential. The halal status of foods is a substantial determinant in their purchasing decisions.

Regarding the halal status of a food item, consumers need to check the halal label on the product. There are institutions that categorize items as halal or haram according to existing regulations. For instance, in Indonesia, halal certification is issued by BPJPH (Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency), based on a halal determination valid for four years from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). The MUI serves as a forum for ulama, scholars, and Muslim intellectuals. There are also regulations and enforcement practices related to halal in Malaysia. Government agencies responsible for enforcement include several bodies dedicated to halal issues. Each agency has its own acts and regulations for enforcing laws concerning halal goods and products. In practice, halal and haram status are also monitored by government authorities, the community, and consumer protection non-governmental organizations (Hasan, 2014:434-440). Thus, consumers can safely enjoy food, particularly in hotels, with a sense of security.



## CONCLUSION

Three variables, namely Shariah compliance hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah compliance healthcare services, have been analysed using SPSS under multiple linear analyses in order to determine the most vital aspects. The results showed between Shariah-compliant hotels, Halal food and beverages, and Shariah healthcare services. The Halal foods are the most vital factor that influence the young generation's purchasing intention in Malaysia. Baharuddin et al. (2015) stated that halal and non-halal cover all aspects of Muslim life. It is not only about food and drinks but also about safety, social justice, animal welfare and sustainable environment. It shows that Malaysian youth is not only seeking halal but also demanding hygiene when it comes to food preparation for the sake of their safety and health. Furthermore, halal food is also one of the halal product sectors that have increased strongly over the past decade and is currently worth an estimated USD 667 million (GIFR, 2013). With precision, this study has identified and evaluated the factors impacting the Halal market and how those factors influence the purchase decisions of Malaysia's young consumer cohort. According to the study's results, younger Malaysians have a lot of influence when it comes to issues like Shariah-compliant healthcare, Halal food, and lodgings. More than that, the findings are in line with similar studies, confirming that younger Malaysians have a strong preference for Halal food. There must be abundant access to Halal food and drink in the market if Malaysia is to adequately serve its Muslim population and any foreign students attending Malaysian universities. Furthermore, Malaysian youth hanging tastes are shed light on by the survey. All the way through the preparation process, they keep to the highest standards of cleanliness and food safety, going above and beyond only to make sure Halal items are available. The younger generation is increasingly prioritizing issues like social justice, environmental sustainability, animal welfare, and safety, broadening the focus of concern.

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# Chapter II

## AN OVERVIEW OF HALAL FOODS IN THE ECONOMY

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### ABSTRACT

***Purpose:*** Halal food is one of Allah's rules for eating permissible food and avoiding haram foods. With the rising Muslim population, the availability of halal products and easy-to-access halal food increases the awareness of halal. This paper aims to conduct a systematic article review on the Awareness of Halal Food in Malaysian Economy.

***Methods/Design/approach:*** A systematic article review of articles from 2019 to 2024 from Malaysia.

***Findings:*** The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) monitors the halal status of food products in Malaysia. Halal certification and the logo of JAKIM are the most trusted among Muslim consumers in Malaysia, which shows that people are aware of halal products. Furthermore, not only Muslims prefer to choose halal food as they are aware of the production of halal food itself, which is hygienic and does not have any cross-contamination on the product.

***Implication:*** *This study provides significance for Islamic tourism, especially in Malaysia, which covers an extensive range of interests among the young Malaysian generation's demand for the Halal market.*

***Keywords:*** *Halal awareness, Halal Food, Halal Economics, Halal certification*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Food is one of the necessities of life, and it is one of the sources of energy and growth. In Islam, there are a few rules and regulations that Muslims must obey and follow, as they are the commands of the Almighty. Halal food is one of the requirements and obligations applicable by all Muslims regardless of race, ethnicity, and gender; as long as the people are Muslim, they must choose halal food. The word "halal" is also linked to the word "toyyib," which means "good", and anything good for humans and permitted by Islam is considered "halal" (Azam & Abdullah, 2020). Therefore, any food is permissible for Muslims to eat except the unlawful things such as khamr, pigs, dog and others. The food must also be safe for human consumption and not contaminated with unlawful ingredients. The food must also be hygienic because it aligns with the toyyiban concept. Halal also can be classified as a part of religious acts that all Muslims should follow and practice. Nursalwani et al. (2023) state that halal is the religious requirement influencing Muslims' adoption of halal products, especially food items, for their daily consumption. Therefore, Muslims are required to consume halal food in order to cater to their religious needs. Halal is also crucial for every Muslim as they always need to be aware of what they are consuming, from farm to fork. Cross-contamination of the food can affect the status of halal of the food itself, even though it is halal. Therefore, to ensure the status of halal food, agencies such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, known as JAKIM, have been established in Malaysia to monitor the halal status of food in the halal food industry. Therefore, this paper investigates the awareness of halal food and halal economics.

The world's population consists of Muslims. According to the latest statistics from the Department of Statistics, the population in Malaysia has reached 32.4 million in 2022. The data on religious demographics in 2020 indicates that the majority are Muslims, accounting for 63.5%, followed by Buddhists (18.7%), Christians (9.1%), and Hindus (6.1%)

(Department of Statistics Malaysia, n.d.). With Malaysia's population steadily increasing, there is a corresponding rise in the country's halal economy. Consequently, the demand for halal food among Muslim communities is growing annually. Nurul et al. (2023) noted that during the World Halal Forum 2011 in Malaysia, the concept of the halal industry gained widespread recognition, becoming a way of life for over 1.8 billion Muslims and an increasing number of non-Muslim consumers. This indicates that the halal industry is not only catering to Muslim consumers but is also attracting non-Muslims. Consequently, the halal economy is experiencing significant expansion.

The report on global Islamic economy indicator crowned Malaysia as the perennial champion among 81 nations for the 10th straight year, with Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and the UAE in tow. Indonesia ascended to third place, Bahrain reemerged in the top 5 after a hiatus since 2019/20, while South Africa debuted in the top 15. Notable strides within the top 15 were made by Iran, Qatar, Pakistan, and South Africa. Investments in Islamic economy sectors surged to \$25.9 billion in 2022/3, marking a staggering 128% year-on-year surge. Islamic finance commanded over 55% of investments, with media, travel, and halal food following suit. These figures epitomize corporate consolidations, tech start-up ventures, and private equity ventures. Halal-related product imports by OIC member nations are poised for a 7.6% CAGR rise to reach US\$492 billion by 2027, up from US\$359 billion in 2022. OIC imports constitute a substantial portion of the global halal trade encompassing food, fashion, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics (Imam Ali Liaqat, 2023)<sup>1</sup>.

Study of Halal lifestyle in Indonesia indicate that cultural and social factors do not exert a significant impact on the adoption of halal products, whereas personal and psychological factors do. A Halal lifestyle embodies a way of life in which every aspect adheres to Islamic principles, encompassing permissible actions sanctioned by Islam. This encompasses consuming halal food and beverages, utilizing halal products, and structuring one's time in accordance with Islamic teachings. Halal lifestyle encompasses various elements that delineate an Islamic ethos, spanning across domains such as fashion, culinary choices, halal tourism, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals (Diana et al., 2023). Another study by (Madrah et al., 2019) gave a new insight that the development of the halal industry in Korea, especially halal restaurants, is greatly influenced by the presence of migrant workers from Muslim

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dinarstandard.com/post/state-of-the-global-islamic-economy-report-2023>

populated countries. This suggests that the global economy stands to receive significant support from the halal industry.

Moreover, the establishment of agencies such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) and the International Institution for Halal Research and Training has further facilitated the growth of the halal economy in Malaysia. Furthermore, this paper investigates awareness regarding halal food and economics. This research is necessary as few studies are focusing on this aspect despite its close connection to the Islamic faith of Muslim individuals. Most previous studies have concentrated on halal food rather than on awareness of halal food and its economics.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employs qualitative research design. The method to gather and search for information on the awareness of halal food and halal economics utilises a secondary data approach based on previous research papers dated from 2019 to 2024. Additionally, several websites, including Google Scholar, Emerald, and the International Islamic University Malaysia library, were utilised to find previous studies on halal food and economics awareness. Most of these papers were sourced online, facilitating ease of access and searchability.

A total of five research papers related to the awareness of halal food and five research papers on halal economics have been included. The information in these papers is derived from previous research conducted between 2019 and 2024, ensuring relevance and applicability to the current study.

Moreover, identifying the research papers involved thorough reading and analysis of the content, aligning with the objectives of the research paper. This ensures that the content of these research papers is in line with the study's objective, which is to investigate the awareness of halal food and halal economics. This approach was adopted to achieve the study's objectives effectively.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Halal and Awareness of Halal Products.**

The term "Halal" originates from the Arabic word "halla yahillu," which conveys the notion of being free or unrestricted. In the context of Halal discourse, it signifies anything devoid of worldly dangers and concerns of the afterlife. Furthermore, Halal denotes actions, items, or practices permitted under Islamic law, as they have been severed from prohibitions or harmful elements, with attention to their procurement methods. Thus, Halal extends beyond merely food and beverages, encompassing all facets of life (Diana et al., 2023).

Halal is a term commonly used within the Muslim community, as mentioned in the Al-Quran by Almighty. Ali and Ahmad (2023) highlighted that Muslims are obligated to adhere to Allah's rules by consuming halal food products, as it is considered part of the Islamic faith. Certain foods and beverages are prohibited for Muslims according to the Qur'an and Hadith, including pork, alcohol, blood-based products, carnivorous animals, and animals not slaughtered according to Islamic practices. Therefore, due to the religious rules and regulations in Islam, Muslims are required to obey the commands of Allah. Halal can also be classified as a standard for Muslims and is a crucial element that requires attention. Thus, awareness of halal food products that are to be consumed is essential for every Muslim. Awareness can be defined as a person's understanding, observation, and emotional response to a particular event or item (Ali & Ahmad, 2023). Sources of awareness include religious belief, halal certification, and health reasons. However, the promotion of halal products is not limited to Muslim consumers. Several developed countries, capitalizing on their tourism appeal to Muslim travelers, are increasingly cultivating awareness of halal products. They perceive this market as highly lucrative. Numerous countries with non-majority Muslim populations have started to promote halal businesses by leveraging their tourism potential, which is highly desirable among Muslims. This emerging trend represents a very promising new economic catalyst (Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018).

Given that nearly one quarter of the global population identifies as Muslim, understanding the Muslim mindset becomes imperative for Multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in such regions. The strength of an individual's religious identity serves as a robust predictor of consumer behavior regarding halal choices and perceived self-expressive religious benefits.



Furthermore, consumers' halal choice behavior and perceived self-expressive benefits directly contribute to Consumer based Halal Brand Equity (CBHBE). Additionally, consumer halal choice behavior is identified as a partial mediator in the relationship between self-expressive benefits and CBHBE. In terms of practical implications, the authors advocate that firms targeting Muslim consumers can enhance CBHBE by concentrating their marketing efforts on three key psychological and behavioral constructs delineated in the model (Butt, 2017). For instance, businesses can leverage halal certification logos and furnish compelling information attesting to the halal nature of their brands to facilitate Muslim consumers' decision-making processes.

