

EXPLORING THE VARIETY OF HALAL TOURISM AREAS BY MUSLIM TERTIARY STUDENTS AT UITM SHAH ALAM

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Article history

Received date : 26-3-2026

Revised date : 27-3-2026

Accepted date : 24-4-2026

Published date : 26-6-2026

To cite this document:

Ismail, M. Z., Abdul Mulup, N. A., Abd Rahim, S., Ramli, M. A. R., Aziz, A., & Zakaria, M. (2026). Exploring the variety of halal tourism areas by Muslim tertiary students at UiTM Shah Alam. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 11 (83), 607 – 621.

Abstract: *In the coming years, halal tourism, particularly among young Muslims, could double to \$300 billion. Although Muslim university students' halal travel preferences are increasing, what influences them remains unknown. This academic study looks at the choices of young Muslim consumers. Researchers distributed Google Forms survey questionnaires to tertiary students to collect quantitative data. Islamic destination preferences reflect Muslim students' needs and expectations. The study focusses on religious destination choice marketing to this demographic. The findings help tourism stakeholders who cater to Muslim tourists understand halal tourism and provide practical advice. Researching cultural and religious influences on travel promotes halal tourism.*

Keywords: *Halal Tourism, Muslim Consumer, Islamic Shariah, Halal Food*

Introduction

Halal tourism has gained significant importance as a branch of the halal industry, which encompasses products and services that adhere to Islamic law. The Muslim travel market is projected to experience substantial growth, potentially reaching 230 million travelers by 2028 and thus having a considerable impact on the global tourism economy. In light of this trend, researchers and industry experts have started to explore halal tourism, highlighting the necessity of understanding the distinct needs and preferences of Muslim travelers. Despite increasing global attention toward halal tourism, recent studies continue to overlook the specific behavioural patterns and destination preferences of Muslim university students a rapidly growing and influential segment of halal travellers. This absence of updated empirical evidence limits the ability of tourism planners and policy developers to design strategies that address the unique religious, social, and economic needs of this demographic, thereby reducing the effectiveness of halal tourism development efforts. Halal tourism has developed into a specialized sector that addresses the unique requirements of Muslim travelers and has notably influenced the global tourism landscape in recent years. As the Muslim travel market continues to grow, it is essential to comprehend the factors affecting this demographic's destination choices. Muslim university students represent a significant segment of this market, influenced by their academic, social, and cultural contexts. While previous research has examined halal tourism in broader contexts, limited scholarly work specifically analyses how Muslim university students make travel decisions within the halal tourism framework. This gap restricts tourism authorities and industry stakeholders from fully understanding travel motivations among young Muslims, thereby constraining efforts to plan targeted, youth-oriented halal tourism initiatives. Malaysia, with its diverse tourism offerings that encompass cultural experiences, adventure, and relaxation, remains a prime destination for those seeking an authentic experience in Southeast Asia. This research is both timely and vital as it seeks to understand the destination preferences of Muslim university students, promoting more inclusive and culturally sensitive tourism practices as the global tourism industry adapts to diverse traveler needs. The study aims to address gaps in current literature and make a meaningful contribution to the expanding field of halal tourism research.

Literature Review

Accessibility of Halal Cuisine in the Context of Halal Tourism in Malaysia

Islamic tradition and religious culture play a crucial role in the halal tourism sector, which places a strong emphasis on these elements (Sholehuddin et al., 2021). Consequently, Muslims need access to the necessary resources to fulfill their obligation of praying five times a day, no matter where they are, as well as to find Halal food. When choosing Halal tourism destinations, important religious considerations include the presence of Halal-certified food and amenities that support prayer and worship. A prior study by (Nik Abdul Rashid et al., 2020) suggests that even less devout Muslims are anticipated to have stronger sentiments regarding their dietary choices than other religious duties. This indicates that the demand for Halal food is significant within the context of Halal tourism destinations. (Nik Abdul Rashid et al., 2020) emphasize that Muslims are required to faithfully perform their religious obligations in daily life and while traveling, including the practice of prayer as stated in the Al-Quran. Allah SWT declares in the Qura'n (2:43):

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ٤٣

"And be steadfast in prayer; practice regular charity; and bow down your heads with those who bow down in worship."

