Growing Behavioral Intentions for Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Indonesia: Does Muslim Tourism Attributes and Muslim Experiential Quality Matter?

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Abstract. Indonesia has the world’s largest Muslim population (86.7%), but it lags behind even Muslim minority countries in Halal tourism. The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism has 10 Halal Priority destinations in 2018, but domestic and foreign tourists are unaware. This study examined how Muslims’ perceptions of tourism attributes affect their experience and behavior. This research was quantitative. The author surveyed Muslims who vacationed in Indonesia and the surrounding region. Data collection involved purposive sampling. Smart PLS software was used to test assumptions using Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modeling. This study can help tourism stakeholders develop Muslim-friendly destinations. Through this research, tourism stakeholders can develop future strategies to serve Muslim tourists. The theoretical framework has never been tested, especially on Muslim-friendly tourism in Indonesia. This research contributes to the development of knowledge as an alternative model solution to increasing Muslim tourists’ behavioral intentions. This research found that halal or Muslim tourism attributes and Muslim experience quality boost Muslim-friendly travel destinations’ behavioral intention.

Keywords: Muslim Tourism Attributes · Muslim Experiential Quality · Behavioral Intention · Halal Tourism · Muslim Friendly Tourism

1 Introduction

Growing Muslim population affects demand for Islamic goods and services. According to the Pew Research Center, there are 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide. Christianity is first, then Islam [1]. Foreign tourists spent $1145.64 per visit in 2019, contributing USD 16,426 billion to Indonesia’s GDP [2]. Tourism’s biggest niche market is Muslim tourists. 230 million Muslim travelers and $300 billion in travel spending are predicted by 2026. UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar are most spend tourists [3]. Indonesia ranks fifth in outbound Muslim travel in 2019 [4], so it sends many tourists to Muslim-friendly destinations. Recent studies say halal tourism is understudied [5, 6].
Covid 19 devastated tourism. This pandemic has affected hotels, food, transportation, and tour guides. Due to transportation and MSMEs, the tourism industry is one of the most economically significant [7]. Aceh, West Sumatra, Riau Islands and Riau, West Java, DKI Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Central Java, East Java (Malang), Lombok, and South Sulawesi (Makassar) are National Priority Halal Destinations. Foreign and domestic tourists are unaware of Indonesia’s 10 HalalPriority destinations. Indonesia has the world’s largest Muslim population (86.7%), but it lags in Halal tourism.

According to research, relationship quality predicts future behavior [8, 9]. Researchers and practitioners can benefit from understanding attachment-loyalty dynamics [10]. Destination characteristics affect tourist behavior. This study identified the characteristics that support the establishment of Muslim-friendly tourism industry that satisfies Muslim visitors’ fundamental requirements, despite the complexities of the halal concept in the hospitality business caused by overlapping aspects [11]. Religious aspects draw Muslim tourists [12]. Indonesia as a Muslim-majority nation has tourism attributes similar to their home country [13].

Cognitive, affective, sensory, somatic, and transcendental interactions make up the customer’s experience [14]. Scholars say experience predicts behavior [14–16]. Positive consumer experience increases behavioral intent. Customer experience and behavioral intention are correlated empirically. Tourism researchers study positive behavioral intentions to predict visitor loyalty [17, 18]. Recent empirical research defines visitor behavior as recommending and returning [15, 16, 19, 20]. These two behavioral intention measures are common in tourism [21].

Little research has been done on Muslim-friendly tourism in Islamic and non-Islamic countries. Inconsistent research on Muslim-friendly tourist features and behavior. Multiple studies show Muslim-friendly tourism affects behavior [22–26]. Muslim-friendly tourism doesn’t affect tourist behavior, according to research [27].

Inconsistent research on Muslim-friendly tourism attributes and behavior intentions. A direct or indirect mediating variable was needed to bridge Muslim-friendly tourism attributes and behavioral intentions. This study will re-examine these two variables and include a mediating variable, Muslim Experiential Quality, to strengthen the effect of Muslim-friendly tourism attributes on Muslim tourists in Indonesia. It examines how Muslim experience affects tourist behavior.

This study examined how Muslim-friendly tourism attributes affect Muslim experience quality and behavior. Indonesian tourism benefits from Muslim-friendly research. Based on this study’s variables, managers of Muslim-friendly tourist destinations can develop attributes and create a quality experience for Muslim tourists. This study can inform future research on Muslim-friendly tourism in Indonesia and Muslim tourists’ behavior. We’ll study the variables in Fig. 1.

2 Hypothesis Development

Islam separates physical and nonphysical traits [28, 29]. Tourism products and services have physical value. It includes Muslim utensils, food, and drinks [28]. Prayer rooms, Muslim areas, and others are nonphysical Sharia characteristics [28]. Islamic shari’a promotes Muslim travel [26]. This study examined whether Halal tourism can be created
using Islamic travel characteristics. This assumes Islamic influences on travel destinations, purposes, and behavior [30]. Certain places must have Islamic characteristics [31].