#### **Halal Certification and Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM).**

In Malaysia, several government-established bodies ensure the halal status of products due to the majority Muslim population, making halal a critical focus. The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, or JAKIM, monitors the halal status of products in Malaysia. These agencies provide halal certification for food product producers that comply with halal requirements. According to Ibrahim et al. (2023), Muslim consumers in Malaysia generally accept only food products certified halal by JAKIM. Halal certification is regarded as a symbol of a product's quality in accordance with Islamic Sharia law (Ali & Ahmad, 2023). However, several issues related to the halal status of food products have gained attention among halal consumers in Malaysia. For instance, issues such as the cartel scandal involving imported meat from non-Muslim countries have raised concerns. Maifiah et al. (2022) reported that after the cartel scandal, Malaysian consumers showed less trust in meat and products bearing the halal logo from non-Muslim countries. Consequently, Muslim consumers in Malaysia retained confidence in the halal status of local meat and JAKIM-certified items. This demonstrates the trust and awareness of halal certification by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM).

#### **Accessibility, Availability of Halal Food Products, and Halal Economics.**

Awareness of halal food products is evident when these products are easily accessible and available in the market. Without accessibility and availability, the halal market cannot expand widely. Additionally, Muslim-majority countries prioritise accessibility to halal produce, while non-Muslim countries focus on the availability of halal products (Hasnizam et al., 2020). The global halal market size is expected to reach approximately USD 9.17 trillion by 2025 (Hasnizam et al., 2020), indicating sustained demand and growth in the halal industry.

Therefore, producers in the halal industry must ensure the availability of halal products in the market. As a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Malaysia can potentially expand the halal market globally. The International Institute for Halal Research and Training (INHART) has also been established to aid Malaysia's halal economy expansion. Nisa (2023) highlighted that INHART's halal inventions and professional services have benefited numerous countries. Hence, agencies such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia and the International Institute of Halal Research and Training (INHART) play crucial roles in the halal sector by contributing to its growth. Furthermore, producers should collaborate with these organisations to ensure the production of quality halal products and their accessibility in the market, thus increasing consumer awareness of their availability.

By establishing a connection between Halal Food Certification (HFC) and business outcomes, managers can recognize the considerable impact of HFC on both operational and financial metrics. This understanding may incentivize more food companies to pursue Halal certification, thus creating opportunities within the lucrative Halal food industry. Moreover, it provides empirical evidence supporting the notion that religious-based food certifications, like HFC, possess the capacity to affect business performance, akin to other recognized food standards such as ISO 22000 or HACCP (Syazwan et al., 2017). Within the business realm, the concept of what constitutes Halal has led to the emergence of ingredient brands and, in certain cases, forms of co-branding. However, the complete potential of Halal has yet to be fully realized, and areas of discord and misconception persist. The researchers attribute this to the current limitations in brand theory, which unnecessarily confine the term Halal and assume a singular interpretation of its significance. Moreover, contrary to prevailing trends that emphasize critical steps within functional marketing strategies, Halal's competitive edge gains greater importance when communicated through the implicit aspects of strategy and management (Jonathan & Jonathan, 2010). Table 1 below presents a summary of research on Halal food awareness and Halal economics.

**Table 1: Summary of Research on Halal Food Awareness and Halal Economy**

<b>AUTHOR NAME &amp; YEAR</b>	<b>ARTICLE TOPIC</b>	<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT RESULTS</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>REMARK/ HOW DOES IT RELATE TO YOUR STUDY</b>
Nursalwani, M, Ghazali, S., Abdullah, P. S., & Latiff, Z. (2023)	The Perception on Halal Label of MAMEE Products among Consumers in Selangor	Quantitative design	The study shows that halal label perception in Selangor is highly influenced by demographic variables such as age, race, occupation, and religion.	The study indicates that age, race, occupation, and religion have an impact on MAMEE customer perceptions of halal products in Selangor, indicating that government and policymakers can increase demand.	The study provides important insights for industry and government initiatives by examining how demographic characteristics, including age, race, occupation, and religion, affect consumer perceptions of MAMEE goods labeled as halal.
Maifiah, M., Ahmad, A., Azam, M., Norazmi, A., & Nawawi, K. (2022)	Malaysian Muslim consumers' awareness, confidence, and purchase behaviour on halal meat and its products after the meat cartel scandal	Structured questionnaire	Muslim consumers' attitudes and purchasing patterns have been profoundly affected by the crisis of imported meat cartels. As a result, they are now less confident in JAKIM-certified meat products and are more inclined to choose local produced goods.	Muslims' purchasing patterns and confidence were severely damaged by a case involving the imported meat cartel and they began to purchase more local halal meat and recognised the importance of trustworthy brands.	The paper highlights the importance of a local meat supply while examining the effect of international meat cartels on Muslim consumers' confidence in halal meat.
Ali, M. Q., & Ahmad, N. (2023)	The Factors that affect Halal Food and Food Products Awareness and Different Challenges: an overview	Quantitative approach	The paper discusses factors that influence halal awareness, economic opportunity, and obstacles faced by the halal industry, including international certification requirements, and highlights the importance of halal	Consumer behaviour is greatly influenced by halal awareness and certification, particularly among Muslim consumers. Important considerations for the halal industry are potential marketing strategies, international	The study looks at the elements that influence halal food and product knowledge, the impact of halal certification on purchasing intentions, and the obstacles Malaysia faces when implementing halal goods. It emphasises how crucial international

			awareness in influencing purchase decisions.	standards, and financial difficulties.	standards for halal certification are.
Hasnizam S. et al., (2020)	Does Halal Product Availability and Accessibility Enhanced Halal Awareness and Intention to Purchased Halal Packaged Food Products : Malaysia and Thailand's Halal Industry Perspective	Quantity approach	It has been discovered that halal practices are promoted and consumer awareness is raised in Malaysia and Thailand when halal packaged food goods are easily accessible and available.	Increased consumer awareness of halal products depends on both accessibility and availability, with Muslim countries demanding more accessibility and non-Muslim countries seeking availability. Marketers need to ensure variety and ease to access halal products.	The paper discusses the accessibility and availability of halal products stimulate the rising of awareness of halal.
Ibrahim, I. I., Nor, M. N. M., Ahmad, Z., Razali, M. F. M., & Mansor, Z. (2023)	Examining The Awareness Of Muslim Consumers Towards Halal Food	Primary and secondary data (questionnaire)	Muslim customers' purchase decisions are significantly influenced by their high awareness of the Halal logo, labelling and packaging, authorities' exposure and enforcement, and consumer attitudes.	The study emphasises the importance of halal certification in Malaysia, as it guarantees customer satisfaction, confidence, and trust by verifying that items fulfil strict requirements related to nutrition, safety, hygiene, and cleanliness.	The study investigates Malaysian Muslim consumers' knowledge of halal food, with a particular emphasis on regulatory exposure, customer views, and halal logo labelling. It also highlights the significance of supply chain orientation and strategic marketing.
Azam, S. E., & Abdullah, M. A. (2020)	Global Halal Industry: Realities and Opportunities	Secondary data from different sources literature review library search online journal publications	The study emphasises the global halal market's expansion, which is driven by an expanding Muslim population, Muslim economic development, and the potential halal markets in non-Muslim countries.	The study report emphasises the difficulty of harmonising standards in the halal sector, advocating for stronger regulatory monitoring, increased investor and government involvement, and	This study examines the issues faced by industry participants, the expansion of halal marketplaces in non-Muslim countries, and the need for better understanding, data updates, and market exploration.

				collaboration across certifying bodies..	
Nurul R.F et al., (2023)	Development of Halal Industry As Halal Economic Source : Roles Of Syariah Compliance Commision	Qualitative approach	The paper discusses the importance of syariah compliance in Malaysian daily life and its impact on the halal industry, emphasising its role in enhancing Malaysia's halal income and competitiveness.	The recommendation for a Syariah Compliance Commission emphasises its practical role in developing government rules, particularly for Islamic finance and the halal industry, as well as its contribution to Malaysia's economic growth.	The growth of Malaysia's halal industry is discussed, along with its effects on the halal economy and its roles in raising awareness of and income for halal food. The establishment of a Syariah Compliance Commission is also covered.
Nisa, E. F. (2023)	Transnational Halal Network: INHART And The Islamic Cultural Economy In Malaysia And Beyond	Ethnographic fieldwork and digital ethnography	INHART contributions have greatly boosted the transhalal ecosystem's visibility in non-Muslim majority contexts, allowing for the transnational flow of halal knowledge and practices in the global Islamic cultural economy.	The halal sector is impacted by globalisation, and INHART place in the transhalal landscape growth. Malaysia's leading role in non-Muslim majority contexts.	The paper covers the global Islamic cultural economy, with a particular focus on Malaysia and its growing halal food industry, and highlights the efforts of the International Institute for Halal Research and Training (INHART). .
Nor, N. F et al., (2023)	Potencies and Opportunities of Halal Market in Global Industry: An Empirical Analysis of Malaysia and Indonesia.	Qualitative	The study's key finding is that Indonesia and Malaysia have similar potential and opportunities in the halal market, and that both countries' GDPs have a considerable beneficial impact on it. The survey also showed that non-Muslims are now part	This study emphasises the significance of Islamic principles in the industry, the expanding consumer knowledge of the halal market and the market actors' foresight, and the role that halal certification has in boosting public trust and interest in purchasing halal products.	The essay emphasises how the halal industry is now recognised throughout the world as a new economic engine, and how its growth demonstrates its importance. It highlights how important it is to carry out more research on the halal industry in order to help halal practitioners.

			of the halal market, which has great market potential in the global economy.		
Adinugraha, H. H n.d	Halal Tourism in Malaysia:: Its Development and Strategy	Qualitative	Malaysia's high ranking in the Global Muslim Travel Index is indicative of its success in halal tourism. The nation's favourable attitude towards Muslims, variety of national tourism resources, and status as a destination for halal tourism investment are important components. Its attraction is influenced by tactics like support for institutions and promotion.	Malaysia has emerged as the top destination for halal tourism according to the Global Muslim Travel Index. Among the strategies are marketing, destination development, and assistance for organisations and business owners.	This study emphasises the significance of Islamic principles in the industry, the expanding consumer knowledge of the halal market and the market actors' foresight, and the role that halal certification has in boosting public trust and interest in purchasing halal products.

## **DISCUSSION**

This study provides valuable insights into the popularity of halal food and its impact on the local economy, particularly in Malaysia. The findings underscore the increasing awareness of halal food products among people, including non-Muslims, which has contributed to the growth of the halal sector. According to Nurul et al. (2023), halal food is essential for adhering to Islamic hygiene principles and health considerations, with Muslims generally consuming halal food due to their religious obligations. The establishment of organisations such as the International Halal Research and Training Institution and the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) plays a crucial role in promoting the development of the halal industry in Malaysia. Halal food products are readily available and accessible in the market, which is emphasised to enhance consumer awareness and promote halal economic development.

