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Halal Tourism Development: A Systematic Review of Policy, Certification, and Sustainable Practices

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Abstract

This study aims to systematically analyse and synthesise empirical articles on halal industry development, focusing on three key dimensions: policy, certification, and sustainability practices. This study employed the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, to review articles from two major databases: Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). A total of 73 eligible empirical articles were identified and then analysed in depth. It identified 13 critical aspects of the policy dimension to be considered in developing the halal industry, including the regulatory framework, promotion and marketing, collaboration, infrastructure, and human resource development. Within the halal certification dimension, ten types of certification were identified across various sectors, including food, hotels, and restaurants. The dimensions of sustainability practices include sixteen aspects related to environmental protection, socio-cultural preservation, technology use, and economic empowerment. The urgency of this research lies in the integration of sustainability policies, certification, and practices within a single analytical framework. This framework emphasizes that halal tourism development depends on the synergy of these three dimensions. Ultimately, this study recommends further research on the halal industry in Muslim-majority countries, the challenges of implementing halal standards, and the development of empirical models that integrate these three dimensions using quantitative and mixed-methods approaches.

Keywords: *Certification, Halal Tourism Development, Policy, Sustainable Practices, Systematic Literature Review.*

INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism is a segment of the tourism industry that has experienced continuous growth over the past two decades. Data published by Mastercard-Crescentrating (2025) stated that by the end of 2025, the Muslim population is estimated to be 2.19 billion and is predicted to increase to 2.54 billion by 2035. In fact, the Pew Research Centre (2015) predicts that by 2050, Islam will be the religion with the highest growth rate among other major religions. This will undoubtedly impact consumption across various economic sectors. Dinar Standard (2025) stated in its State of the Global Islamic Economy report that the Muslim population of over 2 billion in 2023 is projected

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to have consumption spending of $2.34 trillion, increasing to $3.36 trillion by 2028, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 5.3%. This phenomenon certainly encourages not only Muslim-majority countries to improve Muslim-friendly travel services, but also Muslim-minority countries, as research conducted by Henderson (2015) promotes the development of halal tourism not only in Malaysia but also in the Muslim-minority country of Singapore. Madjid et al. (2024) and Wazin et al. (2025) also emphasise inclusivity in halal tourism, which is not only friendly to Muslims but also to non-Muslims.

This significant growth in the halal tourism industry can pose challenges and even threats if not properly managed. Tourism development certainly requires more than just Sharia compliance; it also necessitates strengthening policies, certification that is not only Islamic but also adaptive, and attention to sustainability. Research conducted by Uansa-ard & Binprathan (2018), Rusby & Arif (2020), Izudin et al. (2022), Santoso et al. (2022), Danarta et al. (2024), Rahayu & Abbas (2024) emphasises the importance of collaboration and synergy among all stakeholders as a way to increase the growth and development of halal tourism. Furthermore, the formulation and strengthening of government regulations is another crucial aspect, as evidenced by research conducted by Hartarto & Azizurrohman (2022), Maskuroh (2023) and Trishananto et al. (2024). Vandromme (2020) and Aimon et al. (2023) emphasise the importance of strong political will as a crucial factor in the development of halal tourism.

Regarding sustainability practices, Izudin et al. (2022) stated that halal tourism development must accommodate local identities and values. Maskuroh (2023) and Maftukhatusolikhah et al. (2024) also explain the importance of eco-friendly tourism practices in halal tourism. Finally, the growing interest in halal tourism has encouraged many countries to strengthen their halal tourism sectors by implementing policies and regulations, promoting certification, and advancing halal tourism in line with sustainable practices. Paying attention to these three dimensions: policies, certification, and sustainability practices, which substantially interact and are inherent in the halal industry, can be a factor in improving the development of the halal industry.

