

DISCOVERING HALAL TOURISM'S FOOTPRINTS: A BIBLIOMETRIC PERSPECTIVE ON BUSINESS RESEARCH USING SCOPUS DATA (1997–2023)

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ABSTRACT

Halal tourism has emerged as a significant segment within the global tourism industry, driven by increasing demand for travel experiences that align with Islamic values. Despite this upward trend, there remains a lack of systematic research mapping publication patterns and dominant themes in the field. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the evolution and thematic development of halal tourism scholarship and identifying potential opportunities for business innovation. A bibliometric analysis was conducted using R Studio Biblioshiny (Bibliometrix) on 306 Scopus-indexed documents. The results reveal key thematic clusters, including halal hospitality, the halal industry, halal food, customer satisfaction, and emerging areas such as confirmatory factor analysis and behavioural intention. The analysis indicates steady growth in scholarly output, with an annual increase of 6.39% in publications between 1997 and 2023 and an average of 10.2 citations per document. Influential journals play a central role in shaping the knowledge base, while robust international collaborations—particularly among researchers from Indonesia and Malaysia—highlight the potential for cross-national innovation. The growing focus on consumer perceptions, customer satisfaction, and branding strategies rooted in Islamic values points to substantial opportunities for industry and destination development. By mapping the intellectual structure, key themes, and collaboration networks within halal travel and tourism using a Scopus-based bibliometric analysis (1997–2023), this study offers a comprehensive reference point for future research. The findings also support evidence-based strategies that can guide tourism stakeholders—including industry practitioners and policymakers—in advancing Muslim-friendly destination development and service innovation.

Introduction

The results of the literature review indicate that tourism products and services catering to the needs of Muslim travellers are conceptualised as "halal tourism", "Islamic tourism", or "Muslim-friendly tourism". The terminology is relatively new in the academic discourse and is emerging as a distinct concept within tourism studies. (Bhuiyan et al., 2011). Halal tourism represents an evolving approach that provides vacation opportunities for Muslims in which core tourism activities align with Islamic principles (Noviarita et al., 2024). Changes in tourist profiles and global understanding of tourism have also affected religious tourism. In particular, the rise in the welfare of Muslim-majority countries and changes in income levels among Muslim individuals have influenced travel behaviour and the purchase of tourism products and services. (Baysal, 2017).

Halal tourism holds considerable market potential, supported by the presence of approximately 1.6 billion Muslims across 100 countries as of 2017. According to demographic projections from the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project, the global Muslim population—estimated at 1.6 billion in 2010—is expected to grow by 35%, reaching around 2.2 billion by 2030 and approximately 2.8 billion by 2050 (Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project, n.d.). In 2016 alone, 121 million Muslim travelers participated in international tourism, generating an estimated US\$156 billion in spending. Projections indicated continued growth, with arrivals projected to reach 156 million by 2020 and total spending to rise to US\$220 billion. By 2026, the market was expected to reach US\$300 billion (Arpaci & Batman, 2015).

Over the past two decades, the Muslim population has grown at nearly twice the rate of the non-Muslim population. While global population growth averages 1.5%, growth among non-Muslims is 0.7% (Battour et al., 2022). This demographic shift, along with several key drivers, is propelling the expansion of the Islamic market, particularly in halal tourism. Four primary forces underpin this growth:

- i. A young, dynamic, and rapidly expanding global Muslim population;
- ii. A large and fast-growing Islamic economy;
- iii. The increasing influence of Islamic values in shaping consumer lifestyles and business practices; and
- iv. The proactive role of Islamic economic cooperation organizations in promoting the development of Sharia-compliant (halal) markets.

Taken together, these dynamics suggest that the halal tourism market will continue to expand. This study aims to elucidate the current landscape by conducting a bibliometric analysis of international academic studies on halal tourism within specified parameters. (Kususiyanah et al., 2024). Bibliometrics encompasses a range of laws and methodologies and refers to the statistical study of academic publications. (Parker, 2001). In this study, the development of research on halal tourism was mapped using Scopus-indexed publications retrieved via the keyword "halal tourism" in the "all fields" search. Furthermore, this study presents several key insights from a bibliometric analysis conducted using the RStudio Bibliometrics package.

Literature Review

Halal Tourism: Conceptual Overview, Practice, and Future Research Directions

Halal tourism is a rapidly growing sector within the global tourism industry. (Chandra, 2014). Muslim and non-Muslim countries alike have begun adopting this concept to attract Muslim tourists by providing services that comply with Islamic values. The growing awareness of halal tourism among global stakeholders is reflected in the increasing number of destinations incorporating faith-based considerations into their tourism offerings. (Ratnasari et al., 2020; Syamsu et al., 2025) projected that the halal tourism sector would reach US\$192 billion in 2020, up from US\$140 billion in 2013, which accounted for 13% of global travel expenditures. This substantial growth reflects not only the economic potential of halal tourism but also the shifting priorities of tourism markets in response to the rising demand from Muslim consumers. (Azizah, 2021).

Conceptual Framework: Between Faith and Hospitality

Halal tourism is commonly regarded as a sub-category of religious tourism. (Abdul Rahim et al., 2022). It primarily caters to Muslim travelers seeking tourism experiences that align with their religious values and spiritual obligations. While the foundational principle is compliance with Islamic law (Maulana et al., 2022) Modern halal tourism extends beyond legal compliance to encompass hygiene, safety, service quality, and overall comfort—elements increasingly emphasized by contemporary Muslim consumers. (Saefullah et al., 2025; El-Gohary, 2016).

Despite its widespread use, halal tourism lacks a universally accepted definition. This is partly due to its multidisciplinary nature, which spans theology, hospitality, economics, and cultural studies. Scholars have proposed a range of definitions that emphasize various elements, such as legal compliance, service delivery, customer segmentation, and country context. For example:

Table 1. Conceptualizations of Halal Tourism Across Literature

Source	Definition	Key Focus
(Ratnasari et al., 2020)	A tourism product offering accommodation and services compliant with Islamic teachings	Sharia-compliant service delivery
(M. Battour et al., 2020)	Any tourism object or action permissible under Islamic law	Legal permissibility
(Carboni & Idrissi Janati, 2016)	Tourism that enables Muslims to fulfill religious obligations while traveling	Religious observance
(Jafari et al., 2020)	Promotion and delivery of tourism services in line with Islamic law	Ethical marketing and service
	Activities or experiences that support Muslim travelers in fulfilling religious requirements	Inclusive policy perspective

Although these definitions vary in scope and emphasis, they converge on key themes, including compliance with Sharia, ethical service provision, and Muslim customer satisfaction. This convergence reflects the dual aim of halal tourism: to support spiritual well-being while providing high-quality travel experiences.

Operational Realities and Critical Attributes

While definitional debates continue, scholars increasingly emphasize the operational dimensions critical to the success of halal tourism. El-Gohary (2016) highlights the gap in evaluation and guiding research in this domain, calling for a more structured approach to understanding how tourism services can fulfill both religious and practical needs of Muslim travelers. These include not only basic compliance, such as halal-certified food and prayer facilities, but also broader concerns, such as modest attire, norms governing gender interactions, and ethical service conduct. El-Gohary (2016) further assert that appropriately designed tourism services enable Muslims to enjoy vacations while maintaining adherence to Islamic principles.

Building on this foundation, several researchers have proposed comprehensive principles for creating a truly halal-friendly destination. Stephenson (2014) introduces a dual-dimensional framework, categorising halal hospitality into concrete elements (physical facilities and services) and abstract elements (spiritual environment and ethical behavior). Similarly, Suharko et al., (2018) Stress the importance of specific facilities and behaviors that align with Islamic values.

These operational principles are summarised in Table 2, which synthesizes key features identified across the literature. Beyond the physical infrastructure, the role of social and cultural contexts is also pivotal. (Yağmur & Aksu, 2021) and (Han et al., 2016) emphasise how local traditions, values, and destination branding influence tourists' perceptions and overall satisfaction. A halal-friendly destination is not merely one that avoids haram; it is one that actively creates an environment in which Muslim travelers feel spiritually at ease and socially accepted. (Siddiq et al., 2025).

Despite the presence of such frameworks, implementation varies significantly across regions due to differing regulatory standards, market readiness, and institutional support. This inconsistency reinforces the need for future studies to assess not only theoretical principles but also the practical realities of halal tourism service provision.