Research on MAMEE products in Selangor demonstrates the influence of demographic variables on consumer perceptions of halal products, confirming findings from the literature review. Additionally, studies on Malaysian Muslims' awareness and confidence in halal meat products post-meat cartel scandal shed light on how consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour impact the halal economy. The report also delves into the global halal market, outlining its potential and current realities. Ibrahim et al. (2023) highlighted the expanding halal industry, estimated to be around \$2.3 billion in 2012, and the high certification approval rate for halal products in Malaysia, approximately 90%. Furthermore, research on the growth of the halal industry as a source of income underscores the importance of Shariah compliance in enhancing halal economic growth and Malaysia's competitiveness. The study's conclusion emphasises the increasing public awareness of halal food products.

## CONCLUSION

There is a growing significance of the halal food sector in Malaysia's economy. The demand for halal products is rising due to religious obligations and increasing consumer awareness, including among non-Muslims. Key organizations like JAKIM and INHART are crucial in certifying and promoting halal standards, fostering consumer trust. The study notes that demographic factors and recent scandals impact consumer behavior, emphasizing the need for accessibility and quality in halal products. The halal market is expanding globally, with Malaysia leading in this sector, underscoring the importance of continued research and development to support economic growth.

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# Chapter III

## YOUTH TRAVELERS' INTENTION IN SELECTING MUSLIM-FRIENDLY TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** 1) To assess the level of youth intention to choose Muslim-Friendly Tourism (MFT) destinations 2) To investigate most influential factor that give impact towards youth traveler intention in selecting Muslim-Friendly Tourism.

**Methods/Design/approach:** A total of 150 respondents involved in this study. The data was analyzed by using IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 through several analyses such as descriptive analysis, frequency analysis and regression analysis.

**Findings:** The current research revealed that most of Muslim youth have high intention in choosing MFT. The most influential factor that makes the youth intend to select MFT destinations is the perceived behavior control, followed closely by the religiosity factor. The third most influencing factor is the subjective norm, while the least influential factor is the tourist attitude.

***Implication:*** *The current study has a wide potential to be further developed and improvised. this contribute towards the understanding of travel intention of the youth travelers that is covered in a new perspective.*

*Keywords: Muslim Friendly Tourism, TBP Theory, Islamic Tourism.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

These days, Muslims already have its place in the globalizing world. Due to that, most of the world countries provided Muslim-friendly services including the aspect of tourism. Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) is currently seen as a significant segment of international tourism and has been very popular in recent years. (Liu, Li, Yen, & Sher, 2018). The trend is growing as more Muslims undertakes travel to international destinations, and it is not limited to visit to pilgrimage centers like Mecca and Medina only (Mohsin, Ramli, & Alkhulayfi, 2016).

The Muslims are encouraged to go on travel as to witness the beauty of the creation of Allah and emulate the feeling of humbleness upon His greatness. Among the related verses from different surahs are: “Precedents have been set for you in the past; roam the earth and note the consequences for the unbelievers” Al-Imran (The Amramites), verse 137 “You are not on earth, to see what have been the predecessors of the end?” Hajj, verse 46. In relation to the verses mentioned above, Muslim travels to achieve social, spiritual and physical goals. One could also enhance their patience and knowledge, relieve the mental stress so they could prostrate to Allah better (Mohsin et al., 2016)

Tourism which is the action of travelers undertaking a travel to any destination outside of their common environment for less than a year. Al Ziadat (2014) coined that the understanding on travelers’ behavior is vital for both destinations and tourists. Soon, MFT is predicted to be one of the trending types of alternative tourism which attract huge attention in the tourism field. Liu, et. al., (2018) stated that the importance of MFT has been widely discussed by various researches in the field and conceptual proposed. The Mastercard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index 2018 revealed that the global Muslim travel market was worth USD167 billion in 2017 and is expected to grow to USD220 billion by 2020. Apart from this development, Malaysia has forecasted to receive profit around RM15 billion by 2020 from MFT (The SunDaily, 2018). Despite the huge number projection,

Malaysia at the moment is facing a declination in this past three years in terms of Muslim tourists' arrival. Refer to the statistic published by MyTourism Data 2019, has indicate that the percentage of tourist arrival has dropped significantly from 2016 to 2018. In 2016, the tourist arrival was reported as 26.76 Million while in 2017 it dropped to 25.95 Million in 2017 and further declined to 25.83 Million in 2018. Thus, it is important to find out the solution for this issue, starting from discovering major factors that influences the traveler to choose MFT.

In addition to this, the study on the travel motivations among the Malaysian youth to go for MFT is still non-evident, while several researches has start to be undertaken elsewhere specifically among the Kuwaiti (Nassar, Mostafa, & Reisinger, 2015), and Indonesian (Vargas-Sánchez & Perano, 2018). Thus this studies aims 1) to identify the major factors that influences the youth traveler to choose Muslim-Friendly Tourism, 2) to investigate the most influential factor that give impact towards youth traveler intention in selecting Muslim-Friendly Tourism.

### **Significant of Study**

According to the Pew Research Center (2015), as of 2010, the Muslim population constituted 23% of the world's population. The same study predicted that the Muslim population would reach 2.76 billion by 2050, a significant increase from the 1.6 billion recorded in 2010. In-depth insights from this research will prove beneficial to various stakeholders, including the Islamic countries' tourism industry and academia:

#### **Islamic Countries Tourism Industry**

This study provides a better understanding for Muslim and non-Muslim countries, especially for destination marketers, travel agencies, and policymakers, enabling them to serve Muslim travelers more effectively. In the Malaysian context, it holds particular relevance for the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC).

#### **Academic**

The study contributes to the understanding of travel intentions among youth travelers from a new perspective, providing valuable insights for academic research.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a quantitative research approach, assigning numerical values to ordinal variables for data analysis. To meet the research objectives, questionnaires were designed based on insights from the existing literature. The collected data will be analyzed using SPSS software. The study targets youths aged 18 to 30 who have traveled to Muslim-friendly tourism destinations, including domestic travel within Malaysia, with a sample size of 150 participants.

**FINDING**

**The current intention level of youth in choosing Muslim-Friendly Tourism**

Analyzing the mean values from Table 1, it can be concluded that respondents express a willingness to participate in Muslim-Friendly Tourism (MFT) in future travels. Following closely, there is a high likelihood that respondents will choose to travel and tour within MFT destinations. In the third position, respondents intend to prioritize MFT over non-MFT options in their future travels. The fourth-ranked item pertains to considering MFT destinations as the first choice for upcoming travel, while commitment to travel and tour within MFT destinations takes the fifth position. The last item relates to the expectation of traveling and touring within MFT destinations.

Table 1: Table of Statistic of comparison between items in Travel Intention

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
I plan to participate in MFT instead of a non-MFT when traveling in the future	5.05	.985	3
I am willing to participate in MFT when traveling in the future	5.17	.888	1
MFT destinations are my first choice for traveling in the future	4.99	1.043	4
I expect to travel and tour within MFT destinations	4.97	1.045	6

I am committed to travel and tour within MFT destinations	4.98	1.077	5
There is high possibility that I would travel and tour within MFT destinations	5.13	.880	2

The data was further computed to determine the level of intention to visit Muslim-Friendly Tourism (MFT) destinations. It is evident from the data shown in Table 2 that the level of intention is high, representing 83.3%. The intermediate level of intention recorded 16.7%, while the low level of intention is at 0%. This result indirectly answers the first research question: "What is the current intention level of youth in choosing Muslim-Friendly Tourism?" The study indicates that the current intention level is high in choosing MFT.

Table 2 Table of Level of Intention

	Frequency	Percent
Low	0	0
Intermediate	25	16.7
High	125	83.3

### **The most influential factor that give impact towards youth intention in selecting Muslim-friendly tourism**

This section presents results of the multiple regression analysis where the Tourist Attitudes, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behaviour Control and Attitudes are regressed with intention using the enter method to determine the correlation between the independent variables and dependent variable. This is also to determine the total contribution of the factors studied to intention.

In the Table 3, the R-squared value from model summary is 0.558 which means 55.8% of variation in intention to travel to MFT destinations is accounted by variation in the four factors namely; tourist attitudes, subjective norm, perceived behaviour control, and religiosity.

Table 3 Table of Multiple regression of analysis with factors as predictors of intention

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.747 <sup>a</sup>	.558	.545	.55530	.558	45.696	4	145	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Religiosity, Subjective Norm, Tourist Attitude, Perceived Behaviour Control

The results of ANOVA are presented in Table 4 ,  $F(4,123) = 45.696$  and  $p < 0.05$ . That means tne of the four independent variables can be used to predict level of intention in choosing MF; Religiosity, Subjective Norm, Tourist Attitude, Perceived Behaviour Control.

Table 4 Table of ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.363	4	14.091	45.696	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	44.711	145	.308		
	Total	101.074	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Religiosity, Subjective Norm, Tourist Attitude, Perceived Behaviour Control



Table 5 presents the correlation between the independent variables and intention. The results show that there is significant relationship between subjective norm and intention ( $B = 0.034$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), perceived behaviour control and intention ( $B = 0.434$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and religiosity and intention ( $B = 0.340$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, the relationship between tourist attitude and intention ( $B = 0.136$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) were found to be not significant. Therefore H2, H3 and H4 are accepted. In addition to this with the higher Beta value .434, Perceived Behaviour Control is found to be the most influential factor that give impact towards youth intention in selecting Muslim friendly tourist.

Table 5 Table of Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.641	.483		-1.328	.186
	Tourist Attitude	.136	.097	.112	1.401	.163
	Subjective Norm	.203	.095	.185	2.140	.034
	Perceived Behaviour Control	.434	.108	.378	4.014	.000
	Religiosity	.340	.086	.239	3.955	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Intention

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that the majority of respondents, accounting for 83% (N=150), have a high level of intention to travel to Muslim-Friendly Tourism (MFT) destinations. This is evidenced by their strong agreement with statements indicating their intention to participate in MFT, prioritize MFT destinations over non-MFT options, and

consider MFT destinations as their first choice for future travel. Additionally, respondents express a high possibility, commitment, and expectation to travel within MFT destinations. However, approximately 16.7% (N=150) of the results indicate an intermediate level of intention to travel to MFT destinations, with no contributions to the low intention level.

The study aligns with the statement made by Liu, Li, Yen, and Sher (2018), highlighting MFT as a significant segment of international tourism, particularly popular in recent years. As more Muslims undertake international travel, the high level of intention observed in this study reflects this growing trend. The second research objective aimed to investigate the most influential factors impacting youth intention in selecting MFT destinations. The researcher derived factors based on the variables of the PBT, with an addition of the religiosity factor. The results indicate that perceived behavioral control has the most significant impact on youth intention to choose MFT destinations. This finding is consistent with Quintal, Lee, and Soutar's (2010) study, which demonstrated a significant positive result of perceived behavioral control on intention to visit Australia. The youth's independence and confidence in decision-making regarding tourism contribute to this influence, suggesting a higher self-esteem to embrace uncertainties. The second most influential factor for youth to travel to MFT destinations is religiosity, as religion plays a crucial role in shaping Muslim tourists' behavioral intentions. Perceived behavioral control has a significant role in influencing Muslim youth decisions in selecting MFT destinations echoes Walston's (2001) assertion that believing one has control over a behavior is highly associated with actually engaging in that behavior. The existence of perceived behavioral control plays a crucial role in shaping Muslim youth decisions in selecting MFT as part of their destination direction.