As the author described, previous research indicates that studies on halal tourism have primarily focused on specific dimensions and are largely sectoral. For example, research by Yahaya et al. (2020) focused on hotel standards in Malaysia, Uansa-ard & Binprathan (2018) focused on halal tourism awareness in Thailand, and Danarta et al. (2024) on sustainable tourism in Indonesia. This study aims to fill this gap by systematically examining three dimensions: policies, certification, and sustainability practices, using a high-quality article analysis based on the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method and the PRISMA framework. Several previous studies that employed the bibliometric analysis method include research conducted by Ilham et al. (2024) on the evolution of halal production in relation to halal verification methods and Apriantoro et al. (2024) on the current growth and trends in halal ecotourism publications. An SLR conducted by Ismail et al. (2025) maps the existing research on halal tourism. However, to the best of our knowledge, no study has specifically and explicitly examined the development of halal tourism, highlighting three key dimensions: policies, certification, and sustainable practices. Previous studies have tended to map research trends in general terms and have not yet clarified the conceptual relationship between sustainability policies, certification, and practices. This study fills this gap by integrating all three dimensions into a single analytical framework to more comprehensively explain halal tourism development. These three dimensions are essential to map

as a reference for stakeholders in developing halal tourism in the future. This research is divided into several sections. Section Two explains the methodology used up to the point of reviewing the articles. Section three presents the results, including the study's characteristics and findings by dimension (policies, certification, and sustainable practices). Section four provides a discussion, and section five presents the conclusions.

METHOD

The Review Protocol-PRISMA

This study employed a systematic literature review method, based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol, to analyse relevant articles in the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases. This is done by matching research questions in a structured manner, starting from the identification stage to the systematic data collection stage (Moher et al., 2009)

This study employs the PICo (Population/Patient/Problem, Phenomena of Interest, and Context) framework for formulating research questions in qualitative studies (Murdoch University, 2021; Hosseini et al., 2024). Based on PICo, this study aims to investigate the development of three key dimensions: policy, certification, and sustainable practices in various countries within the context of halal tourism. Based on these gaps, this study aims to examine government policies supporting halal tourism development, identify the forms of halal certification applied within the sector, and explore sustainable practices implemented in halal tourism. These objectives guide the systematic search and selection of relevant articles from the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases.