Table 2. Key Operational Components of Halal Tourism Destinations

Category	Specific Attributes
Religious Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worship/prayer rooms (gender-segregated) - Qibla direction markers - Qur'an and prayer rugs in guest rooms
Food & Beverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Halal-certified food and drinks - No alcohol, pork, or derivative products
Accommodation & Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender-segregated facilities (e.g., pools, spas, gyms) - Gender-appropriate staffing (e.g., female staff for female guests) - Islamic dress code for staff
Entertainment & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absence of gambling, casinos, and nightclubs - Conservative entertainment - Religious and culturally appropriate artwork
Spiritual & Ethical Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethical behavior from staff - Peaceful and respectful atmosphere - Compliance with Islamic financial principles, such as zakat
Marketing & Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culturally sensitive branding - Promotion of an Islamic-friendly image and messaging

Literature Gaps and the Need for Structured Evaluation

Despite a growing body of literature, research on *halal* tourism remains uneven. Many studies focus on defining halal tourism or predicting market size, but overlook the evaluation of service quality, standardisation, or consumer satisfaction. El-Gohary (2016) notes the absence of adequate reviews and evaluations that guide tourism operators and policymakers in aligning with Islamic principles. Similarly, Suharko et al. (2018) identify critical service components, such as halal food, gender segregation, and the absence of prohibited activities; however, empirical studies evaluating the consistency or effectiveness of these features across destinations remain limited. These observations highlight an urgent research gap: the need to transition from theoretical exploration to practical, evidence-based assessment and policy integration.

Moreover, previous research often reiterates basic principles (such as compliance with Islamic law) without providing analytical depth or context-specific insights. Statements such as "Muslims live according to Islamic law" or "halal tourism is based on Sharia" risk oversimplification and repetition. To move the field forward, scholars must ask how these principles are operationalised, where they succeed or fail, and what improvements can be made through evidence-based policy. To address these limitations, the current study adopts a bibliometric approach to map the intellectual structure and development of *halal* tourism research globally. Bibliometric analysis offers a quantitative approach for examining publication trends, citation networks, thematic developments, and methodological patterns.

This approach will enable the study to:

- i. Identify leading contributors, journals, and research institutions.
- ii. Track thematic shifts in the conceptualization of *halal* tourism.
- iii. Highlight underexplored areas and potential future directions.

In particular, the study aims to bridge the gap between definitional clarity and practical implementation, aligning academic discussions with operational realities and consumer expectations. By highlighting deficiencies in current literature, this research can support more focused, context-sensitive, and actionable scholarship. In conclusion, *halal* tourism is not merely a religious concept but a comprehensive tourism paradigm that integrates faith-based values with global hospitality standards. While foundational studies have laid important groundwork, the field still lacks consistent frameworks for evaluating and implementing *halal* tourism services across diverse contexts.

The proposed bibliometric study aims to clarify these ambiguities, assess research productivity, and provide strategic insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers. By doing so, it contributes to the development of an academically robust and practically relevant knowledge base that reflects both spiritual imperatives and contemporary realities of travel. Ultimately, advancing halal tourism requires not only theological understanding but also cross-disciplinary collaboration, rigorous evaluation, and continuous innovation centred on consumer needs.

Methodology

This study focuses on a database analysis of Scopus-indexed journals, examining articles from 1997 to 2023. It employs a bibliometric analysis conducted in Biblioshiny using the phrase “halal tourism”. The data is compiled from the Scopus database. In this study, the Scopus database serves as the primary source for collecting relevant data on the trend in “halal tourism” publications, with the search limited to books, conference articles, and papers. This study conducts a Scopus-based bibliometric analysis of halal tourism publications covering 1997–2023. Bibliographic records were retrieved from Scopus using the keyword “halal tourism” and analyzed using the Biblioshiny interface of the bibliometrix R package. The timeframe begins with the earliest indexed halal tourism publication (1997) and ends in 2023, the most recent complete publication year at the time of data retrieval, to ensure longitudinal coverage and to minimize bias from incomplete indexing in the current year. To maintain consistency in indexing and citation metrics, the dataset was restricted to peer-reviewed journal articles, excluding books and conference proceedings. Because the analysis relies solely on secondary bibliographic data and involves no human participants or identifiable personal information, ethical/IRB approval was not required.

Findings

The following presents information on published articles on halal tourism, based on data retrieved from the Scopus database for the period 1997 to 2023. During this period, 306 documents were identified: 252 journal articles, 1 book, 32 book chapters, and 21 conference papers. These documents were published in 151 sources, authored by 777 contributors, and cited 14,625 references. The bibliometric analysis revealed an annual article growth rate of 6.39% and an average citation rate of 10.2 citations per document. To ensure consistency, the 1997–2023 data range has been retained to align with all previously reported statistics. Further details regarding the bibliometric indicators are presented in Table 3, which summarises the descriptive data used in this study.

Table 3. Main information about Data

Description	Results
Timespan	1997:2023
Sources (Journals, Books, etc.)	151
Documents	306
Annual Growth Rate %	6,39
Document Average Age	3,62
Average citations per doc	10,2
References	14625
Document Contents	
Keywords Plus (ID)	362
Author's Keywords (DE)	778
AUTHORS	
Authors	777
Authors of single-authored docs	47
Authors Collaboration	
Single-authored docs	47
Co-Authors per Doc	3,18
International co-authorships %	24,84
Document Types	
article	252
book	1
book chapter	32
conference paper	21

Figure 1 is a Three-Field Plot consisting of the journal publication's name, the author's name, and the keywords used. These three elements are related and are marked with a gray line. The thicker the connecting flow, the stronger the relationship and contribution between the elements. The figure below shows that the Journal of Islamic Marketing has published the most articles on halal tourism. In the writer's element, Abror A, Han H, and Al-Ansi A are identified as the authors who have produced the most articles on halal tourism. The next element is the keyword field, which shows that "halal tourism" remains the most frequently used keyword in published articles.

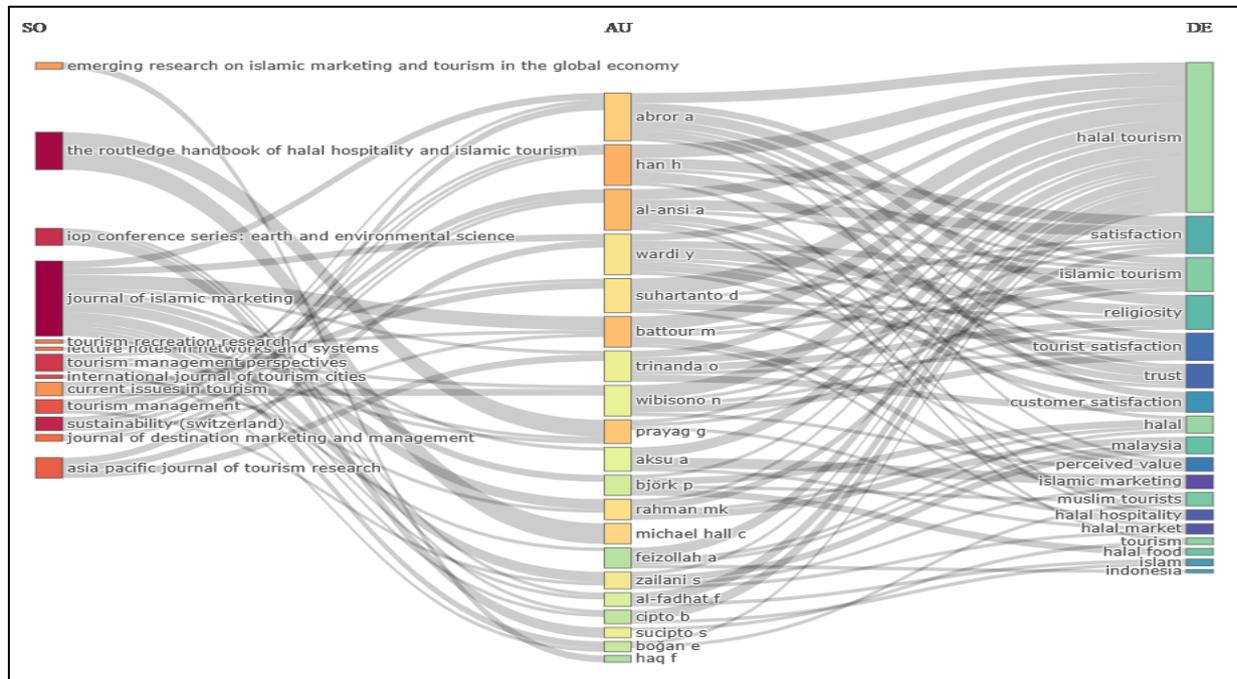


Figure 1. Three Field Plot

This analysis lists the journal publications most influential in research on halal tourism. Various metrics were used, including the number of published articles, h-index, g-index, m-index, and total citations. The table below presents a list of the most relevant publications on halal tourism and the most-cited local sources, based on references used through December 2022. The Journal of Islamic Marketing is the top source for publishing articles on halal tourism, having published 45 articles. The next source is The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism, with 13 articles, followed by the Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism, with 11 articles, and several others.