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# Chapter IV

## A NEW FACE OF TOURISM: UNDERSTANDING PREFERENCE OF GENERATION Z IN ISLAMIC TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

***Purpose:*** To determine the generation Z preference on the Islamic destination's attribute.

***Methods/Design/approach:*** Quantitative method was used in this study to collect data through online survey. Data gained by distributing questionnaires to 305 generation Z. The data collected then analysed through IBM SPSS Software.

***Findings:*** The results revealed that the majority of Generation Z individuals prefer destinations that are considered safe. Interestingly, they are indifferent to the availability of the Quran in their accommodation.

***Implication:*** This study offers a brief understanding of current trends by identifying the most and least preferred attributes of Islamic destinations among young Muslims. This information

*can be valuable for adjusting existing tour packages or creating new ones that better cater to the needs of young Muslim travelers.*

*Keywords: Islamic Tourism, Generation Z, Tourist behaviour*

## **INTRODUCTION**

There are many definitions of tourism expressed by scholars. In general, "Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes" (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008).

Islamic tourism is one of the most profitable and rapidly developing sections of the tourism industry. It holds tremendous potential for leisure, business, and travel-related purposes, making it a significant player in the global travel market (Mastercard & Crescentrating, 2017). In recent years, it has flourished to cater to the needs of Muslim travelers seeking full holiday services that address their religious requirements, as well as Islamic traditions, values, and culture (Battour & Ismail, 2015). The concept of Halal tourism has gained notoriety, emerging as one of the fastest-growing niches in the tourism industry (Elasrag, 2016).

Muslims are motivated to travel globally to witness Allah's greatness and prosperity (Yiap, 2014). Their adherence to Islamic instructions is well-disciplined, significantly influencing their choice of time off and tourism plans (Zamani & Henderson, 2010). Therefore, providing tourism destinations according to Shariah will enhance their travel experiences. Travel behavior is strongly correlated with tourism, and the advent of modern networking technologies, such as social media, smart devices, and online bookings, has transformed travel activity (Caldito, Dimanche & Ilkevich, 2015).

Every strong player in the tourism industry not only requires the courage to accept revolution but also the capacity to respond to it effectively. The continuously increasing global Muslim travel industry presents tremendous opportunities for foreign goods and services related to Muslim travel. The Mastercard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index 2017 (GMTI 2017) recorded an estimated 121 million Muslim foreign travelers in 2016, expected to rise

to 156 million by 2020. The rising Muslim world population, predominantly young and affluent, adds to the market's appeal (Henderson, 2016), and millennials and Generation Z are becoming significant commercial forces (Thomson Reuters & Dinar Standard, 2017).

Generation Z, born in 1997 and later, is considered a crucial cohort in both tourism and travel (Pirest, 2017). This generation, described as vigorous and adventurous, demands attention in scholarly literature (Verghese, 2017, cited in Vargas-Sánchez & Perano, M. 2018). According to the GMTI 2017 report, Generation Z is highly connected with each other and their environment, relying on the Internet and social environments in their daily lives. The Muslim travel industry must adapt its offerings to reintroduce its brands to these new segments, ensuring that Muslim-friendly services are authentic and accessible to this younger demographic. Generation Z is known for being unbiased, wish-list-oriented, and seeking isolated locations (Expedia, 2017), making them inclined to explore distant areas and engage in different travel events. Ozdemir-Guzel & Nilay Bas (2021) also noted that Generation Z is "fast learning and developing, intertwined with technology, easily adapting to the speed of knowledge and time, and willing to adopt technological innovations—a crucial target group for the tourism sector.

Generation Z is progressively influencing the worldwide tourist industry. As digital natives, they are not only well-informed but also extremely picky about their travel experiences, prioritising activities that correspond with their values and lifestyle. In the context of Islamic destinations, recognising the unique features that appeal to Generation Z is critical for developing focused marketing strategies and improving vacation offerings. The purpose of this study is to investigate the fundamental features that influence Generation Z's desire for Islamic locations, with a particular emphasis on how cultural, religious, and modern elements are combined to satisfy their expectations. The outcomes of this study will add to the larger conversation on sustainable tourist development, notably within the realm of Islamic travel destinations.

Tourism sectors are always seeking fresh customer segments. Over the past century, the tourism industry has seen many companies catering to unique groups such as older tourists, disabled tourists, and religious-conscious tourists. Therefore, it is essential to explore Islamic attributes specifically for Muslim tourists to meet their distinct requirements.

## Research Questions

- What is the generation Z preference on the Islamic destination's attribute?

## METHODOLOGY

A research design encompasses the 'procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies' (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p.58). It serves as the overarching strategy that connects theoretical research problems with specific, achievable empirical research goals. In essence, the research design outlines the methodology for gathering and interpreting relevant data, as well as how the research question will be addressed (Grey, 2014).

The research design employed in this study is quantitative. Quantitative approaches emphasize the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data obtained through interviews, questionnaires, surveys, or the use of quantitative tools to analyze pre-existing statistical data. In this particular study, a quantitative method was utilized to collect data through an online survey. Questionnaires were distributed to 305 individuals from Generation Z, and the collected data were subsequently analyzed using SPSS software.

## FINDING

Table 1: Respondent Demographic

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	70	23.0
	Female	235	77.0
	Total	305	100.0
Age	18 to 20	59	19.3
	21 to 23	160	52.5
	24 to 26	73	23.9
	27 to 29	12	3.9
	30 and above	1	0.3
	Total	305	100.0
Monthly Net Household Income (RM)	1000 or less	109	35.7
	2000 to 3000	95	31.1

	4000 or more	101	33.1
	Total	305	100.0

Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The majority of the respondents are female (77.0%), with males making up 23.0%. Age distribution shows that most respondents are between 21 and 23 years old (52.5%), followed by those aged 24 to 26 (23.9%). The least represented age groups are those 27 to 29 years old (3.9%) and 30 and above (0.3%). Regarding monthly net household income, the largest proportion of respondents earns RM 1000 or less (35.7%), followed by those with incomes of RM 4000 or more (33.1%), and RM 2000 to 3000 (31.1%).

Table 2 Generation Z Preference on The Islamic Destination's Attribute

	The Islamic Destination's Attribute	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
A1	Easy access to the halal food in my travel destination	4.5344	.71149	3
A2	The destination's recreational facilities must align with the Shariah rule	4.0656	.90446	8
A3	Accommodation is nearby to a mosque	3.8230	.97407	9
A4	Placement of Qibla stickers in accommodation	4.0951	.99711	7
A5	Availability of a copy of the Quran in the accommodation	3.5934	1.06621	10
A6	Destination which is safer (eg: less/no violence)	4.6361	.60318	1
A7	Destination which has lesser chance of natural disasters occurring	4.5607	.66671	2
A8	Destination with easy access to advanced healthcare services	4.3377	.76995	5



A9	Tour packages that offered by Muslim travel agencies	4.1148	1.00162	6
A10	Political stability in destination that makes me feel less risky to travel	4.5180	.73034	4

The presented data pertain to the respondents' preferences regarding attributes of Islamic destinations. Respondents were asked to rate each question on a five-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Table 1 outlines the statistics for Section C. Notably, A6 has the highest mean, standing at 4.6361. This indicates that the majority of respondents have a strong preference for travel destinations that prioritize safety. Many Muslims seek destinations where Islamic culture and values, including halal food and comfort, are respected, aligning with the practices of Islam and providing a sense of security (Irvani & Mozaffari, 2013). On the other hand, A5 has the lowest mean at 3.5934, suggesting that respondents are generally indifferent to the availability of a copy of the Quran in their accommodation.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the preferences of Generation Z regarding Islamic tourism destinations. The results indicate that safety is the most critical attribute for this demographic, with a mean score of 4.6361, suggesting that young Muslim travelers prioritize destinations perceived as safe and secure. This aligns with previous studies, such as Irvani and Mozaffari (2013), which emphasize the importance of security in travel experiences for Muslim tourists (Irvani & Mozaffari, 2013).

Interestingly, the availability of a copy of the Quran in accommodation received the lowest mean score of 3.5934, indicating that Generation Z is generally indifferent to this attribute. This finding contrasts with traditional expectations that religious texts would be a significant factor for Muslim travelers. It suggests a shift in priorities among younger Muslims, who may place more importance on other aspects of their travel experience, such as safety and access to halal food (Battour & Ismail, 2015).

The preference for destinations with easy access to halal food, which scored a mean of 4.5344, further supports the notion that practical considerations are paramount for Generation Z travelers. This is consistent with the findings of Battour and Ismail (2015), who highlighted the significance of halal food availability in enhancing the travel experiences of Muslim tourists (Battour & Ismail, 2015).

The study also revealed that Generation Z values destinations with advanced healthcare services (mean score of 4.3377) and political stability (mean score of 4.5180), reflecting a broader concern for personal well-being and safety. These preferences underscore the importance of comprehensive safety measures and reliable healthcare infrastructure in attracting young Muslim travelers (Pear Anderson & Wego, 2020).

The indifference towards the availability of the Quran in accommodation could be interpreted in several ways. It may indicate a more flexible approach to religious practices among Generation Z, who might rely on digital versions of religious texts accessible via smartphones and other devices. This aligns with the broader trend of digital integration in daily life, as noted by Ozdemir-Guzel and Bas (2021), who described Generation Z as highly intertwined with technology and quick to adopt technological innovations (Ozdemir-Guzel & Bas, 2021).

In the context of previous studies, the findings of this research contribute to a nuanced understanding of the evolving preferences of young Muslim travelers. While traditional attributes such as religious texts in accommodations may have been significant in the past, the current generation appears to prioritize safety, practical amenities, and digital accessibility. This shift in preferences highlights the need for the tourism industry to adapt its offerings to meet the evolving demands of Generation Z (Crescentrating, 2019).

The implications of these findings are broad and significant. For tourism operators and policymakers, understanding the preferences of Generation Z can inform the development of targeted marketing strategies and the creation of tailored travel packages that cater to the needs of young Muslim travelers. By prioritizing safety, halal food availability, and advanced healthcare services, destinations can attract and retain this important demographic (Pear Anderson & Wego, 2020).