(Qur'an 2: 43)

The presence of designated worship places is essential for Muslim travelers (Putra & Tucunan, 2021). Similarly, this applies to the pursuit of Halal foods.

Recognition as Halal in Islamic Tourism Destinations

Accredited Halal Certification Organizations verify that goods, services, and businesses adhere to Islamic dietary laws and requirements by issuing a halal certification. Products and services that have received this certification have proven to be in accordance with Islamic law, especially as it pertains to the procurement, processing, and serving of food. An essential part of Halal tourism, it guarantees to Muslim customers that whatever they buy or use meets Halal requirements. In accordance with Islamic Shariah law, which forbids gambling, nightclubs, and casinos, and which incorporates halal characteristics, Halal Tourism is defined (Hasan, 2023). Food and drink that adheres to the halal standard, as well as social settings, services, entertainment, and staff dress code, are all examples. Halal tourist destinations must meet all the requirements laid out by (Hasan, 2023). The goal here is to get that Halal certification that the Malaysian Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM) has been offering. The government of Malaysia oversees Halal certification. In Malaysia, a special group called JAKIM gives out halal certificates. These certificates are really important, especially for Muslim travelers. When they go to new places, they look for these certificates to make sure the food and other things follow their beliefs. According to (Nahidloh & Qadariyah, 2021), refer that halal certification is both a marketing label that helps sell more products and a guarantee that the product doesn't contain any ingredients that are against sharia or religious doctrine.

Socio-demographic Factors in Halal Tourism Destination Choice

Some sociodemographic factors that influence halal tourism destination selection include age, gender, and income. The socioeconomic status of young travellers, especially those attending college, influences their diverse tastes. According to (Hanafiah et al., 2022), the growing disposable income and distinctive tastes of this new generation of middle-class consumers are prompting them to inquire about how tourist spots can connect with them on a personal level. This group spends more on vacation experiences, connects with their Islamic roots, and learns about other cultures, according to the author. People with more disposable income can afford to travel to more exotic halal tourist spots, which influences their vacation choices. Rich Muslims, according to a 2014 study by Stephenson, prefer places with first-rate halal services, while frugal tourists place equal importance on affordability and halal compliance. Tourists of the future, particularly those in the younger age bracket, may give preference to businesses and locations that offer first-rate services while also being mindful of local cultures and the environment (Battour et al., 2020). This group of people wants to keep their religious customs while also trying out new cultures. They like to visit places that can help them with their religious needs, like restaurants that serve halal food, spots where they can pray, and beaches or spas that have areas for just men or just women. Therefore, it's safe to assume that Halal tourism destinations will be well-liked by the growing number of younger travellers who fall into this demographic. Muslim college students have diverse travel preferences, as discussed in the literature on halal tourism. Factors that influence decision-making include sociodemographics, religious affiliation, cultural attractiveness, and service quality. It's really important to know what Muslim travelers like so we can make better plans for trips and activities that they will enjoy, especially for Muslim college students. We need to learn about

new trends and what younger Muslim travelers prefer because more and more people are interested in halal tourism.

Methodology

Research Design

This study focuses on exploring halal certification and the accessibility of halal food for Muslim university students at UiTM Shah Alam, particularly in relation to their selected halal tourism destinations. Final year ACIS students were selected because they represent the cohort with the highest level of exposure to halal-related courses, including halal management, Islamic studies, and Shariah-based consumption behaviour. Their academic background provides them with stronger foundational knowledge of halal tourism principles, making their responses more reliable for understanding informed halal travel behaviour. Furthermore, final-year students are closer to entering the workforce and engaging in independent travel, thus offering insights highly relevant to current market trends. This group is made up of people studying for their Bachelor's degrees in Halal Industry Management and Mualamat. To gather information for their research, they send out surveys using Google Forms, which are like online questionnaires that people can fill out. In this study, researchers wanted to learn what Muslim college students at UiTM Shah Alam think about places that are suitable for halal tourism, which means places that follow their food and lifestyle rules. To do this, they asked a lot of student questions using a survey, which is like a set of questions they fill out. They looked at the answers to see how many students liked different things, using simple math to count the answers. A simple random sampling method was applied to ensure each student within the target population had an equal probability of being selected. This approach minimises sampling bias and enhances the representativeness of the findings, thereby strengthening the validity of the study's quantitative outcomes. The survey had different parts to cover all the information they wanted to find out:

1. Demographic factors include age, gender, and level of education.
2. Availability of Halal Food
3. Certification of Halal

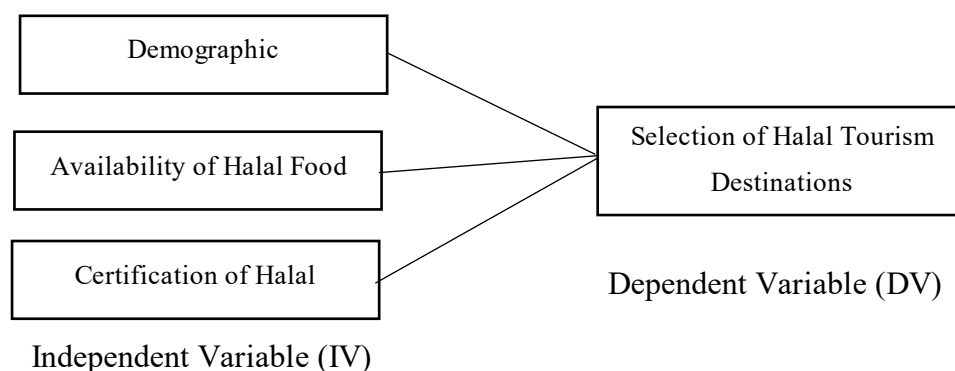


Figure 1: Theoretical Structure

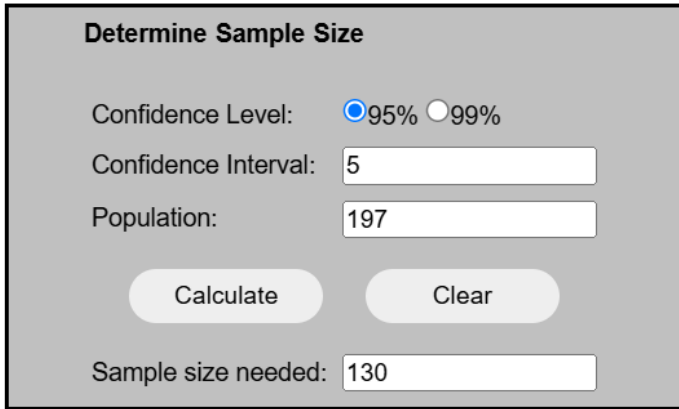
Research Instrument

We used Google Forms to create the surveys for this study, allowing participants to complete them independently. The surveys included special questions called "Likert-Scale" questions, where people could choose from five answers: strongly disagree, disagree, slightly agree, agree, and strongly agree. The surveys had different parts. The first part (Section A) asked about the age, gender, and education of the people answering. The second part (Section B) looked at how Muslim college students at UiTM Shah Alam choose places to visit that are halal, based on

halal certification. The last part (Section C) wanted to find out what affects the availability of halal food for these students, as well as halal tourism places and halal certification. In total, 197 people will fill out these surveys.

Data Collection

This study is mainly about gathering information by talking to people directly. The researchers will ask questions using a survey that they will send out through a link on WhatsApp. After collecting the answers, they will look closely at the information to find patterns and trends. Learning more about the topic will also involve reading library books and articles. Since they might be short on time, they will likely use online resources for this part of the research. At the end of the study, they will list all the sources they used, like books and articles, in a bibliography. When they talk about a "sample," they mean a smaller group taken from a larger group of people. For this study, they will use a method called the Krejcie & Morgan Theory to decide how many students they need to ask questions. They expect to talk to around 197 students, but they will actually survey 130 students from UiTM Shah Alam. There will be a picture, called Figure 1.2, that shows the results of this sample size.