In addition, among the most-cited journals, Tourism Management ranks highest with 683 citations, followed by Tourism Management Perspectives (560) and the Journal of Islamic Marketing (559). Table 4 presents 10 influential journals, ranked by impact metrics and total citations from articles published in each journal. The Journal of Islamic Marketing was identified as an influential journal, with an h-index of 13, g-index of 19, and m-index of 1.857. Tourism Management Perspectives, Sustainability, and several other published journals follow this.

Based on the number of citations, Tourism Management was the most-cited journal with 537 TCs, followed by the Journal of Islamic Marketing, Tourism Management Perspectives, and several other journals.

Figure 2 illustrates the classification of published journals by Bradford's Law, stratified by productivity levels. Bradford's Law is used to study the distribution of articles across journals, and such distributions typically exhibit predictable regularity. (Brookes, 1969). This classification is divided into three groups. Specifically, Zone 1 comprises core journals, Zone 2 comprises intermediate journals, and Zone 3 comprises broad journals. The resulting figure includes only journals classified as Zone 1.

Table 4. Top List of Journals with the Most Published Articles with the Halal Tourism Theme

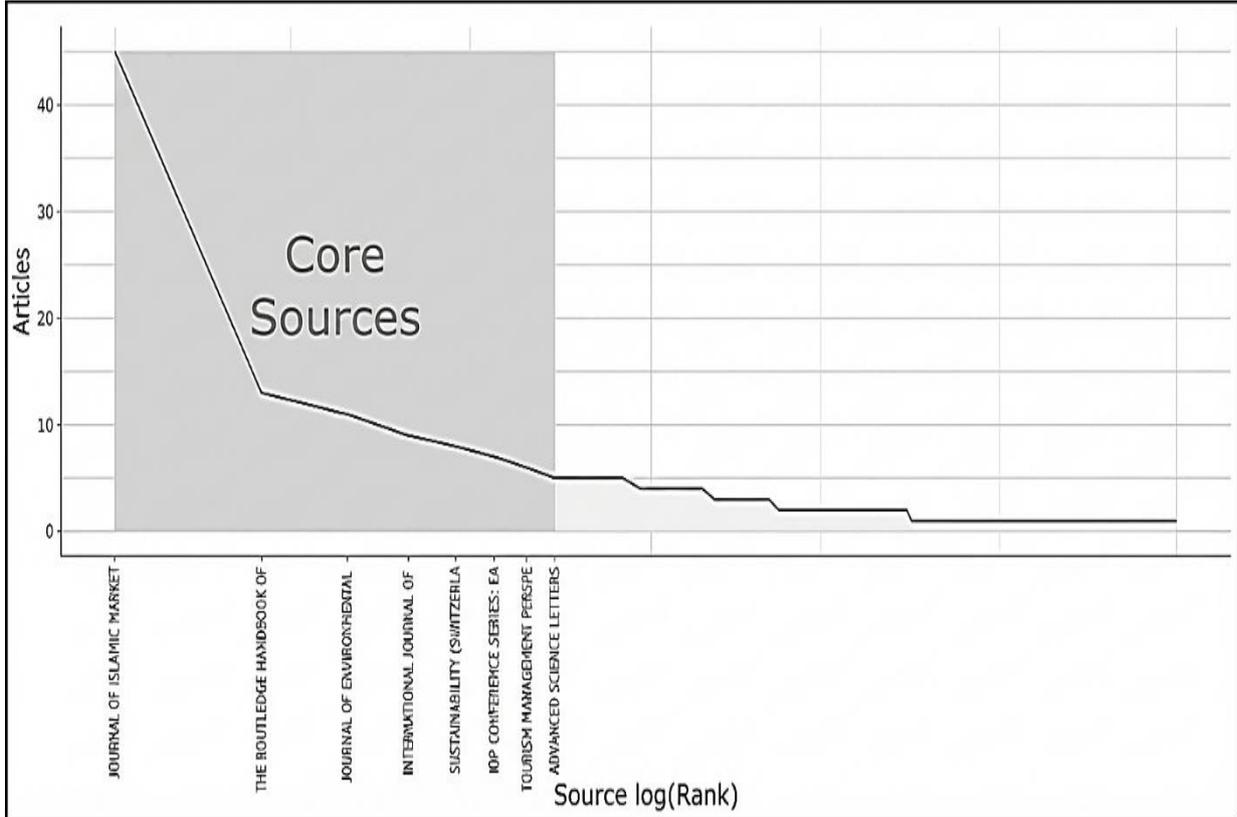
No.	Most Relevant Sources		Most Local Cited Sources	
	Sources	Articles	Sources	Articles
1.	Journal of Islamic Marketing	45	Tourism Management	683
2.	The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism	13	Tourism Management Perspectives	560
3.	Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism	11	Journal of Islamic Marketing	559
4.	International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage	9	Annals of Tourism Research	309
5.	Sustainability (Switzerland)	8	International Journal of Tourism Research	221
6.	IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science	7	Journal of Travel Research	203
7.	Tourism Management Perspectives	6	International Journal of Hospitality Management	173
8.	Advanced Science Letters	5	Current Issues in Tourism	138
9.	International Journal of Tourism Cities	5	Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	127
10.	Malaysian Journal of Consumer and Family Economics	5	Journal of Business Research	119

Table 5. List of Top Published Journals Based on Impact Measurements and Total Citations

No.	Impact Measurements				Sources	Total Citations
	Sources	H-Index	G-Index	M-Index		
1.	Journal of Islamic Marketing	13	19	1,857	Tourism Management	537
2.	The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism	6	6	0,75	Journal of Islamic Marketing	451
3.	Sustainability (Switzerland)	5	7	1	Tourism Management Perspectives	213
4.	Tourism Management	5	5	0,5	International Journal of Tourism Research	194
5.	Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	4	4	0,571	Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	181
6.	Geojournal Tour. Geosites	4	4	0,667	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	164
7.	Journal of Destination Marketing and Management	4	4	0,8	Tourism Analysis	111
8.	Tourism Recreation Research	4	4	0,148	Tourism Recreation Research	84
9.	Emerging Research on Islamic Marketing and Tourism in the Global Economy	3	3	0,3	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	76
10.	International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage	3	5	0,75	International Business Management	60

The analysis found that the Journal of Islamic Marketing, The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism, the Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism, International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage, Sustainability (Switzerland), IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science, Tourism Management Perspectives, and Advanced Science Letters are the core journal groups under Bradford's Law. The other journals fall into other categories.

Figure 2. Top 10 Journals based on Bradford’s Law



Author Analysis

The following section presents an analysis of influential authors in the field of halal tourism, including their affiliations, countries of origin, publication productivity, and citation impact. This analysis helps identify leading contributors and their academic influence. Table 6 presents the most prolific authors based on the number of publications on halal tourism. The most active contributors include Han, with 11 published articles; Al-Ansi, with 10; and Battour and Prayag, each with 7. (Battour et al., 2022; Prayag, 2020).

In terms of research impact, based on the h-index, g-index, and m-index, Al-Ansi ranks highest, with an h-index of 7, a g-index of 10, and an m-index of 1.167. This is followed by Han (h-index = 7, g-index = 11, m-index = 1.4), and Abror (h-index = 5, g-index = 6, m-index = 0.833). Additionally, when considering total citations (TCs), Al-Ansi leads with 519, followed by Han with 370 and Olya with 277. These metrics demonstrate the significant role that these scholars play in shaping halal tourism literature and influencing future research trajectories.