In conclusion, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the preferences of Generation Z in Islamic tourism. The findings highlight the importance of safety and practical considerations over traditional religious attributes, reflecting broader trends in the travel behavior of young Muslims. These insights can guide the tourism industry in developing strategies that align with the evolving needs and preferences of Generation Z travelers

## **CONCLUSION**

The current research discovered that the very obvious result was that the majority of generation Z are willing to travel. Other than that, most of generation z prefer a safe destination. They do not mind having the availability of Al Quran in their accommodation. This study provides significant information for both academician and practitioners in the tourism industry. More precisely, this study provides a better basis for a comprehensive understanding of the current trend by detecting the most and least preferred Islamic destination attributes. They will be able to amend or create new tour packages that fit young Muslim needs. This study shed light on Generation Z's particular preferences for Islamic tourism destinations. As a generation that values both spiritual enrichment and modern comfort, their travel choices are impacted by a mix of cultural authenticity, accessibility, and ethical concerns. The inclination for rich cultural experiences combined with modern amenities emphasises the necessity for Islamic destinations to create a balance between tradition and contemporary needs. Furthermore, Generation Z's emphasis on sustainability and responsible tourism implies that Islamic destinations must not only protect their cultural and religious legacy, but also exhibit a dedication to environmental stewardship and community well-being. These findings highlight the need of tailoring destination offers to the changing expectations of this young, crucial population. As the tourism sector adapts to the shifting dynamics of global travel, knowing and catering to Generation Z preferences will be critical to Islamic destinations' future growth and success. By embracing this generation's values and interests, Islamic locations may establish themselves as appealing and relevant options in the competitive global tourism market.

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# Chapter V

## ISLAMIC TOURISM: MUSLIM YOUTH EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH HALAL FOODS IN PENANG

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** *This research seeks to determine the Muslim youth's satisfaction with Halal food at tourism destinations in Penang. This study identifies 1) the Muslim youth's experience and satisfaction with halal food at a tourism destination in Penang, and 2) investigates the relationship between Muslim youth's experience and their satisfaction with halal food at a tourism destination in Penang,*

**Methods/Design/approach:** *This study applied a quantitative approach and used convenience sampling to collect the data from 250 respondents who participated in this research.*

**Findings:** *Muslim youth have experience with Halal food and are satisfied with it at tourist destinations. The result showed that Muslim youth's experience has a moderate relationship with satisfaction among them.*

**Implication:** *This study will assist the tourism industry, especially restaurant marketers, in improving their Halal food services. This research has implications for theory and practice,*

*showing that Muslim youth's experience with Halal food can bring tourists' intention to revisit and satisfy the elements of Halal food.*

*Keywords: Halal food, satisfaction, Muslim youth's experience, tourism destination*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Malaysia is a Muslim-majority country with a Muslim minority of producers; meanwhile, the halal products are 80% manufactured by non-Muslims (Krishnan et al., 2017). Regarding Malaysia's halal scene, the halal industry contributed about 7.5% of the country's GDP in 2017. This vital contribution of the halal industry to Malaysia's GDP demonstrates that the government has been active in realising its potential as a Muslim-majority country. According to Halal Development Corporation figures, the existence of the Muslim community in Malaysia leads to the development of the Halal food trade, which accounts for 60% of the overall global halal commodity trade (Abdul Khalek, 2015). As a result, understanding the Halal industry can be enlightened by first comprehending halal principles and the environment. The terms of Halal explain any action of purchase that is allowed or implied to the body. Based on Hasan Ahmad (n.d.), Halal food is any food allowed to be eaten, following the Islamic Shariah Law. According to JAKIM (n.d) in Halal Malaysia Official Portal, based on Trade Description Order (Usage of the Term "Halal") 1975, Halal terms can be related to a form of food, as a referrer for the aspect of trading food, which is the process of trade or commerce or the "Halal" terms, "Guaranteed Halal" or "Muslim Food" and any other terms that can be related with the meaning of any food that permissible to consume by all the Muslims. It also allows to consume by the religion, and there are a few terms that need to be followed such as:

- According to Islamic law, there are no animals or any part of that animal that is forbidden to Muslims except animals that have not been slaughtered.
- It does not contain any harmful substance considered impure by Islamic law.
- It uses equipment free from impurities during the preparation, processing or manufacture, as follows by Islamic law.

Halal food is not just about the logo but also involves quality control measures, including monitoring the slaughtering, handling, and ingredients used to process the food. In Malaysia, the Halal industry is one of the sources of economic growth, and it has the key strategies in promoting the country to lead the global halal hub (Saiful Irwan, 2007). The halal

food industry has a significant demand from Muslims and non-Muslims. In the marketplace, the issues of Halal food are gaining attention. It is due to people's knowledge about Halal food and their experience of it. Most people think that Halal food is only about the Logo from JAKIM, and they only experience the restaurants that only display the Halal Logo at their premises. However, the premises' hygienic practices should also be considered. A few considerations that should be emphasised when promoting Islamic tourism include prayer times, shariah enforcement services, and Halal food. All these factors can influence Muslim tourists' travel. Islam is very concerned about Halal food, and Muslims have to make sure of consuming food that has permissibility (Ambali & Bakar, 2014). This is because human wellness and behaviour will be boosted by food consumption (Krishnan, Omar, Zahran, Syazwan, & Alya, 2017). Therefore, this research focuses on Islamic tourism, focusing on Halal food by identifying the experience and satisfaction with Halal food among Muslim youth nowadays.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a quantitative approach. Quantitative data can be defined as the value of data in numbers put into a few categories to make it easy. According to Apuke (2017), quantitative research is about explaining an issue or any phenomenon by gathering data in numerical form. It will then be analysed with mathematical techniques such as detailed statistics. The target population is Muslim youth in Malaysia. The sample size used for this study is based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The sample size decision was condensed and presented in a table based on the population size. The total number of youth in Malaysia is approximately 15,101,000. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of more than 100,000 was 385. Therefore, it is essential to consider this sample size to get the accurate findings for this research data was collected in April using Google Forms, and the link will be shared with the target respondents, Muslim youth. According to Nayak & Narayan (2019), computer-administered, electronic mail, and online surveys are three common ways to collect survey data electronically. Social media is one platform used to share and spread the Google Form link. Muslim youth are the target respondents to answer this questionnaire.



## Research instrument

Table 1: Sources of the Questionnaire

Section	Question Items	Author/Year
Section A: Demographic	1-6	Self- Developed
Section B: Muslim Youth Experience on Halal Food at tourism destination in Penang	7 - 19	Quee Ling, Shahrim Ab Karim, Otham, Mohd Adzahan, Ramachandran (2010)  Ahmad, Abaidah, & Yahya (2013)  Mannaa (2020)
Section C: Muslim Youth Satisfaction about the Halal food at tourism destination in Penang	20 - 30	Quee Ling, Shahrim Ab Karim, Otham, Mohd Adzahan, & Ramachandran (2010)  Al-ansi, Olya, & Han (2018)  Shamimi, Khuzairi & Faiz (2019)
Section D: Comment and Suggestion	31	Self- Developed

This research aims to determine the Muslim youth's satisfaction with Halal food in Penang tourism destinations. A Likert scale from 1 to 5 was provided in the questionnaires, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. There are 30 questions, and all of these questions are based on this study's independent and dependent variables. The instruments' questions are adopted and adapted from previous studies.

## FINDING

Table 2 lists all things under the independent variable (Muslim Youth Experience) and Table 3 on the dependent variable (Muslim Youth Satisfaction). Most of the items for independent variables have a mean score of 3.00 or above. Meanwhile, dependent variables have a mean score of above 4.00. This indicates that most respondents were neutral and agreed with the item's statement in each variable.

Table 2: Summary of Means and Standard Deviation of Muslim Youth Experience

Variables		Mean	Std Deviation
<b>Muslim Youth Experience (IV1)</b>			
TE 1	The premises are hygienic	3.71	0.744
TE 2	The food on the premises is clean and safe to consume	3.81	0.685
TE 3	The premises provide comfortable eating surroundings	3.84	0.742
TE 4	The premises are selling the mixture of both halal and non-halal food	2.51	1.318
TE 5	The Halal food premises located at a strategic location as key of attraction	4.28	0.783
TE 6	The food is prepared by Muslim workers	4.11	0.782
TE 7	Workers apply proper hygienic practice such as wearing gloves while preparing the food.	3.46	0.905
TE 8	Food providers are friendly towards tourists	3.94	0.848
TE 9	The premises offered limited choices of Halal food	2.80	1.289
TE 10	The premises offered reasonable price of food	3.88	0.867

TE 11	The premises apply Halal Logo and certification	3.90	0.900
TE 12	The ingredient of food preparation is Halal	4.05	0.817
TE 13	Halal Logo is not important as long as the ingredients are free from pork or alcohol	2.26	1.391

According to the result analysis, most respondents have experienced Halal food in Penang. The respondents have experience in terms of environments, location of food premises, services, and the essential elements needed in Halal food. This is supported by the previous study that mentioned that the experience is blended with many elements and involves the consumers emotionally, physically, intellectually, and spiritually. This experience concept can also be a servicescape that can influence internal responses and behaviour, a complex mix of environmental features around the services (Shaw and Ivens, 2002), as cited in Mossberg (2007). From the result of this research, the Halal food premises located at a strategic location as a key of attraction are higher mean on independent variables. Therefore, it can be seen that the Muslim youth have experience with Halal food according to the few elements that have been provided.

Table 3: Summary of Means and Standard Deviation of Muslim Youth Satisfaction

<b>Muslim Youth Satisfaction (DV)</b>			
TS 1	I think Halal food contributes to the quality of my visiting experience	4.30	0.814
TS 2	I am pleased to consume halal food	4.71	0.620
TS 3	I think that consuming halal food is good for health	4.77	0.608
TS 4	I think eating Halal food adds to my visiting enjoyment	4.56	0.711

TS 5	The Halal food experience in Penang meets my expectation	4.28	0.739
TS 6	I experienced the culture of Malaysia through the Malaysian halal food in Penang	4.26	0.817
TS 7	I have experienced the good hospitalities at the Halal food premises	4.20	0.737
TS 8	I think the price charged is reasonable	4.00	0.869
TS 9	I am satisfied with the quality of food, price and staff behavior towards Halal food	4.00	0.843
TS 10	I am satisfied with the overall element of Halal (Halal Logo, hygienic of premises and no mixture food with non-Halal)	4.02	0.821
TS 11	I am satisfied with my overall experience of being a consumer of halal food	4.24	0.747

Table 4 lists the computed means of all items according to variables. According to the summary, Muslim youth experience has the highest mean of 3.58, which means that tourists were primarily neutral with the items. Meanwhile, for Muslim youth satisfaction, the average mean is 4.303. This means that most respondents agreed with most of the question items listed in Muslim youth satisfaction.