Determine Sample Size

Confidence Level: ☒ 95% ☐ 99%

Confidence Interval:

Population:

Sample size needed:

Figure 2: Krejcie & Morgan Theory (1970) Sample Size Determinant

Data analysis method

This study uses questionnaires to collect data. This study employed SPSS for statistical analysis. The same tool used to achieve the stated goals makes SPSS a suitable analytical software. In this study, we analyze and elaborate Google Forms data using descriptive analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics summarizes samples and data measures to help understand data characteristics (Hayes, 2024). Once the data is collected, quantitative studies start statistical analysis by describing the responses' characteristics, like the mean age or the relationship between two variables, like age and creativity (Bhandari, 2020). This study looks at how things like people's backgrounds, whether Halal food is simple to find, and if places have a special Halal certificate affect where people choose to go for Halal tourism. The analysis employs percentages and frequency distributions to illustrate the distribution of the observed data (Yong, 2022). A frequency distribution chart or list shows sample outcomes' frequencies. The frequency distribution provides a summary of the values or variables in a sample along with how often each occurs (Gordon, 2024).

Result and Discussion

This section examines the results and independent variables related to the "Exploring the Variety of Islamic Tourism Areas by Muslim Tertiary Students at UiTM Shah Alam." Data interpretation relies on responses from participants who fulfilled specified criteria. The study looked at how well people understood what makes a place suitable for Halal tourism. This section of the research verifies the achievement of the study's objectives. To do this, the researchers looked at the data using simple numbers and charts. They used some math tools to explain how Muslim college students at UiTM Shah Alam Campus choose Halal travel spots. They used a special computer program called SPSS 27 to help with their analysis.

Section A: Demographic profile

Section A detailed the participants in the study. There were 146 people involved, mostly students from a school called the Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies at UiTM Shah Alam Campus. Most of these students are studying two main subjects: Halal Industry Management and Muamalat. Because of the limits of the study, all the participants came from the same school, UiTM Shah Alam Campus.

Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics: Gender Frequencies and Percentages.

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	122	83.6	83.6	83.6
	Male	24	16.4	16.4	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

According to Table 1, people who took part in the study were asked about a few things, like whether they were men or women, if they were married, what classes they were taking, what year they were in school, and how old they were. The information has been analyzed to determine the proportion of each group present. In a special table, we can see that there were a lot more girls (83.6%) than boys (16.4%). In total, 146 people answered the questions.

Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics: Marital Status Frequencies and Percentages.

		Marital Status			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	140	95.9	95.9	95.9
	Married	6	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 2 shows the marital status of the respondents. The data reveals that 140 individuals, or 95.9%, are single, while 6 individuals, accounting for 4.1%, are married.

Table 3: Summary of Descriptive Statistics: Course Frequencies and Percentages.

		Course			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Halal Industry Management	116	79.5	79.5	79.5
	Muamalat	20	13.7	13.7	93.2
	Tourism management	2	1.4	1.4	94.5
	Photomedia	2	1.4	1.4	95.9
	Information Management	2	1.4	1.4	97.3
	Biomolecular Science	2	1.4	1.4	98.6
	Intelligent System Engineering	2	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 3 presents data on the distribution of 116 participants in the Halal Industry Management course, which accounts for 79.5% of the total. The Muamalat course had 20 participants, making up 13.7%, while the tourism management program had 2 participants, or 1.4%. Additionally, two individuals, accounting for 1.4 percent of the total, were enrolled in each of the following classes: photo media, information management, biomolecular engineering, and intelligent system engineering.

Table 4: Summary of Descriptive Statistics: Semester Frequencies and Percentages

		Semester			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Semester 1	10	6.8	6.8	6.8
	Semester 2	8	5.5	5.5	12.3
	Semester 3	2	1.4	1.4	13.7
	Semester 4	12	8.2	8.2	21.9
	Semester 5	20	13.7	13.7	35.6
	Semester 6	36	24.7	24.7	60.3
	Semester 7	58	39.7	39.7	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

In the survey in table 4, different groups of students from different semesters answered questions. Semester 1 had 10 students, which is a small part of all the answers, about 7 out of every 100. Semester 2 had 8 students, which is about 6 out of every 100. Semester 3 had only 2 students, which is less than 2 out of every 100. Semester 4 had 12 students, making it about 8 out of every 100. Semester 5 had 20 students, which is almost 14 out of every 100. In semester 6, there were 36 students, making it about 25 out of every 100. Finally, semester 7 had the most students, with 58, which is almost 40 out of every 100.