[25] studied Islamic service quality, amenities, and participant demographics. It’s used to determine what motivates Muslims to return. Behavior predicts customer and visitor loyalty in hospitality [32, 33]. Previous research examined how halal-friendly hotels affected Muslim guests [11]. Halal-friendly hotels would appeal to Muslim customers. Indirect cognitive and emotional assessments are crucial to achieving Muslim customer behavioral objectives, validating current theoretical research [34, 35]. Muslims travel for religious reasons [12]. Our research found the features that promote a halal-friendly tourism industry that meets Muslim visitors’ criteria. This research proposed:

- H1: Muslim tourism attributes influence Muslim tourist behavior in Indonesia.

Total customer interactions determine company, product, and customer experience on all levels (cognitive, affective, sensory, somatic, transcendental) [14]. Traditional marketing must focus on “experience” in the service-centered era [16]. Experiential quality is how highly a visitor rates their heritage tourism experience [16]. Exceptional experiences vary by culture [36, 37]. A boutique hotel’s physical setting and guests’ communication skills determine its quality [38]. Historical tourism experiences are physical, result, interactive, and accessible [39]. Quality varies by context and culture. Explore Indonesia’s Muslim-friendly tourist destination.

Customer experience influences future behavior, theoretically. Positive customer experiences increase loyalty [40]. Customer experience and behavioral intention are correlated empirically. Macau Food Festival quality affects customer loyalty [41]. Hong Kong passengers’ cruise quality behavior was also studied [15]. In Indonesia, the quality of casual dining affects return visits [42]. Studies show destination quality affects behavioral intentions [18, 43] studied how visitor demographics affect destination quality and behavior. Thus:

- H2: Muslim experiential quality influences Muslim tourist behavior in Indonesia.

Halal and Islamic tourism are interchangeable, according to [44], “Halal” refers to Muslim-friendly tourist destinations and activities [44, 45]. Halal tourism and experience quality are linked in Tourism Consumption Theory [40]. Customers respond positively to a product or service’s quality when it aligns with their beliefs [46]. Using the experience quality-loyalty model, Halal goods and services impact a tourist’s entire experience [40].

Fig. 1. Research Framework Development.
A Halal-friendly destination’s experience is driven by its aspects, says South Korean research [5]. To meet Muslim tourists’ needs, tourism destinations need accurate profile, behavior, and value data [28, 47]. Previous research examined how Chinese tourists’ island ratings affected vacations [48]. Halal goods and services should enhance a tourist’s experience. Hypothesis:

- **H3:** Muslim-friendly tourism attributes influence Muslim experience quality positively.

3 Methods

This research was quantitative. The author surveyed Muslim tourists who visited Indonesian Muslim-friendly spots. To test the research hypothesis, the hypotheses were tested using Smart PLS 3.2.9 and Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modeling. For the Likert Scale, the options were Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). A self-administered internet survey collected data from January to August 2022. This study includes Muslim tourists who visited Indonesian Muslim tourist spots. Purposive non-probability sampling was used. This study included 405 people who visited a Muslim-friendly destinations in Indonesia. [22, 29] provided questionnaire items to assess Muslim Tourism Attributes and Experiential Quality. Behavior Intention adapted from [14–16].

4 Results

SmartPLS data processing includes outer and inner model computations. 405 eligible voters participated in our survey.

4.1 Summary of Result from Outer Model

With this outer model’s, we could examine each indicator’s influence on the latent variable. Figure 2 shows the propensity model and route coefficient for assessing validity and reliability. Validity and reliability are assessed using measurement or external models. Divergent and discriminant validity, composite reliability, and Cronbach’s alpha are assessment models. Figure 2 shows the partially least squares outer model.

First, evaluate the model’s external context. Measuring the outer model involves latent variables and their indicators. We evaluate the model’s credibility and soundness. We tested its validity using convergent and discriminant validity. We ran composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha to ensure each SEM-PLS variable was accurate. All research indicators were tested for convergence validity and reliability. According to outer model test, all indicators have factor loading values greater than 0.7. Each of these signs is thus plausible. A construct is reliable if its composite reliability rating and Cronbach’s alpha are both above 0.7. [49]. According to smartpls, all variables have composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha over 0.7. Each of these elements is therefore reliable.
4.2 Summary of Result from Inner Model

The structural model is used to evaluate a model’s latent components [49] used the R square test of endogenous variables to determine their ability to explain exogenous variables. The inner model test determines the importance of the R square value and the construct. Next, determine if endogenous and external elements interact significantly. This investigation used a two-party test with 5% error. To test this hypothesis, 1.96 is needed. Latent, exogenous, and endogenous components interact if t-statistic > 1.96.