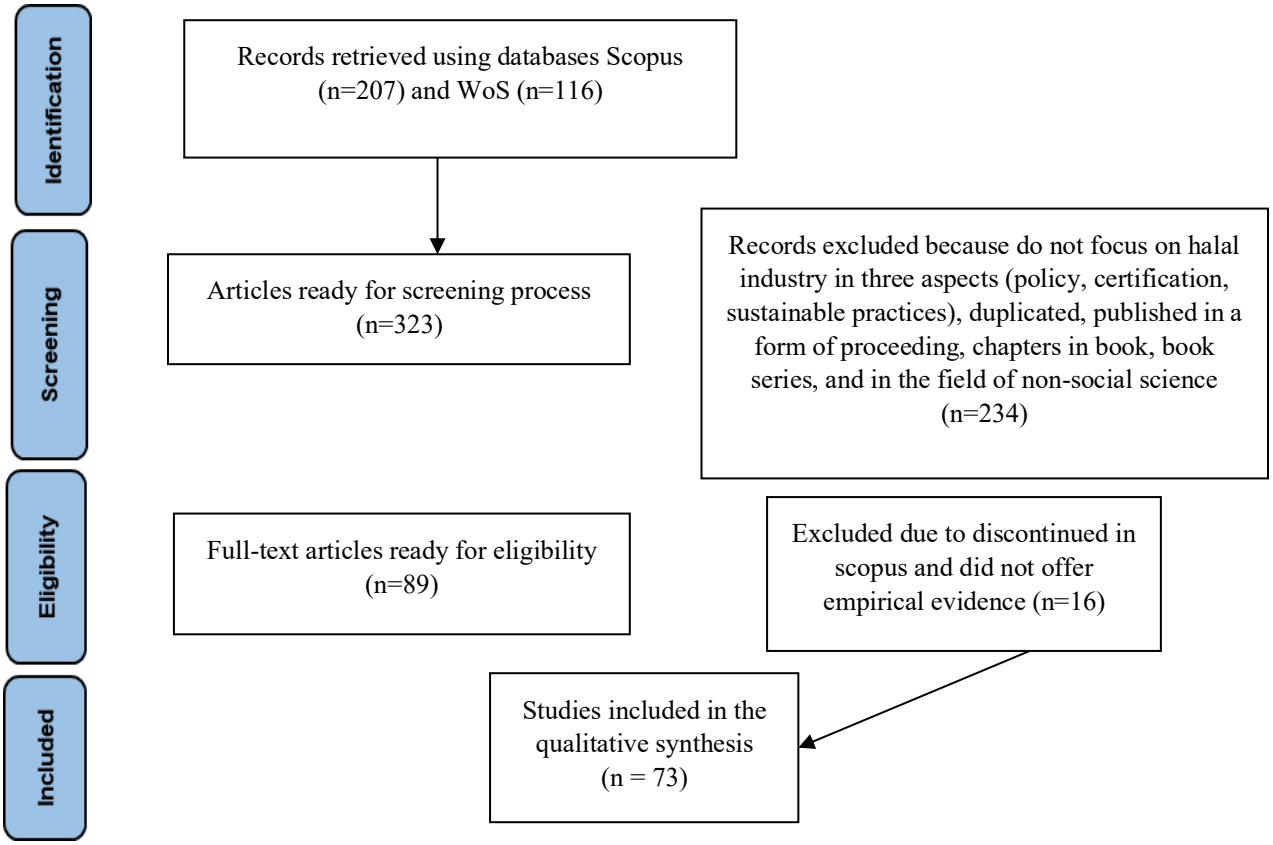
Systematic Searching Strategy

There are five stages involved in conducting a systematic search strategy: Identification, Screening, Eligibility Assessment, Quality Appraisal, and Data Abstraction and Analysis. The identification process begins by searching for relevant literature in the Scopus and WoS databases using synonyms, keywords, variations, and all related terms, such as halal tourism, policy, development, certification, and sustainable practices. The reason for choosing Scopus and WoS as sources for article identification is that both databases feature high-quality articles and various search features that facilitate finding articles that match our research objectives (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020). The search string in Scopus was TITLE-ABS-KEY (("Halal tourism" OR "Islamic tourism" OR "Muslim-friendly tourism" OR "Sharia Tourism") AND ("Policy" OR "Policies" OR "Government regulation" OR "Certification" OR "Halal certification" OR "Standard*" OR "Sustainable tourism" OR "Sustainable practice*" OR "Sustainability")). At this stage, the author obtained 207 articles from Scopus and 116 articles from Web of Science (WoS). The next stage was article screening. The author screened the articles to ensure that they align with the study's objectives. Through this process, the author excluded 234 articles, and the remaining 89 articles proceeded to the eligibility stage. The inclusion and exclusion process was carried out, with only articles on the halal industry from journals in social studies, economics, finance, social science, business, accounting, and management reviewed.

The next stage is eligibility, where the author analyses the reviewed articles. At this stage, the author excluded 16 articles due to their non-empirical nature and those that had been discontinued in Scopus. The authoridentified nine articles from eight journals that had been discontinued in Scopus. The authoralso excluded seven articles due to their non-empirical nature;

therefore, these articles were excluded from the analysis. The next stage is quality appraisal, in which the reviewed articles are assessed for their quality. In general, articles are categorised into three quality levels: high, moderate, and low (Mark & Roberts, 2006). In the quality appraisal stage, articles were classified into high and moderate categories based on the journal's indexation status. Articles published in Scopus-indexed journals were categorized as high quality, while articles in Web of Science's Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) journals were categorized as moderate quality. Based on these criteria, all 73 articles were deemed worthy of further analysis. Each selected article was assigned a numeric code 1–73 to facilitate the identification of findings in the table. Data were then extracted based on author, year, country, objectives, methods, and key findings. Coding was performed by identifying statements or findings related to sustainability policies, certification, and practices. Codes with similar meanings were then grouped into subthemes, such as regulation, promotion, product certification, hotel certification, environmental conservation, and socio-cultural preservation. These subthemes were then consolidated into three main categories accoring to the research questions. Next, in the data abstraction and analysis stage, the author conducted an in-depth analysis of the 73 articles on halal tourism development covering three dimensions: policy, certification, and sustainable practices. Figure 1 shows the flow diagram of the literature review study.