Table 5: Summary of Descriptive Statistics: Age Frequencies and Percentages

		Age			
years old		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	136	93.2	93.2	93.2
	26-30	6	4.1	4.1	97.3
	41-50	4	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 5 provides information on the ages of the respondents. Most of the 123 participants, or 92.5%, are between 18 and 25 years old. There are 6 respondents (6%) in the 26-30 age group, and 4 respondents (3%) are aged 41-50 who took part in this survey.

Section B: Halal food availability and halal certification

This part of the study looks at how Muslim students at UiTM choose places to visit for fun that have Halal food. The study investigates whether the presence of Halal food and Halal certification influences their choice of destinations. The researchers used a questionnaire with simple questions about Halal food and certification. They divided the answers into two sections: one about how easy it is to find Halal food and the other about Halal certification. Each section has five questions to help understand how these things affect the students' choices. The students answered these questions using a scale that shows how much they agree or disagree.

- 1) Strongly disagree
- 2) Disagree
- 3) Neutral
- 4) Agree
- 5) Strongly agree

Descriptive Analysis

Table 6: Interpretation of Mean

Mean Value	Interpretation
1.01 – 2.00	Low
2.01 – 3.00	Moderately Low
3.01 – 4.00	Moderately High
4.01 – 5.00	High

Source: Nunnally and Berstein (1994)

Table 6 shows the average scores for five questions about how easy it is to find halal food. This helps us understand how having halal food available affects Muslim university students at UiTM Shah Alam when they choose places to visit that are suitable for halal tourism.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Halal Food Availability
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Halal tourism destinations offering halal food choices are important to me.	146	3	5	4.68	0.495
I choose travel destinations that offer halal food choices.	146	2	5	4.32	0.812
Having access to halal food boosts my confidence in choosing travel destinations.	146	3	5	4.63	0.538
Having access to halal foods is crucial for me when visiting any tourist location.	146	2	5	4.51	0.667
I think that places where people can find halal food will attract more Muslim travelers.	146	4	5	4.71	0.454
Valid N (listwise)	146				

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Based on table 7 above, the statement "I think that places where people can find halal food will attract more Muslim travelers." states the highest average score of 4.71 in this part of the questionnaire. This reflects the increasing demand among Muslim travelers for halal dining options. According to (Addina et al., 2023), halal food in restaurants and souvenirs can increase halal tourism. Thus, young travelers are more likely to visit halal tourism destinations and halal food. The second-highest mean is 4.68 for "Halal tourism destinations offering halal food choices are important to me.". According to (Nik Abdul Rashid et al., 2020), even the least devout Muslims prioritize food over other religious duties. Regardless of their level of Islamic knowledge, this demonstrates that Muslims are more careful with their food choices. Allah SWT commanded us to eat clean and permissible foods, and this is in accordance with Islamic dietary principles. Fuel enters the bloodstream when consumed. During travel, it is crucial to pay attention to the destination. In the Al-Quran Allah S.W.T mentions:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلّٰهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ١٧٢

Translation:

O believers! Eat the good things we have provided for you. And give thanks to Allah if you truly worship Him alone.

(Qur'an 2: 172)

The statement "I choose travel destinations that offer halal food choices." received the lowest average score in the Halal food availability category, but still maintained a high rating of 4.32. This suggests that, depending on their preferences and circumstances, respondents are inclined to keep choosing halal tourism spots, provided that these locations offer halal food as an option. Supporting this finding is research by (Mohamed Ismail & Noh, 2022) on young Malaysian travellers, which shows that Muslim travellers expect hotels to provide qibla stickers or directional indicators towards Makkah, halal food in the room or at the hotel's restaurant, and other religious amenities.