Table 4: Summary of All Variables

	Mean
Muslim Youth Experience	3.58
Muslim Youth Satisfaction	4.303

Note: 1 “Strongly Disagree”, 2 “Disagree”, 3 “Neutral”, 4 “Agree”, 5 “Strongly Agree”

Table 5 illustrates the relationship between independent and dependent variables. According to Cohen (1998) the r-value from 0.30 to 0.49 shows a moderate relationship. Hence, findings

highlighted that Muslim Youth Experience (IV) has a moderate relationship with Muslim Youth Satisfaction (DV) with an (R-value of 0.499,  $p < 0.05$ ). The correlation of both variables is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). The r value shows that when the independent variables' value increases, the dependent variable's value also increases.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis Between IV and DV

Independent Variable		Dependent Variable
		Muslim Youth Satisfaction
Muslim Youth Experience with Halal Food	Person Correlation	0.499
	Significant	0.01

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed)

Most respondents are slightly satisfied with the Halal food in Penang because some of the elements of Halal food meet their needs related to the Halal terms. Quee Ling, Shahrim Ab Karim, Othman, Mohd Adzahan, and Ramachandran (2010) have mentioned that satisfaction can be indicated as the yield of the pre-consumption expectation and post-consumption experience. Satisfaction is essential because it can influence the tourist destination choices, consumption of certain products, and their decision to return to a tourism destination. For the result of respondents' satisfaction, the respondent with higher satisfaction think that consuming halal food suits their health. This result shows that Muslim youth have their expectation of Halal food before consuming it and their satisfaction after having experience with it.

There is a positive relationship between the independent variable (IV), Muslim youth experience and the dependent variable (DV), Muslim youth satisfaction. The result has highlighted that Muslim youths' experience of Halal food has a moderate relationship with Muslim youths' satisfaction, with an R-value of 0.499. This situation reflected a statement by Mendes, Oom do Valle, Guerreiro, and Silve (2010) that the destination manager needs to consider tourists' level of satisfaction and their reaction to the destination's experience. In

brief, the relationship between Muslim Youth Experience and Muslim Youth Satisfaction with Halal Food in this study can be supported by Song, Lee, Park, Hwang, and Reisinger (2015) about the experiences encountered by tourists influence an evaluation of satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION

Penang is one of the destinations of choice for tourists who love food. Penang is known for the variety of cultures and foods. This study investigates the satisfaction of Muslim youth with Halal food in Penang. Then, based on the problem statement, the researcher proposed a framework and developed a hypothesis to investigate Muslim youth experience and their satisfaction with Halal food in Penang. The result shows positive relationships, and this study is significant and fully supported. Still, it also considers the health and hygienic elements of the cuisine and the environment (Marmaya, Zakaria, & Mohd Desa, 2019). This introduction of Halal food can help to increase the economic growth of local operators in Penang. Given the success of this study, the result will be affected if the information given by the distributed questionnaires is inaccurate, as the respondents can only click the answers without knowing the intent of the research.

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# Chapter VI

## YOUTH INSIGHTS AND PREFERENCES IN RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

***Purpose:*** This study investigates the knowledge and needs of Malaysian youth regarding religious and spiritual tourism.

***Methods/Design/Approach:*** A total of 63 Malaysian youth participated in the research. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.

***Findings:*** As a result, the majority of the youth were found to be knowledgeable about engaging in spiritual activities, and they are aware of the characteristics that should be applied and practiced during travel.

***Implication:*** Concerning needs in spiritual tourism, youth agree that the presence of God is the most fundamental thing in their lives. The researchers recommend further exploration through recent research papers related to spiritual tourism, particularly in Malaysia. This is due to the emerging trend of spiritual tourism in Malaysia's industry.

*Keywords: Spiritual Tourism; Islamic Tourism; Youth, Gen Y, Gen Z*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Recently, there has been a notable increase in the number of travel sites categorized as *religious* and *spiritual*. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) forecasted in 2018 that approximately 300 to 330 million tourists visit religious places worldwide each year, highlighting Spiritual Tourism as a novel dimension in the religious tourism domain. Haq and Wong (2011) posit that there is no specific definition for Spiritual Tourism (ST). In simpler terms, ST can be defined as travel aimed at finding meaning and purpose in one's life aligned with Islamic values. In essence, ST can be seen as the fulfilment of this spiritual desire closely connected to religious principles. Drawing on Kale's (2004) insights, spirituality can also be perceived as a lifelong quest for meaning and purpose, intertwined with positive attitudes and relationships. Modern spirituality encourages individuals to utilize both secular and religious resources to construct personalized belief systems, individual identities, and self-designed systems of meaning during leisure. Therefore, the participation of youth in the tourism industry introduces a new dimension to the market. According to the World Youth and Student Travel Conference (WYSTC), the market for young travelers is valued at approximately US\$136 billion (Simpson, 2010 as cited in Lim et al., 2015). Mohamed et al. (2010) supports this, highlighting that young travellers constitute the fastest-growing segment, representing over 20% of tourists worldwide. This study explores the knowledge and needs of youth regarding ST in Malaysia.

The focus of this study is on youth awareness of ST in Malaysia. The researcher aims to investigate the youth's understanding of the concept of ST in the Malaysian context. Youth travel stands out as one of the fastest-growing and most dynamic markets in the global tourism sector. According to UNWTO, an estimated 20% of the 940 million international tourists traveling the world in 2010 were young people. Furthermore, half of Malaysia's population of occasion creators comprises youngsters (Euromonitor International, 2014). Horner and Swarbrooke (2016) assert that the demands presented by young people have certain distinctive features that set them apart from other types of tourism demands. Consequently, the study's scope also delves into the needs of youth in ST, addressing their motivations and knowledge when engaging in spiritual tourism during their travels.

## Research Objectives

The research objectives are as follows:

- i. To investigate youth knowledge on ST in Malaysia.
- ii. To investigate the need of Youth on ST in Malaysia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Travel allows people to engage in religious or recreational activities in their spare time. However, the changing world has also caused changes in people's travel habits, and interest in travels for spiritual or religious purposes is increasing (Halim et al., 2021). Almuhrzi and Alsawafi (2017), Power (2015), and Sharpley and Sundaram (2005) discussed ST under the leadership of religiosity. On the other hand, researchers such as Kujawa (2017), Norman and Pokorny (2017), Singleton (2017), Wilson, McIntosh and Zahra (2013) argue that spirituality and religiosity are interconnected but not the same, and state that spirituality can go beyond religion. In light of all this, the meanings of spirituality and religion have different perspectives in terms of quality and behaviour (Halim et al., 2021).

Spiritual is derived from the root of the Latin word *spiritus* meaning “breath or soul” (Buck, 2006; Hoshi, 2018). Spirituality, furthermore, is defined in two dimensions: (i) it is expressed as the belief that human is a part of the universe and that his/her sole purpose is the desire to find himself/herself; (ii) it is expressed as the belief in the existence of a creator who creates and controls the universe (Suri & Rao, 2014). It is an undeniable fact that spirituality is linked to religiosity (Halim et al., 2021). As a result, it is associated with ideas of faith and holiness and can lead to the formation of spirituality in religion (Gall, Malette & Guirguis-Younger, 2011). Additionally, spirituality is mostly expressed with the expressions of searching for the meaning and purpose of life, existential reality, and belief system (Ironsides, 2023).

Based on these explanations, ST is defined as discovering the purpose of life and expressing a journey beyond the self, and helps to maintain the balance between body-mind and soul, whether or not it has a connection with religion (Ashana & Marco, 2023). Christou et al. (2023) define ST as the tourist's spiritual search and the activities during this search. ST, which has a history as old as religion, is one of the oldest types of tourism that is carried out for various purposes such as finding healing or paying a price while performing tourism

activities (Rinschede, 1992). While religious tourism (RT) is visiting to religious places or destinations with a certain belief, ST aims to find the elements that are effective in establishing the balance between body-mind and soul, whether or not they have a relationship with religion (Heidari et al., 2018). ST is the journey to a shrine, temple or a sacred place that allows the individual to realize his beliefs and the journey of finding the individual's essence, and its purpose is to ensure that the tourist has experiences that will be beneficial not only during his trip but throughout his life, rather than temporarily performing tourism for a short time. The reason for this is that ST essentially explores the individual's self and his/her world rather than operating with religious beliefs (Vargheese & Varghees, 2012).

Franklin and Crang (2001) and Uriely (2005) state that as trends towards tourism change, tourism is not only carried out for the pursuit of pleasure, but also has different meanings for people and affects their lives. Smith (2003) states that tourism consists of various spiritual and mental experiences rather than physical activities. Tourists are very active in giving meaning to themselves and finding a place for themselves in the world they live in (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2005). Therefore, Noy (2004) and Uriely (2005) state that tourist experiences are now a search for more personal experiences rather than seeking hedonistic pleasures and getting away from daily life. In other words, tourism experiences are not only about physical travel to a place, but also a spiritual experience that includes personal development, psychological and physical benefits (Wilson & Harris, 2006). Zahra (2006) states that tourism will be effective for tourists in discovering their values and goals in life, which they define as ST. For this reason, ST is defined as not only a form of tourism with religious motivation such as visiting holy places or pilgrimage, but also travels for recreational and cultural purposes (Hung, 2015). Lastly, Gökçe (2021), and Gökçe and Batman (2022a, 2022b) state that RT is activities and travels to holy touristic attractions which are parts of cultural formations while ST is more likely spiritual acquisition gained through these trips and journeys.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative approach, evaluating variables through online questionnaires distributed to young adults in Malaysia. The purpose of utilizing quantitative research in this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the social world. Quantitative methodology is described as "the dominant research framework in the social sciences that

refers to a set of strategies, techniques, and assumptions used to study psychological, social, and economic processes through the exploration of numeric patterns" (Coghlan, 2014). This research strategy aims to produce logical, analytical, and unbiased findings. A total of 63 respondents from Malaysian youth participated in the research, and the data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.

## FINDINGS

Section A of the survey questionnaire focuses on the demographic profile of respondents, encompassing gender, age, educational background, occupation, and religion. Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis of the demographic profile of respondents, including their age.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Variable	Category	Frequency, n	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Female	46	73.0
	Male	17	27.0
<b>Age</b>	Generation Y (1982-1997)	25	39.7
	Generation Z (1998-2002)	38	60.3
<b>Education</b>	Bachelor's Degree	45	71.4
	Diploma/STPM	12	19.0
	PhD	1	1.6
	Secondary	5	7.9

In the survey, respondents were categorized into two groups based on gender. Out of the total 63 respondents, females constituted the majority at 73%, with 46 participants, while males comprised 27%, totalling 17 respondents. This indicates a higher eagerness among female participants to engage with the questionnaire. The respondents' age was divided into two categories: Generation Y (born 1982-1997) and Generation Z (born 1998-2002). The results revealed a majority in Generation Z, with 60.3% or 38 participants, compared to Generation Y, which had 39.7% or 25 participants. Regarding education background, the majority held a Bachelor's Degree (71.4%, n=45), followed by diploma or STPM holders at 19% (n=12), secondary school education at 7.9% (n=5), and Ph.D. holders at 1.6% (n=1).