Figure 1: The Flow diagram of the literature review study

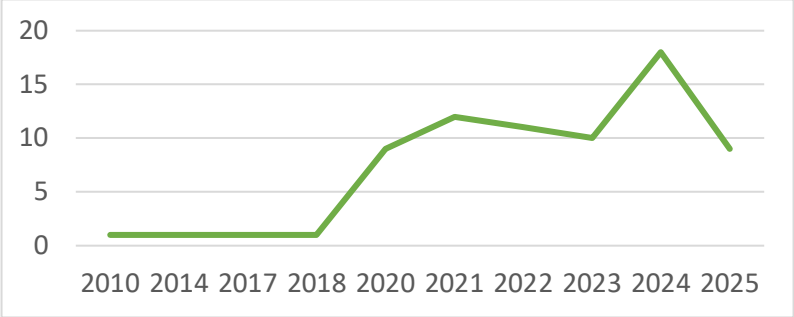


RESULTS

Characteristics of The Studies

The figure below explains the number of articles published by year. The total number of articles is 73, with a publication year range from 2010 to 2025. The author found that the highest number of publications occurred in 2024 (18), and the fewest in 2010, 2014, 2017, and 2018 (1 each).

Figure 2. Publication by Years



*Publication as per December 2025

The 73 articles analyzed in this study were published in 39 journals, indicating that halal tourism studies are spread across a variety of academic outlets. The Journal of Islamic Marketing was the most dominant journal with 22 articles, followed by the International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage with five articles. Meanwhile, Mazahib: Journal of Islamic Legal Thought and Ijtihad: Journal of Islamic Law and Humanitarian Discourse each published three articles, while most other journals only published one or two articles. Based on the indexing status used in this study, 38 journals are listed in Scopus with SJR rankings Q1–Q4, while one journal, Etikonomi, is indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) of Web of Science. This distribution indicates that the literature on halal tourism has expanded across journals, although publication remains concentrated in a handful of outlets specifically addressing Islamic marketing, tourism, and Islamic studies.

Table 1 presents the distribution of research by country of study and examines how policy, certification, and sustainability practices contribute to the development of halal tourism. The author found 68 papers focused on a single country, out of 17 total countries. Based on the articles reviewed, Indonesia had the most research on the halal industry, with 42 articles. The dominance of studies from Indonesia reflects the country's large Muslim population, strong policy attention to halal tourism, and the active development of Muslim-friendly destinations. However, this geographical concentration also indicates that evidence from Muslim-minority and underrepresented countries remains limited, thereby restricting the broader applicability of current findings. Furthermore, five studies were conducted in more than one country. The following table describes the 73 articles, arranged by numeric code from 1 to 73.

Table 1. Articles Based on Countries

Country	Papers	No. of papers
Single-country (16 Countries)	1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23, 24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,34,36,37,38,39,41,42,44,45,46,	**68**

Country	Papers	No. of papers
	47,48,49,50,51,52,53,54,55,56,57,58,59,60,61,62,63,64,65, 66,67,68,69,70,71,72,73	
Indonesia	2,3,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,19,22,23,26,28,29,30,32,38,39, 41,42,44,46,47,48,49,50,53,56,57,58,59,62,64,65,66,67,69,72	42
Thailand	5,34,55,61	4
Turkiye	6,54,60,70	4
Malaysia	1,52,68,73	4
UAE	7	1
Spain	37,51	2
Portugal	20	1
Philippines	21	1
Japan	18	1
South Korea	24	1
Tunisia	25	1
Australia	27	1
Slovenia	31	1
Jordan	36	1
Maldives	45	1
India	63	1
Russia	71	1
Multi-countries	**4,33,35,40,43**	**5**
Indonesia and Japan	33	1
Iran and Saudi Arabia	35	1
Indonesia and Thailand	4	1
Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Pakistan.	43	1
Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Taiwan, and Korea	40	1

Source: Author's synthesis of the reviewed articles (2026)

Findings by Dimensions

To ensure the sustainability of halal tourism, three main dimensions are crucial to integrate into halal tourism development efforts. The first dimension is policy, encompassing the government's responsibility to establish laws, promote, synergise, and collaborate, as well as build infrastructure that supports halal tourism. The second dimension is halal certification, which helps ensure the halal status of products and services in the tourism industry, thereby fostering trust among tourists. The third dimension encompasses sustainability practices, including socio-cultural aspects, environmental protection, economic development, and the utilisation of technology. The following are the findings for each dimension, presented in a table format.