Table 6. Top 10 Authors based on Number of Article Publications, Impact Measures, and Total Citations

No.	Number of Publications		Impact Measurements				Total Citations	
	Authors	Articles	Authors	H-Index	G-Index	M-Index	Authors	Total
1.	Han H	11	Al-Ansi A	7	10	1,167	Al-Ansi A	519
2.	Al-Ansi A	10	Han H	7	11	1,4	Han H	370
3.	Battour M	7	Abror A	5	6	0,833	Olya Hgt	277
4.	Prayag G	7	Zailani S	5	5	0,385	Ismail Mn	258
5.	Abror A	6	Battour M	4	7	0,308	Battour M	255
6.	Michael Hall C	6	Prayag G	4	7	0,5	Battour M	224
7.	Rahman Mk	5	Rahman Mk	4	5	0,571	Abror A	153
8.	Suhartanto D	5	Wardi Y	4	5	0,667	Kim W	151
9.	Wardi Y	5	Feizollah A	3	3	0,6	Stephenson MI	143
10.	Zailani S	5	Haq F	3	3	0,3	Wardi Y	142

Figure 3 below shows the productivity frequency distribution using Lotka's law. The resulting ordinate shows the percentage of authors from various literature sources, while the abscissa shows the number of documents. Lotka stated that a mathematical relationship exists between the number of authors and the number of works produced. (Pao, 1985), which can be known through the application. The resulting dotted line shows Lotka's law. The figure indicates that 84.4% of writers published one article, while 11.1% wrote more than one.

Figure 3. Productivity of Article Writers with Halal Tourism Themes based on Lotka's Law

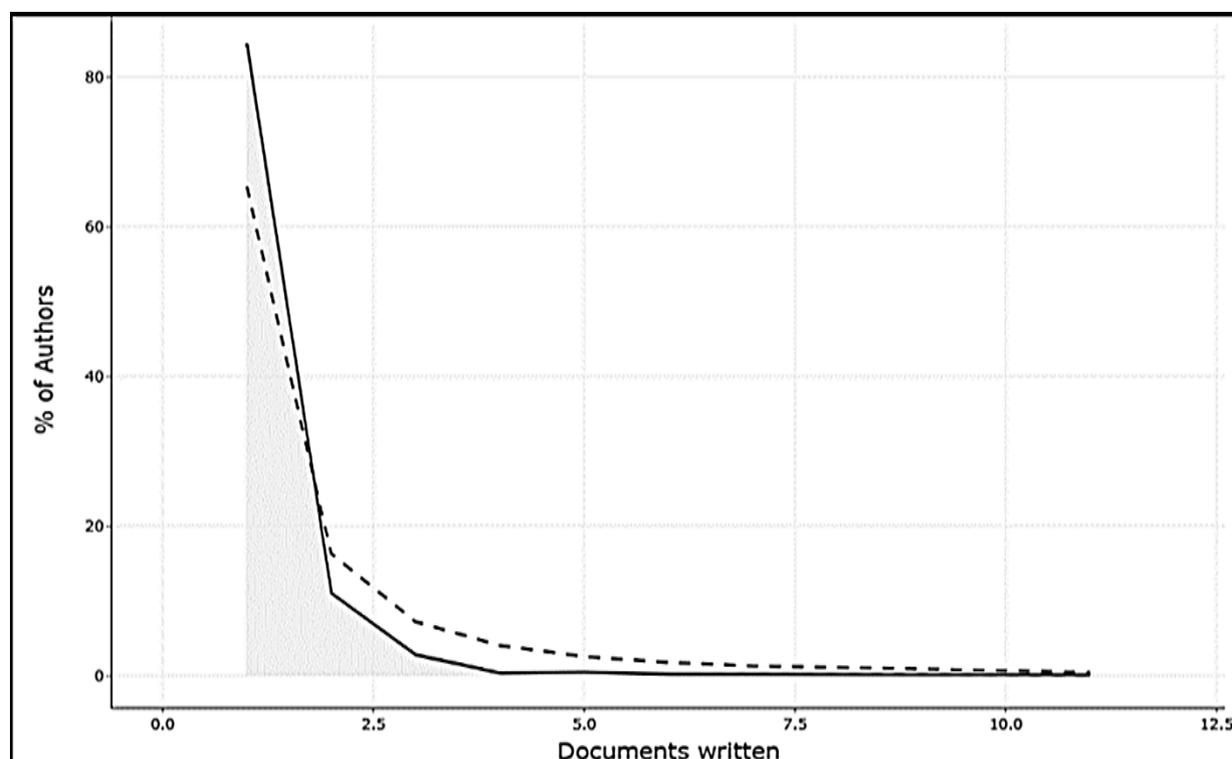


Figure 4 illustrates the co-authorship collaboration network in halal tourism research, emphasizing that scholarly output in this field emerges primarily from interconnected partnerships rather than isolated individual efforts. (Prell et al., 2009; Song et al., 2019). In this network map, each node represents an author, and each line segment denotes a co-authorship link. The overall configuration thus reveals patterns of collaboration—showing who works with whom and the strength of these associations. The size of each node, generated by bibliometric software, reflects the number of co-authored publications attributed to an author; larger nodes denote higher collaborative productivity and often signify individuals who serve as key contributors, coordinators, or influential figures within specific research communities.

The visualization identifies ten distinct collaboration clusters, differentiated by color, suggesting that halal tourism scholarship is structured into several sub-communities. These clusters are characterized by more intensive intra-group collaboration than inter-group engagement. They may reflect shared research themes (e.g., Muslim-friendly services, hospitality management, destination branding, or consumer behavior), geographic or institutional affiliations, or project-based research teams that frequently co-publish. The density of ties within a cluster indicates the strength of internal collaboration, while inter-cluster connections represent bridging links that connect otherwise separate scholarly groups. These bridging actors play a critical role in facilitating the diffusion of concepts, methods, and data across clusters. They also promote interdisciplinary exchange and help mitigate fragmentation within the field.

Overall, the collaboration structure depicted in Figure 4 offers valuable insights into the maturity and interconnectedness of halal tourism research. Greater integration and more robust cross-cluster collaboration are generally associated with stronger knowledge development, enhanced methodological diversity, and broader international visibility of the field.

Figure 4 below shows several authors and their collaboration networks. The circle size generated by the application indicates the number of articles an author has co-authored. Thus, the larger the circle, the greater the number of jointly published articles. In Figure 4, 10 collaborative network clusters are identified, each distinguished by colour.

Figures 4 and 5 together provide a comprehensive visual representation of the collaborative landscape in halal tourism research, capturing both micro-level (individual author) and macro-level (country) dynamics.

Figure 4 displays the co-authorship network among scholars who have contributed to publications on halal tourism. In this network map, each node represents an author, while the connecting lines indicate co-authorship ties, with line thickness reflecting the strength of collaboration. The size of the node correlates with the number of co-authored publications, with larger nodes representing higher collaborative productivity. Notably, prominent authors such as *al-ansi a*, *han h*, and *battour m* emerge as central figures, indicating their significant influence and coordination roles within the field.