**What is the youth’s Knowledge of Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia?**  
**Total Mean score of Youth Knowledge on Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia**

Table 2: Total Mean score of Youth Knowledge on Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia

Variables		Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
K1	I am knowledgeable about the definition of spiritual tourism.	3.22	2.004
K2	I am knowledgeable about how to apply spiritual knowledge during traveling.	3.29	1.995
K3	I am knowledgeable about how to involve in spiritual activities.	3.98	1.755
K4	I am familiar with spiritual tourism.	3.30	.944
K5	I have a clear idea of which character is important to practice during travelling.	3.37	.938
K6	My knowledge about spiritual tourism is broad.	3.21	.928
K7	I know a lot about spiritual tourism activities.	3.11	.900

The results present the overall mean scores reflecting the knowledge of youth regarding Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia. The highest mean pertains to K3 (M=3.98, SD=1.755), indicating that youth possess significant knowledge about engaging in spiritual activities. The second-highest mean is associated with K5 (M=3.37, SD=.938), suggesting that youth are well-informed about the important characteristics to practice during their travels. Following closely, the third-highest mean for both Generation Y and Z regarding their experience with Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia is K4, "I am familiar with Spiritual Tourism," with M=3.30 and SD=.944. Subsequently, the fourth-highest mean is K2, exploring whether youth are



discerning about applying spiritual knowledge during their travels, scoring  $M=3.39$  and  $SD=1.995$ . In comparison, K1, which addresses knowledge about the definition of Spiritual Tourism, holds the fifth position among youth with  $M=3.22$  and  $SD=2.004$ . It appears that youth awareness about Spiritual Tourism is not extensive, making the variable K6 the second-lowest mean, scoring  $M=3.21$  and  $SD=.928$ . Finally, "I know a lot about spiritual tourism activities" (K7) attains the lowest mean, with  $M=3.11$  and  $SD=.900$ .

**What is the need for Youth on Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia**  
**Total Mean score for Need of Youth on Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia**

Table 3 Total Mean Score for Need of Youth on Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia

Variables		Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
N1	Spirituality is relevant for the quality of life	4.03	1.031
N2	Spirituality has actual value in life	4.05	1.023
N3	Participating in spiritual programs is essential in my life	4.05	.974
N4	I believe there are many rewards to a spiritual way of life	4.03	1.016
N5	I believe that God is present in all human activity	4.24	1.088
N6	I will travel to visit spiritual sites	3.78	1.007
N7	I will participate in spiritual tourism activities	3.97	.967

The results reveal the overall mean scores indicating the needs of youth in ST in Malaysia. Predominantly, most youths express a strong belief in the presence of God in all human activities, yielding a mean score of 4.24 and  $SD=1.088$ . Following closely, the second-highest values for needs are found in both N2 and N3, with both variables scoring  $M=4.05$ . This signifies that youths affirm the value of spirituality in life and consider participating in spiritual programs essential. Additionally, N1 and N4 share the same mean score of 4.03, with all participants acknowledging the relevance of spirituality for a quality life and recognizing the numerous rewards associated with a spiritual way of life. However, when it comes to the intention to participate in spiritual tourism, 27 out of 63 respondents strongly agree, achieving a mean score of 3.97 with a standard deviation over 1.000. Lastly, N6 ( $M=3.78$ ,  $SD=1.007$ ) attains the lowest mean score for the needs of youth in ST in Malaysia. Evidently, only 28 respondents express their willingness to travel to visit spiritual sites, while 2 individuals choose not to willingly travel to these sites.

## **CONCLUSION**

The data revealed that the majority of respondents have knowledge of how to engage in spiritual activities, demonstrating their awareness of the characteristics that should be applied and practiced during travel. However, their experience with spiritual tourist activities is limited due to a lack of comprehension of the concept of ST. According to ST theory, most young people believe that the presence of God in all human activities is a crucial necessity. Youth also recognize the importance of spirituality in their lives and consider participating in a spiritual program as essential. Additionally, both generations acknowledge that spiritual beliefs have a positive impact on the quality of life, and there are several benefits to following a spiritual path. This study contributes to the existing literature on Spiritual Tourism in Malaysia, particularly among youth, in terms of knowledge and needs. It enhances our understanding of the current trend for youth to apply the concept of Spiritual Tourism while traveling. Moreover, the study has positive implications for young generations to embrace religious values during their vacations or visits to various places.

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# Chapter VII

## ANALYZING COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE RESPONSES IN VIRTUAL REALITY TOURISM WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON MOSQUE VISITS AMONG GENERATION Y

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### ABSTRACT

***Purpose:*** To determine Generation Y's cognitive and affective responses to virtual reality mosque tourism.

***Methods/Design/Approach:*** A total of 100 Generation Y involved in this study. The sample was selected using nonprobability sampling among Muslim. The data were analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Science version 26 through descriptive analysis.

***Findings:*** As a result, the virtual reality experience allows tourists to immerse themselves in exploring new mosque destinations and acquiring fresh knowledge.

***Implication:*** The finding suggest that the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour significantly engages participants to the point of forgetting their physical surroundings. This implies that incorporating virtual reality in mosque tourism can enhance the overall engagement and immersive experience for tourists, potentially leading to increased interest and participation.

*Keywords: Mosque tourism, virtual reality, cognitive response, affective response*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The rising influence of Muslim tourists represents a new and impactful category in the global tourism industry (Musa et al. 2021). One of the nascent forms of tourism experiences gaining traction Muslim is Virtual Reality (VR). The exponential growth of virtual reality technology in recent years has opened up new avenues for research and innovation across multiple sectors (Chunying, 2022). The halal tourism industry is no exception, as virtual reality's potential to enhance the travel experience and provide innovative marketing opportunities for tourism-related products and services has been recognized (Suhaeni,et.al. 2022). VR technology, which has seen a surge in popularity, holds significant potential to revolutionize the tourism industry. Leung, Zulkernine, and Isah (2018) conducted a comprehensive study, recognizing VR for its educational effectiveness and its ability to disseminate new knowledge, particularly in education and research. Mosque tourism represents another emerging trend that resonates with tourist inclination toward cultural immersion and unique travel experiences. This convergence highlights a promising avenue for scholarly investigation and innovation within the tourism industry, accommodating the evolving preferences and expectations of travelers. While virtual reality (VR) is an advancing technology within the tourism industry, limited research has been undertaken to explore the factors influencing consumers' decisions to visit destinations presented through VR (Kim, et, al. 2020). Therefore, this study is designed to investigate the influence of cognitive response and affective response towards virtual reality intention in visiting mosque.

## **Research Objectives**

The research objectives are as follows:

- i. To determine the cognitive responses of Generation Y in virtual reality mosque tourism
- ii. To determine the affective responses of Generation Y in virtual reality mosque tourism

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research employs a quantitative approach. Quantitative research focuses on collecting data from a diverse range of individuals during the data gathering stage, helping establish baseline information and reduce potential elitist bias. Additionally, this research adopts a cross-sectional study design. As Kesmodel (2018) noted, a cross-sectional study examines a population at a specific point in time by gathering data from individuals within that population. This approach involves collecting data on various variables of interest from different individuals or groups within the population without following them over time (Hassandra et al., 2015). While cross-sectional studies have limitations in establishing causal relationships between variables, they serve a valuable purpose in research. In this study, the cross-sectional design will be used to determine the influence of various variables on tourist visit intentions in 360-degree virtual reality mosque tourism.

To ascertain the appropriate sample size, the initial step is to identify the population, with the focus here being Malaysian Muslim tourists from Generation Y. The Generation Y population in Malaysia is of paramount interest due to its significant influence on various societal aspects. Unfortunately, specific data on the exact size of Generation Y in Malaysia is limited. Nevertheless, available sources suggest that Generation Y constituted a substantial segment, amounting to 13.44 million people or 42% of Malaysia's total population in 2018 (Memon et al., 2019).

For the purpose of data collection, researchers utilized a non-random sampling strategy, distributing an online questionnaire via Google Forms due to time constraints. This study seeks to assess the adequacy of a sample size of 100 responses for data analysis, aligning with Comrey and Lee's assertion that a sample size of up to 100 respondents, while considered weak, can still offer valuable insights when analyzing extensive and informative data (Kubicová and Záhumenská, 2017). The determination of an appropriate sample size is critical in research studies as it directly influences the validity and generalizability of finding and generalizability of the findings.



## FINDING

Table 1 Cognitive response of Generation Y toward virtual reality mosque tourism

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I gain knowledge from using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour	4.98	.974
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is useful to collect information	4.86	.910
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour spark my imagination	4.80	1.005
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour allows me to explore new Mosque destination	5.04	.983

Based on Table 1 “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour allows me to explore new Mosque destination” shows the highest mean of 5.04. Next, the item “I gain knowledge from using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour” recorded 4.98. Moreover, the items “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is useful to collect information” and “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour spark my imagination” with mean scores of 4.86 and 4.80 respectively. This shows that using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour allows tourists to explore new mosque destinations and gain new knowledge. Overall, the data from Table 1 demonstrates that the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is highly valued for its ability to allow users to explore new mosque destinations and gain substantial knowledge. The tour is also perceived as useful for collecting information and stimulating imagination. These findings highlight the VR tour's effectiveness in combining exploration with educational benefits, making it a powerful tool for both learning and inspiration in the context of mosque tourism.

Table 2 Affective response of Generation Y toward virtual reality mosque tourism

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am completely involved in the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour	4.66	1.224
I am deeply impressed by the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour	4.96	.886
I feel spiritually connected with the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour	4.96	1.145

I am closely related to the content when using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour	4.79	1.056
I am attached to using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour	4.63	1.069
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is part of my life	4.63	1.268
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is important to me	4.57	1.174
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour makes me forget where I am	4.42	1.182
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is enjoyable for me	5.00	1.063
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is pleasurable for me where I am	5.06	1.135
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour keeps me relaxing	4.69	1.021
Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour keeps me happy	4.88	1.165
When I am using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour, I feel totally captivated	5.00	1.005
When I am using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour, I forgot all concern	4.77	1.013
When I am using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour, time seems to pass very quick	4.68	1.171

The findings presented in Table 2 highlight the overall positive reception of the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour among users. The highest mean value of 5.06 for the statement “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is pleasurable for me where I am” indicates that users find the experience highly enjoyable and fulfilling. This suggests that the VR tour effectively provides a satisfying and engaging experience that resonates well with participants. The mean score of 5.00 for both “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is enjoyable for me” and “When I am using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour, I feel totally captivated” further supports the notion that users find the VR tour both enjoyable and captivating. This indicates that the tour succeeds in capturing the users' attention and maintaining their interest throughout the experience.

The slightly lower mean scores of 4.77 for “When I am using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour, I forgot all concerns” and 4.68 for “When I am using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour, time seems to pass very quickly” suggest that while the VR tour is engaging, it does not

completely immerse users to the extent that they lose all sense of time or forget their surroundings. This might imply that there are still elements of the user's real-world context that are not entirely overshadowed by the virtual experience.

The means of 4.63 for both “I am attached to using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour” and “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is part of my life” indicate a moderate level of attachment and integration of the VR experience into users' routines. These results suggest that while the VR tour is appreciated, it has not yet become a regular or indispensable part of users' lives. Finally, the mean score of 4.42 for “Using the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour makes me forget where I am” represents the lowest score, reflecting that users may not completely lose their sense of their actual location while using the VR tour. This could suggest that while the VR experience is immersive, it may not be fully effective in creating an experience so engrossing that users entirely lose their spatial awareness.