Policies

Based on Table 2, the government has implemented various policies to develop halal tourism. The author categorised these policies into 13 types. For example, suboptimal halal tourism services in Aceh are due to a lack of strong synergy among stakeholders, necessitating cross-sector collaboration (Rahayu & Abbas, 2024). The importance of synergy between various stakeholders, such as the central government, tourism managers, tourists, local authorities, the private sector, investors, and business people in general, has a positive impact on the development of halal tourism, as stated by Uansa-ard & Binprathan (2018); Rusby & Arif (2020); Izudin et al. (2022);

Santoso et al. (2022); Danarta et al. (2024). Even in the policy-making stage, collaboration between the government and the private sector is necessary to ensure that the resulting policies do not harm the environment, marginalise local communities, and create low-quality tourist destinations (Purwandani & Yusuf, 2021).

Table 2. Policies for the Development of Halal Tourism

No.	Policies	Papers	No of Papers
1	Socialisation, promotion, and marketing	5,9,10,19,28,34,39,40,42,50,51, 53,55,56,57,58,59,64,68,70,72	21
2	Formulation and strengthening of Formal regulations	1,11,14,15,22,25,26,29,34,39,45, 48,50,54,55,58,59,69,73	19
3	Synergy and Collaboration	2,5,8,10,16,19,26,29,32,33, 38,39,40,46,49,53	16
4	Infrastructure development	5,26,32,34,35,36,44,45,53,58,59	11
5	Training	32,35,40,46,53	5
6	Human Resource Capacity Building	5,32,39,59	4
7	Support for SMEs	3,28,61	3
8	Financing from Islamic Finance Institutions	26,37,45	3
9	Air connection with Muslim-Majority Countries	20	1
10	Strengthening the Locally Based Halal Supply Chain	28	1
11	Land Reform	38	1
12	Implementation of Comprehensive Sharia principles in the tourism and hospitality	55	1
13	Incentives for halal certification	76	1

Source: Author's synthesis of the reviewed articles (2026)

In the context of promotion, Rusby & Arif,(2020), Juliana et al. (2022), Noviarita et al. (2024), Pongsakornrungsilp et al. (2024), Osijo et al. (2024), and Sari et al. (2025) emphasised the need for promotion in the development of halal tourism. Socialisation about the urgency of developing halal tourism destinations is also beneficial, as it provides explanations to local communities about the specific positive impacts, enabling people to understand the inclusiveness of halal tourism and avoid misperceptions (Hennida et al., 2024). Additionally, socialisation enhances understanding and awareness of the concept of tourism (Wahyudin et al., 2022). Purwandani & Yusuf (2021) explained that the government needs to formulate and promote halal tourism policies that take into account the norms, culture, and traditions of each community. Kasdi et al. (2021) stated that promotion can be achieved by hosting successful events at halal tourism destinations. Meanwhile, Boll (2020) stated that tourism development can serve as a means to promote cultural identity. Finally, promotion is a crucial step in ensuring the long-term sustainability of tourism (Wazin et al., 2025)

In the context of policy formulation and strengthening, Trishananto et al. (2024) stated that halal tourism policies need to be further integrated with Islamic values to become more competitive

in the global market The need for hotel standardisation in halal tourism is also emphasised by Pamukcu & Sariisik (2021). Meanwhile, Maskuroh (2023) proposed developing halal tourism through policy formulation grounded in the eight policy principles outlined by Ibn Khaldun. Hartarto & Azizurrohman (2022) found that government policies, including halal hotel certification and the designation of 12 provinces in Indonesia as Muslim-friendly destinations, increased the number of Muslim and non-Muslim tourist visits by 21%. Vandromme (2020) and Aimon et al. (2023) stated that strong political will has a significant influence on the development of halal tourism. For example, Santoso & Wahid (2023) propose the importance of a specific law for halal tourism to maximise public welfare. Hadiasali et al. (2022) criticise the inconsistency of government regulations for sharia-compliant hotels, which often leads industry players to create their own interpretations of what constitutes a sharia-compliant hotel. Finally, Ruhaeni et al. (2024) argue for a national-scale halal tourism law.