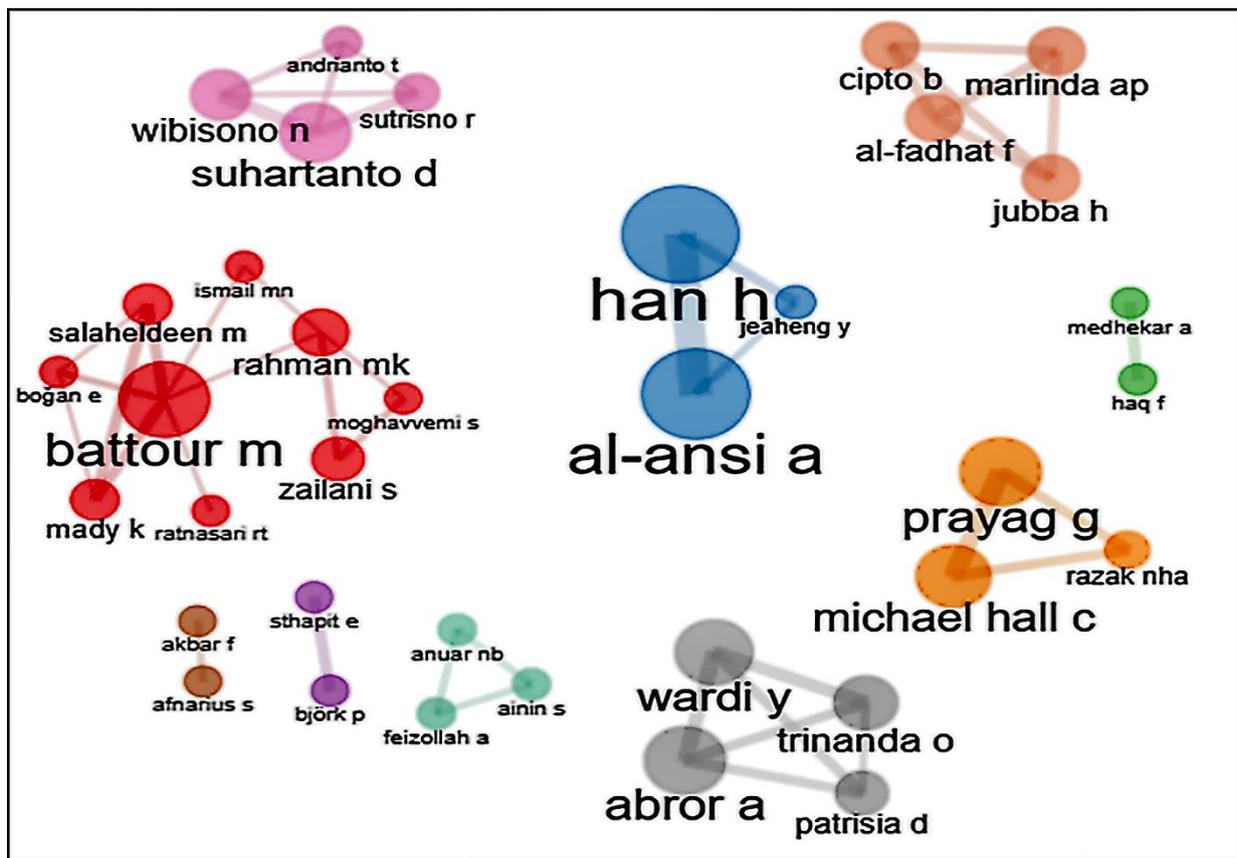


Figure 4. Collaborative Network Between Article Authors with the Halal Tourism Theme

The visualization reveals ten distinct collaboration clusters, each represented by a different color, suggesting the presence of sub-communities within the broader halal tourism research ecosystem. These clusters likely reflect shared thematic interests—such as Muslim-friendly services, hospitality management, destination branding, and consumer behavior—as well as institutional affiliations, regional proximity, or recurring project-based collaborations. Strong internal ties within clusters demonstrate cohesive research efforts, while inter-cluster links identify key bridging authors who facilitate intellectual exchange across otherwise disconnected research groups. These bridging actors are crucial for fostering interdisciplinary innovation, enhancing conceptual integration, and reducing fragmentation within literature. The structure shown in Figure 4, therefore, not only maps collaborate with whom but also reflects the field’s overall maturity, connectivity, and trajectory of knowledge development.

Complementing this micro-level analysis, Figure 5 presents a global map of research collaboration among countries involved in halal tourism studies. The red lines illustrate international co-authorship ties, highlighting transnational partnerships in scholarly output. The data indicate that Indonesia and Malaysia exhibit the strongest bilateral collaboration, having co-authored 13 publications. This suggests a particularly active academic exchange, potentially driven by shared cultural, religious, and market interests in halal tourism development.

Following this, Malaysia also appears as a key international collaborator, partnering with Egypt to produce eight joint publications and with New Zealand and Sweden to produce seven publications each. Malaysia's central role in the global collaboration map reflects its strategic position not only as a research hub but also as a leading nation in promoting halal tourism initiatives. The geographic spread of connections—spanning Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Oceania—demonstrates the growing international relevance of halal tourism as a multidisciplinary research domain. These collaborations signify increasing scholarly interest in understanding halal tourism from diverse cultural and regional perspectives, contributing to the globalization of discourse.

Taken together, Figures 4 and 5 offer critical insights into the structure and evolution of halal tourism research. The dense, multi-nodal author network and the widespread international linkages suggest a robust and growing field characterized by active collaboration, thematic diversification, and increasing global visibility. Such collaborative configurations are essential for enhancing the field's intellectual depth, methodological rigor, and practical relevance in addressing the multifaceted dimensions of halal tourism in a globalized context.

Figure 5 presents a map of countries' collaborations, indicating which countries had authors who collaborated on research on halal tourism. The red line depicts the relationship among the countries in which the authors collaborated on the research. The results indicate that Indonesia and Malaysia are the two countries that have collaborated most extensively in publishing articles, with 13 joint publications. It was followed by Malaysia and Egypt, which produced eight articles; Malaysia and New Zealand, and Malaysia and Sweden, each of which produced seven articles; and several other countries.

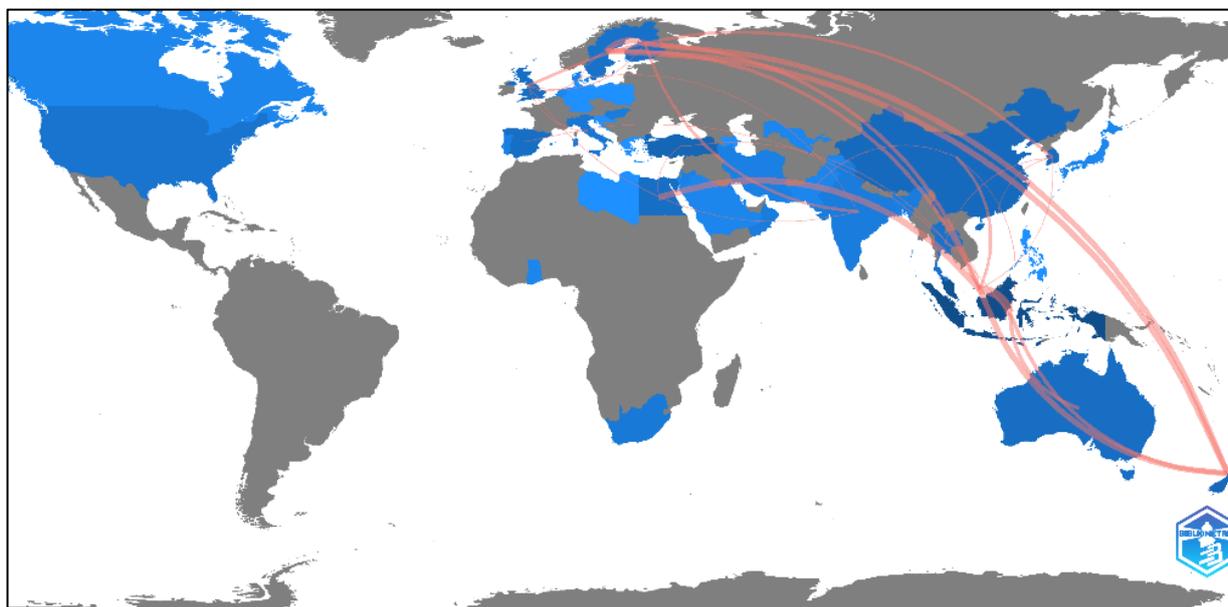


Figure 5. World Map of Research Collaboration with the Theme of Halal Tourism

Table 7 shows the top 10 affiliates and countries producing halal tourism articles. The author affiliations that generated the most articles were the University of Malaya (17), Universiti Teknologi MARA (15), Sejong University (11), and several other institutions. The countries with the most authors producing articles were Indonesia (198), Malaysia (153), Turkey (28), and several other countries.

Table 7. Top 10 Affiliates and Countries Producing Articles with Halal Tourism Themes

No.	Most Relevant Affiliations		Country Scientific Production	
	Affiliations	Articles	Country	Articles
1.	University of Malaya	17	Indonesia	198
2.	Universiti Teknologi Mara	15	Malaysia	153
3.	Sejong University	11	Turkey	28
4.	University of Canterbury	9	China	23
5.	International Islamic University Malaysia	7	New Zealand	19
6.	Linnaeus University	7	Egypt	18
7.	Tanta University	7	South Korea	17
8.	Universitas Brawijaya	7	Uk	15
9.	Universitas Islam Indonesia	7	Finland	12
10.	Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta	7	Spain	12

Document Analysis

Document analysis is critical for investigating the number of citations obtained globally (SC) and locally (LC) across all Scopus databases, and for measuring an article's impact in receiving citations from various disciplines. In addition, it measures an article's impact based on citations received across all documents included in this study. (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Grant et al., 2000; Waheed et al., 2018).

Document analysis is essential for examining citation performance at both the global citation (GC) and local citation (LC) levels using Scopus-indexed data. This approach enables the assessment of an article's scholarly impact based on citations received within the Scopus database and within the dataset analysed in this study. Relevant bibliometric indicators were derived from all documents included in the analysis study. (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Grant et al., 2000; Waheed et al., 2018).

Table 8 presents the top 10 articles ranked by GC, placing Olya & Al-Ansi's work, published in *Tourism Management* in 2018, first with 153 citations. This was followed by the work of M. Battour et al., published in the *International Journal of Tourism Research* in 2011, which has received 152 citations. Stephenson's work, published by *Tourism Management* in 2014, received 143 citations, along with several other articles.