Overall, the findings indicate that the 360-degree VR Mosque Tour is highly pleasurable and enjoyable for users, with its primary strengths lying in providing a captivating and engaging experience. However, there may be room for improvement in enhancing the level of immersion and making the experience more integral to users' lives.

## **CONCLUSION**

In an era marked by technological advancements, this study delves into the cognitive and affective responses of Generation Y in the realm of virtual reality mosque tourism. With 100 participants selected from the Muslim community, our research utilizes nonprobability sampling and employs IBM Statistical Package for Social Science version 26 for analysis. The findings shed light on the transformative impact of virtual reality experiences, revealing how they facilitate immersive exploration of new mosque destinations and the acquisition of fresh knowledge. This exploration is framed within the broader implication that integrating virtual reality into mosque tourism holds the potential to significantly enhance engagement and enrich the overall tourist experience.

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# Chapter VIII

## YOUNG BACKPACKERS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS ISLAMIC ATTRIBUTES OF DESTINATION

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** *To investigate the satisfaction level of young backpackers regarding the Islamic attributes of destinations.*

**Methods/Design/Approach:** *This quantitative research involves 170 tourists and utilizes the IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 for data analysis through descriptive analysis.*

**Findings:** *The young backpackers expressed satisfaction with the Islamic attributes offered by the destination.*

**Implication:** *It is crucial for destination management in the tourism sector to continuously enhance the experience for young backpackers. The high satisfaction level during their visit is likely to encourage them to revisit the destination.*

**Keywords:** *Backpacker, Islamic Tourism, Destination*

### INTRODUCTION

Tourist destinations encompass a myriad of characteristics such as climate, historical sites, sunshine, scenic beauty, beaches, snow, cultural events, recreation opportunities, enjoyment, rest and relaxation, self-esteem, prestige, health and fitness, adventure, social interaction, benefits, interests, and marketed image accessibility (Battour et al., 2011). This research aims to identify specific tourist destination attributes, particularly Islamic attributes, encompassing both tangible and intangible elements. These include prayer facilities, Halal food, Islamic entertainment, Islamic dress codes, Islamic morality, and the Islamic call to prayer. The satisfaction of tourists and their decision-making processes are influenced by these destination attributes (Zhang, Wu, and Buhalis, 2018). Further, Alam, Mohd, and Hisham (2011) find that religious Muslims consider Islam to be their source of reference. The close relationship between tourism and religion has been extensively addressed in the tourism literature (Battour et al., 2011)

Malaysia, guided by the New Economic Model (NEM) since 2009, is committed to sustainable development across political, social, and environmental objectives. This study aligns with Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - Sustainable Cities and Communities. Emphasizing the creation of career and business opportunities, safe and affordable housing, and the building of resilient societies, this goal is crucial for the future of tourism, especially considering the substantial role played by youth, representing more than half of the world population.

Despite existing research on Islamic attributes in tourism destinations, limited studies focus specifically on Malaysia. Previous works, like Farnaz Farahdel's study on Iran and Agus Sudigdo's work on Jakarta, explore similar themes but in different geographic contexts. This research aims to fill this gap, providing insights into young backpackers' preferences and satisfaction with Islamic attributes in Malaysia.

As youth tourism gains prominence, representing one of the most dynamic markets globally, this research addresses the growing interest in the youth segment. UNWTO estimates that around 20% of the 940 million international tourists in 2010 were driven by young people (UNWTO, 2011). Acknowledging the dominance of youth in the tourism industry, this study seeks to understand young backpackers' satisfaction when exploring Malaysia as backpackers. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of Islamic destination attributes' impact on young backpackers' satisfaction, offering valuable insights for the

tourism industry in Malaysia.

## **Research Objectives**

The research's objectives are as follows:

- i. To investigate the level of satisfaction of young backpackers in Islamic destination attributes.
- ii. To analyse any significance relationship between Islamic destination attributes and satisfaction.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a quantitative research design to assess research variables through questionnaires distributed to young backpackers in Malaysia. Quantitative methods focus on objective measurements, surveys, or the manipulation of pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques (Babbie, 2010). This form of research, as described by Babbie, centers on accumulating numerical data and generalizing it across groups of individuals or explaining specific phenomena.

In terms of the approach to data collection, the researcher used a cross-sectional study design. A cross-sectional study, also known as cross-sectional analysis or transverse study, is a type of observational study design where the researcher measures both the outcomes and exposures simultaneously. Therefore, for this study, the researcher employed a quantitative approach through a questionnaire in Google Form, targeting young backpackers aged between 15-40 years old.

## **Population and Sample Size**

For this study, a non-probability sampling method, specifically nonrandom sampling employed to collect data. A total of 170 valid responses were obtained for data analysis, representing a response rate of 44.3%. This response rate is considered acceptable when compared to similar research studies. For instance, Dzuraidah (2010) achieved a response rate of 24.4%, which is considered acceptable (cited in Rahman, 2014). Additionally, Lin and Ho (2008) collected 153 completed questionnaires out of 500, resulting in a response rate of

30.6% in a survey on the adoption of green technologies among logistics service providers in Taiwan.

**FINDING**

The level of young backpackers’ satisfaction toward Islamic destination attributes is important to the tourism industry. The attributes in the destination need to be improvise in order to gain revisit.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistic for Young Backpacker’s Satisfaction

Satisfaction Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I did the right thing in deciding my Islamic destination	-	-	18.2% (N=31)	51.2% (N=87)	30.6% (N=52)
My choice to backpacking in Islamic destination was a wise one	-	3.5% (N=6)	12.9% (N=22)	55.3% (N=94)	28.2% (N=48)
I am pleased with my decision to backpack in Islamic countries.	-	-	14.1% (N=24)	52.4% (N=89)	33.5% (N=57)
It was a good decision to backpack in Malaysia.	-	0.6% (N=1)	9.4% (N=16)	52.9% (N=90)	37.1% (N=63)
As expected, Malaysia has good Islamic	-	0.6%	13.5%	42.4%	43.5%



attributes		(N=1)	(N=23)	(N=72)	(N=74)
Overall, I'm satisfied with Islamic attributes in Malaysia	-	0.6% (N=1)	11.2% (N=19)	52.4% (N=89)	35.9% (N=61)

Regarding young backpackers' satisfaction with Islamic attributes in Malaysia, the highest percentage expressing satisfaction was 51.2% (N: 87), with respondents indicating agreement. Conversely, the lowest percentage, at 18.2% (N: 31), felt slightly agree with the item. When evaluating young backpackers' satisfaction with their wise choice to backpack in Islamic destinations, 55.3% (N: 94) of respondents agreed, while only 3.5% (N: 6) disagreed.

Additionally, 52.4% (N=89) of respondents agreed that they made a good decision to backpack in Islamic destinations, and 14.1% (N: 24) respondents slightly agreed with the item. Examining satisfaction with their good decision to backpack in Malaysia, the highest percentage of agreement was 52.9% (N: 90), with only 0.6% (N: 1) of respondents expressing disagreement.

Moreover, when assessing the expectation that Malaysia has good Islamic attributes, 43.5% (N: 74) of respondents agreed, with only 0.6% (N: 1) disagreeing with this expectation. In terms of overall satisfaction with Islamic attributes in Malaysia, 52.4% (N=89) of respondents agreed, and an additional 35.9% (N: 61) strongly agreed. Conversely, only 0.6% (N: 1) of respondents expressed disagreement with this item.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistic for Overall Satisfaction

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Satisfaction	170	4.1980	.55854

Valid (listwise)	N	170		
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The table above displays the satisfaction levels of young backpackers regarding Islamic attributes in Malaysia. The results clearly indicate that all respondents have provided positive feedback, as evidenced by the mean score of 4.198. This score falls between the fourth and fifth points on the Likert scale, corresponding to 'agree' and 'strongly agree,' respectively. The standard deviation, with a value of 0.55854, is the highest but remains close to the mean. In summary, young backpackers express overall satisfaction with both tangible and non-tangible Islamic attributes in Malaysia.

### Is There Any Significance Relationship Between Islamic Destination Attributes and Satisfaction?

Researcher will be using Pearson correlation in order to identify the significance relationship between independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV) of this research.

Table 3 Pearson Correlation

		Tangib le	Non- Tangible
Satisfactio n	Pearson Correlation	.430**	.428**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	170	170

Table 3 above presents the calculation results for the relationship between Islamic destination attributes and young backpacker's satisfaction using Pearson product-moment correlation. The goal is to determine whether Islamic destination attributes directly influence the satisfaction of young backpackers or vice versa. As mentioned earlier, there is a positive and significant relationship between Islamic destination attributes and young backpacker's

satisfaction, as evidenced by the Pearson's correlation ( $r(2) = 0.428^{**}$ ), with a significant 2-tailed value of 0 for non-tangible attributes. For tangible attributes, the Pearson's correlation is ( $r(2) = 0.430^{**}$ ), also with a significant 2-tailed value of 0. Consequently, these values indicate a moderate and significant correlation between tangible variables and satisfaction. In conclusion, the correlation analysis has achieved the third research objective. Based on the findings, the hypothesis for this study is formulated: there is a moderate and significant correlation between both tangible and non-tangible attributes and young backpackers' satisfaction. This conclusion is supported by the overall  $r$  value for the independent variable, which is 0.000, a smaller value than the ( $P < 0.05$ ) alpha value.

## CONCLUSION

The young backpackers were proven to be satisfied with the Islamic attributes. The mean satisfaction score is 4.198, indicating that the young backpackers were content with both tangible and non-tangible attributes in Malaysia. They were also satisfied with their decision to backpack around Malaysia, which provides good Islamic attributes. This study presents new discoveries that align with previous research, and the outcomes are consistent with findings from Eid and El-Gohary (2015). They discovered that Muslim customers' Islamic religiosity or religious devotion mitigates the impact of Islamic physical and non-physical attributes on their pleasure. Meng et al. (2008) supported this by stating that assessing tourists' satisfaction provides information on how effectively the tourism destination meets their demands, potentially improving the quality of services and products that satisfy them. Therefore, the tourism industry must provide high-quality attributes to increase repeat visitation by Muslim backpackers. Satisfying them would be much easier than attracting new tourists. The overall satisfaction expressed by young backpackers regarding Islamic attributes indicates a positive and significant correlation. This result aligns with the findings of Battour et al. (2011), confirming that the availability of Islamic features at a site is a source of enjoyment for Muslim tourists. This suggests that certain Islamic features, when compared to existing positive destination attributes, can bring pleasure to Muslim visitors during their holidays. There is a positive relationship between tangible attributes and young backpacker's satisfaction, as the Pearson's Correlation was  $0.428^{**}$ . For non-tangible attributes, the Pearson's Correlation was  $0.430^{**}$ . Both tangible and non-tangible attributes recorded a significant 2-tailed value of 0.000. This correlation of 0 indicates a significant relationship between these two variables. The result confirms that the independent variable does influence the dependent variable. Therefore, when one variable changes, it will affect and influence the




other variable. In this finding, when tangible or non-tangible Islamic attributes change, it will affect and influence the young backpackers' level of satisfaction.




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