In Jordan, Neveu (2010) stated that the government, through the Ministry of Awqaf and the Ministry of Tourism, is reconstructing historical Islamic sites to improve Islamic tourism, such as the reconstruction of the Cave of the Seven Sleepers and the reconstruction of the mausoleum of Abu ‘Ubayda b. al-Jarrah. On a smaller scale, Djamali et al. (2025) even emphasise the importance of facilities and infrastructure on beaches, such as the presence of female diving instructors for Muslim women. The government can also collaborate with Islamic financial institutions, as suggested by Muneeza et al. (2020), who stated that financing from equity crowdfunding and Islamic financial institutions is needed to develop halal tourism infrastructure. This is reinforced by Martín et al. (2020), who suggest that Islamic finance, through innovative mechanisms, can be utilised by policymakers to develop halal tourism. Meanwhile, according to Nawawi et al. (2020), one of the key factors in advancing the halal food industry is effective government support for local SMEs.

Another concrete step in developing halal tourism is conducting halal certification training (Madjid et al., 2024). Syufa’at et al. (2024) stated that one way the Banyumas government welcomes tourists is by conducting halal certification training. Another development strategy could be implemented by domestic training institutions, facilitated by the government in collaboration with multinational companies (Zamani-Farahani & Henderson, 2010). Maftukhatusolikhah et al. (2024) and Hariani & Hanafiah (2024) stated that increasing awareness of sustainable halal tourism can be achieved through education and training campaigns involving the government, local communities, and tourism activists. Purwandani & Yusuf (2021) also stated that developing the quality and quantity of human resources is a crucial factor in advancing halal tourism. In its development, halal tourism also requires funding from Islamic financial institutions through innovative financing mechanisms (Muneeza et al., 2020; Martín et al., 2020; Yusuf et al., 2021). Other important policies include air connectivity with Muslim majority countries (Domingues & Almeida, 2023), strengthening locally based halal supply chains (Suaidi et al., 2025), land reform policy (Jaelani et al., 2024), and inserting Sharia principles into the tourism and hospitality (Abas et al., 2022).

Certification

Based on Table 3, the authoridentified various halal certification models that can be implemented to develop halal tourism. Rahayu & Abbas (2024) found that ensuring the halal status of food through certification can increase regional economic growth in Aceh. Research conducted by Prawiro & Fathudin (2023) found that halal certification in MSMEs increases the growth of

MSMEs and the development of the halal industry in Lombok. Furthermore, Sarastiani et al. (2022), Azizah et al. (2023), Domingues & Almeida (2023), Lestari et al. (2023), and Danarta et al. (2024) found that guaranteeing halal certification affects visits and the competitiveness of halal tourism, which ultimately impacts the growth of the halal industry. A study by Maftukhatusolikhah et al. (2024) emphasised the importance of halal certification in culinary products. Ratnasari et al. (2020) found that halal certification in the culinary arts positively influences behavioural intention for halal tourism, and halal food certification also influences tourist satisfaction (Johan & Rahman, 2025).

Table 3. Forms of Certification for the Development of Halal Tourism

No.	Certification	Papers	No of Papers
1	Halal Certification Products (Food and Beverages)	2,3,4,5,9,12,16,17,19,20,21,23, 27,28,31,32,33,34,40,39,40,41, 42,43,46,47,48,53,51,52,53,55, 56,61,64,66,67,69,71,74,72	40
2	Halal Standard/Certification for Hotel	1,4,14,25,31,39,43,44,52,53, 58,59,66,67,70	16
3	Halal-certified restaurants	5,9,24,29,43,44,45,54,58,59,	10
4	Halal Accommodation	37,50,67	3
5	Halal-certified entrepreneurs	5,33	2
6	Halal Cosmetics	24,37	2
7	Halal pharmaceuticals	37	1
7	Halal Fashion	37	1
8	Halal Mart/Markets	24	1
10	Halal SPA	53	1