Table 8. 10 Articles Based on Citations Globally

No.	Document Title	Authors & Year Published	Global Total Citation
1.	Risk assessment of halal products and services: Implications for the tourism industry	(Olya & Al-ansi, 2018)	153
2.	The Impact of Destination Attributes on Muslim Tourists' Choice	(M. Battour et al., 2011)	152
3.	Deciphering 'Islamic hospitality': Developments, challenges and opportunities	(Stephenson, 2014)	143
4.	Exploring halal-friendly destination attributes in South Korea: Perceptions and behaviors of Muslim travelers toward a non-Muslim destination	(H. Han, Al-Ansi, Olya, et al., 2019)	124
5.	Role of halal-friendly destination performances, value, satisfaction, and trust in generating destination image and loyalty	(Al-Ansi & Han, 2019)	107
6.	Toward a halal tourism market	(M. M. Battour et al., 2010)	103
7.	Halal culinary and tourism marketing strategies on government websites: A preliminary analysis	(Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018)	76
8.	Halal tourism: antecedent of tourists' satisfaction and word of mouth (WOM)	(Wardi et al., 2018)	69
9.	The capacity of New Zealand to accommodate the halal tourism market - Or not	(Razzaq et al., 2016)	69
10.	Muslim travellers' needs: What don't we know?	(Oktadiana et al., 2016)	64

Meanwhile, Table 9 lists the top 10 articles by LC, placing Han et al. (2019; *Tourism Management*), with 53 citations, followed by Stephenson (2014) and M. Battour et al. (2011). From the comparison of GC and LC rankings, it is evident that highly cited local articles also tend to influence other academic fields globally, indicating their broader relevance within halal tourism research.

Table 9. 10 Articles Based on Local Citations

No.	Document Title	Authors & Year Published	Local Total Citation
1.	Exploring halal-friendly destination attributes in South Korea: Perceptions and behaviors of Muslim travelers toward a non-Muslim destination	(H. Han, Al-Ansi, Olya, et al., 2019)	53
2.	Deciphering 'Islamic hospitality': Developments, challenges and opportunities	(Stephenson, 2014)	53
3.	The Impact of Destination Attributes on Muslim Tourists' Choice	(M. Battour et al., 2011)	52
4.	Toward a halal tourism market	(M. M. Battour et al., 2010)	46
5.	Role of halal-friendly destination performances, value, satisfaction, and trust in generating destination image and loyalty	(Al-Ansi & Han, 2019)	42
6.	Risk assessment of halal products and services: Implications for the tourism industry	(Olya & Al-ansi, 2018)	41
7.	Halal tourism: antecedent of tourists' satisfaction and word of mouth (WOM)	(Wardi et al., 2018)	40
8.	Halal culinary and tourism marketing strategies on government websites: A preliminary analysis	(Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018)	35
9.	Muslim travellers' needs: What don't we know?	(Oktadiana et al., 2016)	32
10.	Muslim tourist perceived value: A study on Malaysia Halal tourism	(Isa et al., 2018)	31

Analysis Author's Keyword

The following analysis examines the keywords used by authors in halal tourism research articles. Keyword analysis is a crucial bibliometric technique as it reveals trending topics, core research themes, and evolving scholarly interests in a specific field. (Song et al., 2019). This insight allows researchers to identify focal areas of study, track thematic development over time, and uncover potential gaps in literature.

As shown in Figure 6, a visualisation of keyword co-occurrence, the most frequently used terms in halal tourism publications are presented. "Halal tourism" is the dominant keyword, reflecting its central role in the study. It is followed by terms such as "halal", "tourism", "Islamic tourism", "Muslim tourist", "halal food", as well as geographically specific keywords like "Malaysia" and "Indonesia".

Additionally, conceptual terms like "religiosity" and "satisfaction" frequently appear, indicating that researchers are increasingly exploring the experiential, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of Muslim travel behaviour. These keywords highlight the expanding scope of halal tourism research beyond legal compliance, incorporating tourist satisfaction, motivation, and destination branding. In summary, as illustrated in Figure 6, the keyword visualisation highlights a rich, multidimensional research landscape, identifying both dominant themes and emerging areas in halal tourism.

Figure 7. Keyword co-occurrence network of halal tourism research (Author Keywords). Node size represents the frequency of keyword occurrences, links represent co-occurrence relationships (thicker links indicate stronger associations), and colours denote clustered themes. The network was generated using association-strength normalization with full counting and a minimum occurrence threshold of 5 keywords to improve readability. By presenting Figure 6 first, the research provides an overview of the dominant themes before delving into the more detailed relational structure in Figure 7. This sequencing enhances the reader's understanding and supports a layered, evidence-based discussion of research trends in halal tourism.

Furthermore, this analysis will present a thematic map that extracts themes from keywords to predict potential future developments and serve as a reference for other scholars developing research in specific fields, based on density and centrality. Density measures the cohesiveness among nodes, with higher values indicating greater cohesion; centrality measures the degree of correlation among topics, with higher values indicating greater correlation. (Esfahani et al., 2019). This is evident in Figure 8.

Thematic maps are divided into four quadrants, namely the upper right quadrant (Q1), which represents motor themes; the lower right quadrant (Q4), which represents basic themes; the upper left quadrant (Q2), which represents niche themes; and the lower left quadrant (Q3), which represents emerging or declining themes. Each keyword is grouped into several clusters, each marked with its respective colour.

The data analysis results indicate 12 clusters distributed across several quadrants. The theme in Q1 comprises one cluster: "Muslim tourists, customer satisfaction, and perceived values." As for the themes in Q4, there are five clusters, namely "halal products, brand, lifestyle," "halal market, Islamic marketing, Islamic hospitality," "halal, tourism, Islam," "Muslim travelers, attachment, halal-friendly image," and "halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal food."

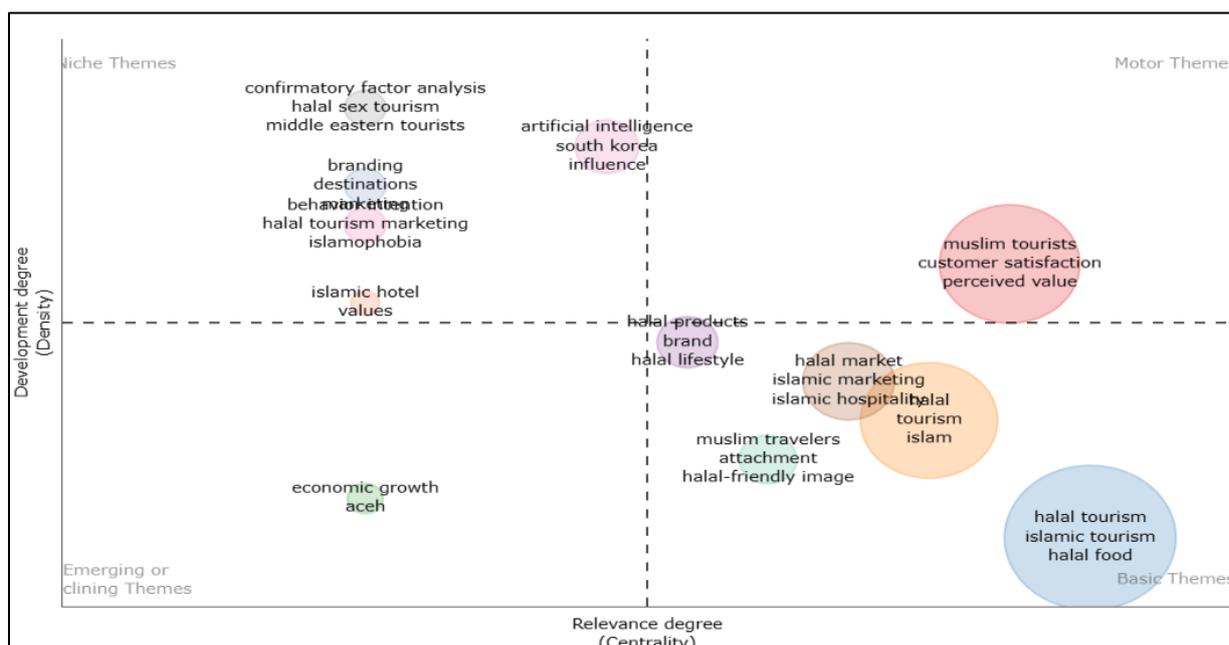


Figure 8. Thematic Map

As for the themes in Q2, there are five clusters, namely themes related to "confirmatory factor analysis, halal sex tourism, Middle Eastern tourists," "artificial intelligence, South Korea, influence," "branding, destinations, marketing," "behavioural intention, halal tourism marketing, islamophobia," and "Islamic hotel, values." Finally, the theme in Q3 contains one cluster, namely themes related to "economic growth, Aceh.