**Table 1. Inner Model Findings Test.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship Each Variables</th>
<th>Direct Effect</th>
<th>Indirect Effect</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>R square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Path coefficient</td>
<td>t-statistic</td>
<td>P value</td>
<td>Path coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Tourism Attributes → Behavioral Intentions</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>4.946</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Experiential Quality → Behavioral Intentions</td>
<td>0.464</td>
<td>7.343</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Tourism Attributes → Muslim Experiential Quality</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>35.738</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows that behavioral intention had a “moderate” R square value of 58.5%. Exogenous muslim tourism features and experience quality factors may explain or influence 58.5% of behavioral intents variables. Unaccounted factors affect 41.5% of the population. Endogenous muslim experience quality’s R Square value is 61.4%, which is “moderate” under the given conditions and meets the requirements. 61.4% of endogenous muslim experiencing quality may be explained or influenced by external muslim tourist variables. Unstudied variables affect the remaining 38.6%. All three accepted hypotheses found that exogenous variables had a positive and significant impact on endogenous variables. When each variable connection’s calculated t value exceeds 1.96 and P value is less than 5%.

4.3 Discussion
This research found that Muslim-friendly travel destinations affect Muslim behavior. Physical and nonphysical qualities are discussed. These characteristics influence Muslim customers’ intentions when staff provides services in accordance with Islamic law, provides prompt service, effectively communicates, understands mandatory Islamic rules, and maintains services in accordance with Muslim values. Previous studies on halal tourism have shown that more halal services increase the number of Muslim tourists [50–52]. The indirect assessment also evaluated Muslim experiencing quality as key mediators to realize Muslim customers’ behavioral intentions, complementing current theoretical research [34, 35]. Religion is a major draw for Muslim travelers [12]. Despite the complex problem of halal in tourism due to overlapping factors, our study identified the critical factors that support the development of halal-friendly tourist locations that satisfy Muslim visitors’ fundamental requirements.

This study examined the impact of perceived destination quality on travelers’ behavior in Muslim-friendly destination in Indonesia. Perceived destination quality significantly influenced behavioral intentions. Muslim experience quality also influences visitor behavior. Cruise industry, children’s theme park, and rural tourism research support these findings [15, 36, 53]. These findings support earlier research [16, 18]. Positive physical and interpersonal experiences strengthen a consumer’s decision to use a halal-friendly tourist service again. Travelers who had positive opinions of Muslim-friendly tourist sites in Indonesia were more likely to return or recommend them. Visitors with a positive impression of Muslim-friendly travel destinations are more loyal to them.

Halal experience quality is a segment-specific attribute. The new Muslim-friendly tourism model had a strong fit and explanatory power [54], which supports the widely acknowledged constructs of experience quality are crucial factors in determining a traveler’s devotion to a certain location, especially for Halal travelers to Korea [5]. A high-quality experience encourages Halal travelers to return, refer, and choose the place. The results show that a great experience builds Halal visitor loyalty. This research suggests that Halal experiences may boost high-quality Halal tourism. According to Korean data [5], a destination’s components affect Halal travelers’ experience quality. Muslim tourism qualities affect how well destinations meet Muslim travelers’ needs [28, 46]. A previous study examined how Chinese tourists’ assessments of island destination characteristics affected their experiences [47].
4.4 Implications

These results suggest that Muslim-friendly tourism locations and service providers should maintain the quality that Muslim visitors seek to improve their reputation. This would be good for Indonesia’s Muslim-friendly tourism sector. Despite including specific goods in many studies, the tourist Halal experience differs greatly from previous research. This study focuses on Indonesian Muslim visitors, which may explain why the Halal experience is different. This study’s tool for measuring the Halal tourist experience could make future research easier and close the literature gap. Locals have the most impact on tourists’ behavioral intentions and actions, according to this study.

5 Conclusion

Halal or Muslim tourism attributes and Muslim experience quality boost Muslim-friendly travel destinations’ behavior. This study examines halal marketing and tourism. These data show that Indonesian halal tourism practitioners should give Muslim tourists an exceptional experience to strengthen behavioral objectives. So, Muslim tourism will improve. These designs will encourage repeat use. Despite its importance for Islamic marketing and tourism.

Follow-up studies must address study flaws. The study’s Indonesian sample and data may not apply to other passengers. History and culture may affect other East Asian or Western countries. More research may reveal halal features in hotels and other tourist destinations. This model needs to be replicated with different responders. Study variables were limited. Future research can include customer-intention tactics or an expanded hypothesis. Future research can benefit halal tourist marketing. Emotional satisfaction, visitor understanding, and tourist loyalty may predict Muslim-friendly tourism intentions.

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References


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