Table 8: Halal Certification Descriptive Statistics
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Halal certification plays an important role in my selection of a halal tourism destination.	146	3	5	4.51	0.687
I choose halal travel destinations that have the approval of Islamic authorities.	146	2	5	3.99	0.887
I will select halal tourism locations that offer prayer amenities.	146	2	5	4.52	0.646
I will choose halal tourism locations where the consumption and serving of alcoholic drinks are not allowed.	146	2	5	4.51	0.687
I will choose halal travel destinations that offer vacation packages suitable for Muslims.	146	2	5	4.49	0.624
Valid N (listwise)	146				

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

This part of the questionnaire collected participants' views on Halal certification. Table 8 shows the average scores for five items related to this variable. The item with the highest average, scoring 4.52, is "I will select halal tourism locations that offer prayer amenities." Similar to travel, the practice of the five daily prayers is crucial, necessitating access to water for purification and designated spaces for prayer for both genders. (Azizan et al., 2023) highlighted the importance of prayer rooms and Islamic facilities for Muslim travelers, enabling them to practice their faith during their trips. Consequently, Halal tourism destinations that offer proper prayer amenities are likely to attract younger Muslim tourists.

Two statements in this section have an identical mean score of 4.51: "Halal certification plays an important role in my selection of a halal tourism destination" and "I will choose halal tourism locations where the consumption and serving of alcoholic drinks are not allowed." In the context of halal tourism, halal certification pertains to the food and dining options available at these locations, such as hotels, accommodations, and restaurants that comply with Islamic law. This law requires that all food and drink consist of permissible ingredients, excluding pork, alcohol, and blood. Ultimately, halal certification guarantees that the food, beverages, and services provided align with halal standards. Muslim university students generally prefer destinations that are Halal-certified, as shown by their high ratings in this area. According to (Ariff Irshad et al., 2022) numerous halal cafés and restaurants in Malaysia offer halal food due to their certification from the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). Nahidloh and Qadariyah's research from 2021 also talks about how important halal certification is for improving halal tourist destinations because it makes sure that the products follow Sharia law and don't have any forbidden ingredients.

Muslim university students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam demonstrate a limited dependence on travel suggestions from Islamic authorities, as reflected in a low average score of 3.99 for the statement "I choose halal travel destinations that have the approval of Islamic authorities." Despite the efforts of organizations such as Malaysia's Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) to promote halal tourism, their impact on the travel decisions of these students seems to be minimal. Several factors contribute to this trend. Firstly, these students have varied preferences and levels of religious observance, leading some to overlook Islamic authorities' marketing. Instead, personal preferences, travel experiences, and peer suggestions play a significant role in their destination choices. Additionally, economic conditions may impact their travel decisions, with budget-conscious students prioritizing cost and accessibility over official recommendations in their search for affordable, halal-compliant options.

Malaysia, a Muslim-majority nation, offers halal food and prayer facilities for halal tourism. Muslim tertiary students can tailor their travel plans to their preferences rather than following Islamic authorities. Halal options let students prioritize cultural attractions, recreational activities, and costs. Young travelers can also make informed decisions, thanks to digital platforms and social media. Travel is always changing, and now, many people listen to online reviews, travel blogs, and friends' suggestions more than official recommendations. This shows how important it is for travel companies to connect with Muslim college students online. Even though groups like the ITC support halal tourism, Muslim college students make their travel choices based on many different things. These students can choose their travel destinations based on personal preferences, economic factors, and the availability of halal amenities. This growing trend makes it even more important to learn about the travel preferences of young Muslim adventurers and push for a wide range of flexible travel options within the field of halal tourism.