Addressing Conceptual Ambiguity and Fragmentation in Halal Tourism Research: A Bibliometric Perspective

To address the conceptual ambiguity and fragmented focus of *halal* tourism research, which has often been sporadic and insufficiently systematic, this study conducts a bibliometric analysis using Biblioshiny within RStudio, drawing on data from the Scopus database. A bibliometric approach is employed because it provides a quantitative and objective method for mapping the field's intellectual structure, identifying trends in scientific output, collaboration networks, and thematic and methodological developments in the global literature on *halal* tourism. This method enables the construction of a comprehensive, structured understanding of the academic dynamics in this area, laying a solid foundation for evidence-based policy formulation and future research.

Descriptive Statistics and Sample Overview

The analysis shows that between 1997 and 2022, 306 documents on *halal* tourism were published. These include 252 journal articles, 32 book chapters, 21 conference papers, and one monograph. The annual growth rate of publications stands at 6.39%, indicating a consistent rise in scholarly interest over the past two decades. The average number of citations per document is 10.2, indicating that the field is gaining academic recognition; however, citation impact varies considerably, with a few articles receiving disproportionately close attention.

Source Analysis

The *Journal of Islamic Marketing* is the most prolific source, publishing 45 articles and serving as a central platform for discourse in Islamic marketing. Other important sources include The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism (13 articles) and the Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism (11 articles). Notably, several highly regarded international journals—such as *Tourism Management* (with 683 citations) and *Tourism Management Perspectives* (with 560 citations)—have published extensively cited articles on *halal* tourism, demonstrating that the topic has gained mainstream relevance and cross-disciplinary appeal.

Author Analysis and Scholarly Productivity

In terms of scholarly output, Han H is the most prolific author, with 11 publications, followed by Al-Ansi A with 10 articles, and Battour M and Prayag G with 7 each. However, based on scientific impact (measured by the h-index, g-index, and m-index), Al-Ansi A ranks highest (h-index: 7; g-index: 10; m-index: 1.167), followed by Han H and Abror A. These findings suggest that while publication volume is important, scholarly influence and visibility are equally crucial in shaping the field's development.

Collaboration Networks and Geographic Distribution

The analysis of collaboration networks reveals that most publications are either single-authored or produced by small research teams. Consistent with Lotka's Law, 84.4% of authors have published only one article, while 11.1% have published two or more. This suggests that *halal* tourism research remains somewhat fragmented, with a lack of well-established, sustained academic networks. Nevertheless, international collaboration is emerging, particularly among scholars from Indonesia and Malaysia (13 joint publications), followed by collaborations between Malaysia and Egypt (8 articles) and between Malaysia and New Zealand and Sweden (7 articles each). These patterns highlight Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia, as a key hub for global academic collaboration in *halal* tourism research.

In terms of scholarly output, Han H is the most prolific author, with 11 publications, followed by Al-Ansi A with 10 articles, and Battour M and Prayag G with 7 each. However, when scholarly impact is evaluated using citation-based metrics such as the h-index, g-index, and m-index, Al-Ansi A demonstrates the greatest influence (h-index = 7; g-index = 10; m-index = 1.167), followed by Han H and Abror A. This disparity underscores that publication volume alone does not fully reflect scholarly influence; citation impact and visibility are equally critical in shaping the field.

An analysis of collaboration networks reveals that halal tourism research is predominantly single-authored or conducted by small research teams. Consistent with Lotka's Law, most authors contribute only a single publication, whereas a smaller proportion produce multiple works. This pattern indicates a fragmented yet gradually evolving collaborative landscape. Notably, international collaboration is beginning to take shape, particularly among scholars affiliated with institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia. Additional partnerships between Malaysia and countries such as Egypt, New Zealand, and Sweden further highlight the region's increasing interconnectedness. These trends suggest that Southeast Asia—especially Malaysia—is emerging as a key hub in the global research landscape on halal tourism.

Most Cited Documents

In terms of scholarly impact, the article by Olya and Al-Ansi (2018), published in *Tourism Management*, is the most cited, with 153 citations. It is followed closely by Battour et al. (2011), published in the *International Journal of Tourism Research*, with 152 citations. These publications are highly significant both theoretically and practically, as they enhance understanding of Muslim travelers' preferences and provide conceptual and empirical models for destination marketing and halal tourism management.

Keyword Analysis and Thematic Structures

The most frequently used keywords across the dataset are “*halal* tourism,” “*halal*,” “tourism,” “Islamic tourism,” and “Muslim tourists.” These keywords primarily focus on normative frameworks and market segmentation, particularly about the religious and spiritual needs of Muslim travelers. The use of terms such as “Malaysia” and “Indonesia” underscores the dominance of Southeast Asian research contexts in the literature. A co-occurrence network analysis, visualized in Figure 7, illustrates the interconnections among central concepts, including “*halal* tourism,” and related terms such as “*halal* hospitality,” “*halal* food,” “Islamic attributes,” and “satisfaction.” The size of nodes and the strength of linkages indicate the intensity and frequency of these conceptual relationships, offering deeper insight into the structure of research and the emergence of subfields within *halal* tourism.

Thematic Mapping

Thematic mapping yields four distinct quadrants based on centrality and density:

- i. Motor Themes (e.g., *halal* food, customer satisfaction) – well-developed and central to the field;
- ii. Niche Themes (e.g., religiosity, Muslim identity) – specialised topics with limited general influence;
- iii. Emerging or Declining Themes – topics that may be gaining relevance or losing scholarly attention;
- iv. Basic Themes (e.g., *halal* tourism, Islamic tourism) – foundational to the discipline and widely studied.

This thematic categorization outlines current research priorities and reveals gaps requiring further investigation. This bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive and structured overview of the academic landscape of *halal* tourism. It identifies key contributors, influential publications, major patterns of collaboration, and dominant thematic structures. The findings highlight both the achievements and limitations of the field and reveal areas with significant potential for further development. By shedding light on the intellectual structure of *halal* tourism studies, this analysis offers valuable guidance for evidence-based policymaking, curriculum development, and strategic academic planning. The insights presented here will contribute to more contextualized, inclusive, and impactful research in the growing domain of *halal* tourism.

Discussion

This study employed bibliometric analysis of data from the Scopus database to examine the development and intellectual structure of halal tourism research in the business context. Using RStudio Biblioshiny, the study examined the term “*halal* tourism” across multiple analytical dimensions. The findings revealed a steady increase in scholarly interest during 1997–2022, with an annual growth rate of 6.39% and an

average of 10.2 citations per document. These metrics indicate the growing academic significance of *halal* tourism and its expanding relevance in global research discourse.

The Journal of Islamic Marketing has emerged as the most prolific outlet for publications on halal tourism, underscoring its pivotal role as a scholarly platform in the field. Prominent contributors, such as Abror, Han, and Al-Ansi, were identified as the most productive and influential authors based on productivity and citation indices (h-index, g-index, m-index). Their works serve as valuable references for scholars and practitioners seeking strategic insights into *halal* marketing and tourism development. Thematic analysis identified core research themes, including Muslim tourist behavior, customer satisfaction, and perceived value, underscoring their centrality to successful engagement with Muslim travelers. The importance of these themes lies in their influence on travel decision-making and loyalty, thereby shaping the direction of both academic inquiry and business practice in *halal* tourism.

Bradford's Law analysis revealed a concentration of high-impact literature in a few key sources, namely, the Journal of Islamic Marketing, The Routledge Handbook of Halal Hospitality and Islamic Tourism, and the Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism. These journals function as primary repositories of knowledge in the field, reflecting both academic maturity and disciplinary consolidation. Co-authorship and collaboration network analyses revealed that Indonesia and Malaysia are central hubs in halal tourism scholarship. This pattern highlights opportunities for transnational cooperation in knowledge production and innovation. Institutions such as the University of Malaya and Universiti Teknologi Mara were among the most productive affiliations, suggesting their strategic value as academic partners in regional and global *halal* tourism development.

In the document-level analysis, the most-cited publication, Olya and Al-Ansi (2018), published in *Tourism Management*, was identified as a key reference. Its prominence suggests a critical contribution to theoretical advancement and practical relevance in *halal* tourism studies. Meanwhile, keyword co-occurrence analysis showed "*halal* tourism" as the dominant term, followed by "*halal*," "Islamic tourism," "*halal* food," "Muslim tourist," and country-specific tags such as "Malaysia" and "Indonesia." These terms reflect a convergence of geographic focus and thematic interest in religiosity, satisfaction, and tourism behaviour. The thematic map further validated the prioritisation of themes such as Muslim tourist experience, customer satisfaction, and perceived value, reinforcing the need to align services and experiences with religious and cultural expectations. The map also highlights underexplored niches that may inform future research trajectories.

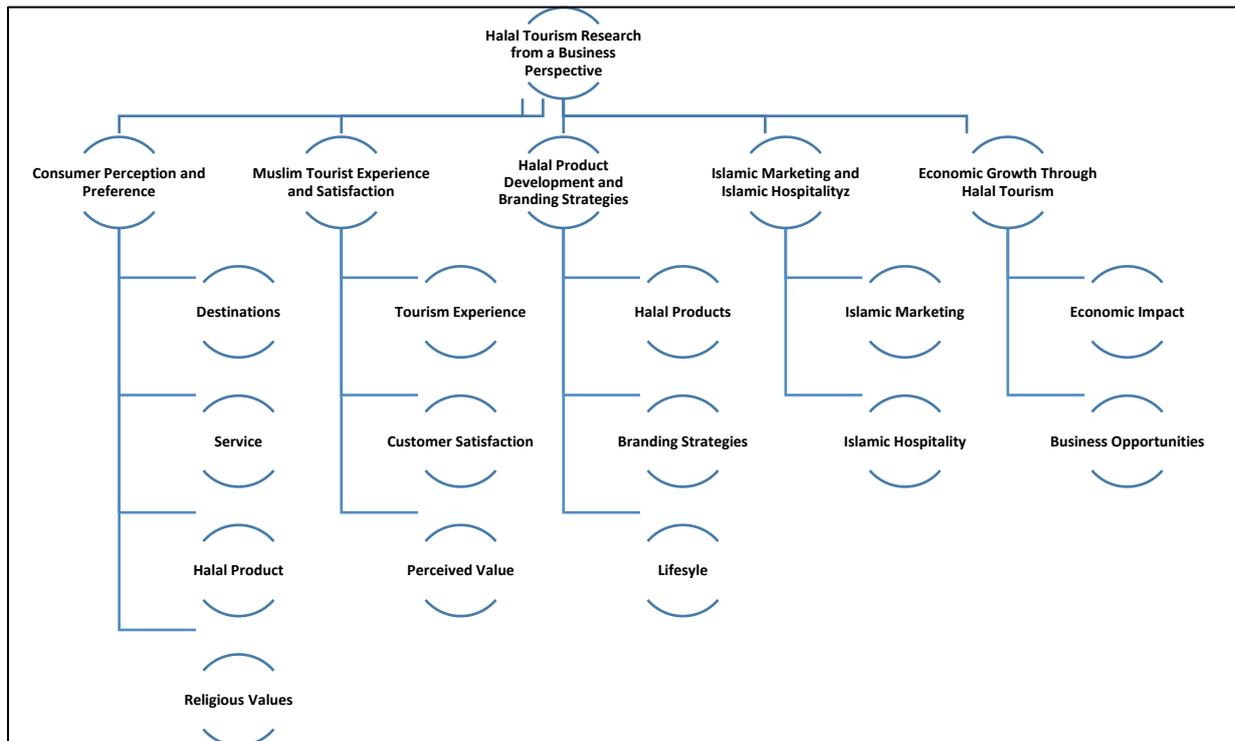


Figure 9: Clusters Based on Thematic Map Analysis

This bibliometric study, based on Scopus data, offers more than a descriptive mapping; it provides critical insights into the theoretical, managerial, and policy implications of halal tourism research. The following subsections synthesize key scholarly findings and propose directions for high-impact, high-quality research.

Consumer Perceptions and Preferences: Constructing Identity through Travel

Our analysis reveals that Muslim tourist behavior is deeply intertwined with religious identity and value congruence, reinforcing Martinez (2023) argument on destination alignment with Islamic identity. Preferred destinations often offer proximity to prayer facilities, gender-sensitive services, and *halal*-compliant environments, attributes that extend beyond rational choice and reflect identity performance in travel. Battour et al., (2010) empirically confirmed that destination attributes significantly influence the choices and satisfaction of Muslim tourists. Likewise, Han et al., (2019) demonstrate that *halal*-friendly destination performance enhances perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty. These findings suggest that consumer behavior in *halal* tourism is not only about utility but also about spiritual coherence and identity affirmation.

Experience and Satisfaction: Toward a Faith-Based Service Model

The concept of tourism within *halal* tourism extends conventional metrics to include spiritual and cultural dimensions. Battour et al. (2010) investigated how destination attributes mediate satisfaction and loyalty among Muslim travelers. Ekka (2023) highlights perceived value in Islamic hospitality as a determinant of revisit intention, integrating religiosity into satisfaction modelling. These frameworks call for the development of faith-based satisfaction indices that incorporate religiosity, halal authenticity, and spiritual comfort, as these dimensions are often overlooked in traditional service evaluation models.

Halal Product Development and Branding: Ethical Strategy in Practice

In the context of *halal* tourism, branding must extend beyond superficial religious cues to incorporate ethical storytelling and narrative. Anggara et al. (2023) found that trust and perceived religiosity significantly influence brand loyalty among Muslim consumers, suggesting that brands must deliver on ethical foundations and authenticity. Ekka (2023) discusses innovative entrepreneurship in halal tourism, underscoring the need for coherent value chains that link halal product development to ethical marketing. Such research bridges the gap between theory and commercial practice, demonstrating how Islamic ethical values can drive both branding and consumer trust.

Islamic Marketing and Hospitality: Ethical Communication and Differentiation

Islamic marketing and hospitality represent strategic levers for making halal tourism both ethically resonant and commercially competitive. Seyfi et al., (2023) Define Islamic marketing as communication grounded in honesty, respect, and cultural alignment, rather than merely as a set of promotional tactics. Han et al., (2019) empirically show that ethical hospitality and destination image foster trust and loyalty among Muslim travelers. However, many service providers still struggle to operationalize these principles, indicating a research gap in evaluating implementation effectiveness, staff training, and consumer perceptions in practice.

Economic Impacts and Strategic Opportunities: Halal Tourism as Inclusive Development

Halal tourism has the potential to drive inclusive economic development, particularly in Muslim-majority regions. Bibliometric data highlights an emerging interest in regional economic implications, including job creation, SME growth, and cultural entrepreneurship. For instance, studies in Indonesia (Aceh) suggest *halal* tourism can act as a lever for local development, connecting SMEs, halal-certified services, and faith-based economic ecosystems. This value-chain perspective offers opportunities to design halal tourism development models that enhance economic resilience and social inclusion.

Theoretical Implications and Research Agenda

The findings of this study contribute to scholarship on faith-oriented tourism, theological profiling in consumer behavior, and ethical branding frameworks. *Halal* tourism should be conceptualized not as a niche segment but as a model that integrates spiritual experiences, economic strategies, and cultural

politics. In light of these findings, future research should adopt mixed-method designs to capture Islamic consumer motivations and value perceptions more comprehensively, undertake cross-cultural comparative analyses to illuminate regional variations in halal tourism, advance the development of faith-based service quality and customer experience frameworks, and conduct policy evaluations to determine the extent to which institutional supports mechanisms enable innovation and sustained growth within the halal tourism sector.

Conclusion

Research on halal tourism shows significant growth, with an annual growth rate of 6.39% from 1997 to 2022 and an average citation per document of 10.2. Journals such as the *Journal of Islamic Marketing* have emerged as critical platforms, with authors like Abror, Han, and Al-Ansi making substantial contributions. Collaboration between authors from Indonesia and Malaysia reflects the potential for cross-national innovation. Using RStudio Biblioshiny for bibliometric analysis, this study identifies key themes such as halal hospitality, halal industry, halal food, and satisfaction, as well as specific topics such as confirmatory factor analysis and behavioural intention. The primary focus on consumer perceptions, customer satisfaction, and branding strategies aligned with Islamic values, along with the potential of Islamic marketing, indicates that halal tourism offers significant opportunities for business development. This research provides valuable insights for marketing strategies and product development and highlights the positive economic impact of halal tourism, positioning it as a promising and potentially expanding business area.

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