Section C: Halal Tourism Destination Selection

Table 9: Halal Tourism Destination Selection Descriptive Statistics
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
If I travel, I prefer to select a tourist location that provides a diverse range of halal dining options.	146	3	5	4.55	0.600
For my holiday, my top preference for a tourist destination is one that provides halal certification across all areas.	146	2	5	4.41	0.701
I plan to travel to a tourist spot that provides Halal or Muslim friendly dining and lodging options.	146	3	5	4.56	0.599
I suggest that others explore tourist spots that have halal certification.	144	2	5	4.53	0.668
Valid N (listwise)	144				

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

In this section, respondents selected five Halal tourism destinations. Table 9 shows the response mean score. Halal food availability and certification are the independent variables in this questionnaire section. This is to determine if both variables affect respondents' Halal tourism destinations. Table 9 shows that "I plan to travel to a tourist spot that provides Halal or Muslim friendly dining and lodging options." has the highest mean of 4.56. The lowest mean score is 4.41 for "For my holiday, my top preference for a tourist destination is one that provides halal certification across all areas.". Table 4.9 shows the respondent's response to the highest and lowest items, so this section will detail both variables. According to a recent study by (Adiwarna Prawira et al., 2023), halal tourism adheres to Islamic law, focusing on travel destinations and services that align with Islamic principles. Muslim travelers have particular needs rooted in their religious obligations, which may not always be met at certain destinations. In the literature, terms like "Halal Tourism," "Islamic Tourism," and "Muslim-Friendly Tourism" are often used to refer to tourism products and services designed for Muslim visitors. Destinations that offer supportive services for Muslim tourists are termed halal tourist destinations. The rise of these destinations is driven by the increasing interest in the halal market, which is estimated to be worth \$580 billion globally each year. Halal tourist destinations can be found in both Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority countries, indicating that halal tourism encompasses tailored services and products for Muslim travelers, regardless of the religious makeup of the host nation.

Table 10: "When traveling, I will choose a tourist destination that offers a wide variety of halal food" of Descriptive Statistics Frequencies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neutral	8	5.5	5.5	5.5
Agree	50	34.2	34.2	39.7
Strongly Agree	88	60.3	60.3	100.0
Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 10 shows that a significant portion of respondents, totaling 88 individuals (60.3%), strongly agreed with the statement, while 50 respondents (34.2%) agreed, and 8 respondents (5.5%) remained neutral. Notably, there were no respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this item. The results suggest that most Muslim tertiary students in ACIS prefer tourist destinations that offer a wide variety of halal food, emphasizing choices that adhere to Islamic guidelines. Some respondents expressed neutrality toward the need for diverse halal options at tourist sites, indicating that while a variety may not be crucial, the presence of any halal food could be sufficient for those rated as neutral. Sometimes, people don't think about halal food being vital when they choose where to go on vacation. This could be because they believe there are enough halal food choices at those places. (Nahidloh & Qadariyah, 2021) explain that halal isn't just about food and drinks; it also includes excellent services and how well the place is run. So, when picking a halal vacation spot, people might care about how excellent the services are and how well everything is organized, not just about how many halal food options there are.

Table 11: “For holiday, my first choice of tourist destinations will be a destination that offers a halal certification in all aspects.” Of Descriptive Statistics Frequencies

		Frequency	Percent Valid	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Neutral	12	8.2	8.2	9.6
	Agree	56	38.4	38.4	47.9
	Strongly Agree	76	52.1	52.1	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 11 shows the frequency and percentage of “For holiday, my first choice of tourist destinations will be a destination that offers halal certification in all aspects” responses. Strongly agree was answered by 76 (52.1%) respondents. 56 respondents (38.4%) agreed. The other 12 respondents (8.2%) were neutral, and 2 (1.45%) disagreed. Halal certification encompasses various aspects, ensuring that tourist destinations adhere to Islamic principles regarding food, facilities, amenities, service, and management, such as offering gender-specific gym and spa services. Most respondents indicated a strong preference for choosing halal-certified destinations when traveling, while a couple disagreed, likely due to personal tastes. Based on study by (Alam et al., 2024) the presence of Halal Certification or Muslim-Friendly standards is likely to enhance the reputation of these destinations among travelers. State religious councils, halal certification bodies, and government-recognized tourism organizations provide certification, ensuring that the food and services meet halal requirements. The findings suggest that locations with halal certification or features catering to Muslim travelers can build a strong reputation among customers and tourists. This improved reputation boosts the attractiveness and competitiveness of halal tourism. These certifications provide assurance to visitors that the destination meets high standards for halal-friendly experiences, showcasing a dedication to Islamic-compliant services and accommodations. This encompasses offerings such as halal food, prayer spaces, gender-segregated recreational areas, and modest dress guidelines, ensuring that Muslims feel secure with respect for their religious practices and values.

Table 12: “I will visit a tourist destination that offers Halal or Muslim friendly food and accommodation” of Descriptive Statistics Frequencies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	8	5.5	5.5	5.5
	Agree	48	32.9	32.9	38.4
	Strongly Agree	90	61.6	61.6	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 12 presents the frequencies and percentages for the statement "I will visit a tourist destination that offers Halal or Muslim-friendly food and accommodation." The results indicate that 90 respondents (61.6%) strongly agree with this statement, while 48 respondents (32.9%) agree. The other 8 (5.5%) were neutral. No one strongly disagreed or disagreed with this item. As studied by (Ariff Irshad et al., 2022), providers catering to Muslim travelers must adhere to halal standards such as MS1500:2019, which guides food operators and manufacturers in certifying their products as halal while detailing proper food preparation, storage, and distribution methods. Since 2019, the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) has been advocating for Muslim-Friendly Assurance and Recognition (MFAR) to support Muslim travelers in choosing accommodations and services that cater to their requirements.

Table 13: “I would encourage others to visit tourist destinations that have been certified as halal” of Descriptive statistics Frequencies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Neutral	8	5.5	5.6	6.9
	Agree	46	31.5	31.9	38.9
	Strongly Agree	88	60.3	61.1	100.0
	Total	144	98.6	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.4		
Total		146	100.0		

Source: IBM SPSS 27th software

Table 13 shows what people like when it comes to food and places to stay that are Halal or friendly for Muslims when they travel. It tells us that 88 people, which is about 60 out of 100, really think that having Halal options is crucial when they choose where to go on vacation. This means that many people want to travel to places that respect their religious beliefs. It shows that following Halal rules is essential for travelers and that they care about their values while having fun. Another 46 respondents (31.5%) agreed, bringing the total number of respondents who supported Halal or Muslim-friendly accommodations to over 90%. To meet this demand, tourism businesses can get certified by trustworthy halal groups. This means passing strict checks and following strict rules that are in line with Islamic dietary laws and ethics. By achieving and maintaining halal certification, businesses can draw in customers who are religiously observant. Incorporating halal practices within the tourism industry can foster growth and benefit related businesses. Understanding and addressing the needs of Muslim tourists can enable travel service providers to tap into this expanding and profitable market. Furthermore, this growth could lead to job creation and stimulate the economy, promoting inclusive and sustainable tourism alongside local economies. Muslim travelers tend to have favorable views of halal accommodations, which indicates they will likely favor destinations

that emphasize their halal offerings. This trend encourages tourism companies to invest in facilities and training to meet these requirements (Alam et al., 2024).

Only 8 respondents (5.5%) expressed neutrality regarding Halal or Muslim-friendly services, and none strongly disagreed with the concept, although two (1.4%) did show some opposition. This minimal dissent highlights a clear preference among respondents for Halal services. The findings indicate that tourism companies ought to focus on obtaining Halal certifications to cater to the needs of Muslim travelers.

Conclusion

This chapter presents the findings and discussions derived from a questionnaire survey conducted among Muslim tertiary students. The study revealed that the majority of respondents prioritize Islamic obligations, especially when it comes to travel. The information shows that when people pick places to have fun, it's really important to them that there is Halal food available and that the food is certified as Halal. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their Halal responsibilities and place a high importance on these criteria in their destination selection. However, a small portion of respondents view these factors as only moderately important or neutral, likely because they reside in an Islamic-majority country where Halal options are readily accessible. Malaysia is encouraged to focus on enhancing destinations that cater to Islamic values, as it seeks to promote its tourism sector to a global audience, including non-Muslims.

Acknowledgements

The authors unequivocally declare that no conflicts of interest exist in relation to this article and accept complete accountability for the creation and refinement of the manuscript. Each contributor has played a vital role in the interpretation of the data, provided invaluable intellectual perspectives, and diligently scrutinized the final version to guarantee its precision and lucidity.

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