Source: Author's synthesis of the reviewed articles (2026)

A study by Katuk, Ku-mahamud, et al. (2021) found that halal certification can improve business performance for business actors in Bandung. This aligns with research by Adel et al. (2021), who found that Muslims visiting non-Muslim tourist destinations consider several factors, including certified halal food, the availability of halal restaurants and halal hotels, and freedom of worship. Madjid et al. (2024) even found that halal certification is a crucial factor in attracting Muslim tourists in non-Muslim-majority areas. Meanwhile, Effendi et al. (2021) stated that the most critical pillar of the Islamic economy in terms of revenue is halal food, an established sector with growing private investment. Ultimately, it states that all aspects of the halal industry, including food, travel, and the creative economy, must use halal certification (Ruhaeni et al., 2024).

Cuevas et al. (2022) emphasised the need for national unification of halal standards. In fact, in the context of tourism villages, research conducted by Noviarita et al. (2024) highlighted a weakness in tourism villages where there is still a lack of halal food certification in restaurants, even though halal certification for all products that support the development of halal tourism villages is necessary (Harini et al., 2025). Slightly different from the results of research conducted by Yusuf et al. (2021), which found that many tourists prioritise halal certification based on local culture rather than formal certification from the government. Research by Rachmiatie et al. (2022) in Indonesia and Thailand found that halal certification in hotels is not a priority for business actors

in this sector, as they believe that if they already guarantee the halal nature of their products without certification, they can still attract Muslim tourists. However, this contrasts with research conducted by Shnyrkova & Predvoditeleva (2022), which found that the government needs to certify hotels as halal to meet the needs of Muslims.

Sustainable Practices

Table 4. Sustainability Practices for The Development of Halal Tourism

No.	Sustainable Practices	Papers	No of Papers
1	Socio-cultural harmony/Community-based halal tourism/ preservation of local wisdom (cultural sustainability)	2,3,4,5,7,8,9,12,13,15,27,28,29,33 34,39,40,47,51,53,56,58,59,76	24
2	Provision of Muslim-friendly facilities	6,13,15,18,19,24,33,34,44,53,62,72,73	13
3	Environmental conservation/Eco-friendly tourism	6,8,11,15,19,34,47,53,57,59,60,62,64	13
4	Digital tourism/Technology Adoption	9,40,46,55,59,66	6
5	Quality of Services	17,30,41,61	4
6	Center of Education Historical Sites	8,12,26	3
7	Good Waste Management	53,57,65	3
8	Inclusivity for Non-Muslim	46,58,59	3
9	Historical, natural, and cultural attractions	6,16,57	3
10	Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability (CHSE)	32,49,70	3
11	Islamic Heritage	20	1
12	Reinforce Islamic cultural values in society	27	1
13	Cultural Exchange between residents and visitors	15	1
14	Uphold the traditional way of life	34	1
15	Eco-friendly farming	8	1
16	Use of renewable energy	72	1

Source: Author's synthesis of the reviewed articles (2026)

Based on Table 4 above, the authorfound several sustainability practices described by previous studies. Rahayu & Abbas (2024) and Harini et al. (2025) stated that halal tourism development is essential to consider the harmony between economic, cultural, social, and environmental growth. Furthermore, Prawiro & Fathudin (2023) emphasised the importance of considering social, cultural, and political aspects in understanding the challenges of implementing halal certification, as the development of the halal industry is closely tied to local wisdom. Islam itself does not prohibit cultural values as long as they do not conflict with Islamic principles, so local culture can also be used to attract customer interest (Rachmiatie et al., 2022). Santoso et al. (2022) emphasised a halal tourism model that can support community economic growth by utilising local wisdom and Islamic principles. Sustainability practices can also be demonstrated through traditional lifestyles and institutions, which could serve as a tourist attraction, as stated by Kasdi et al. (2021).

Izudin et al. (2022) emphasise the importance of preserving local culture (local wisdom) to attract tourists. The primary focus is on integrating social and cultural sustainability with environmental management. This study also explores eco-friendly farming practices based on natural Islamic boarding schools, utilising local organic microbes, livestock waste, and harvested rainwater. Uansa-ard & Binprathan (2018) highlight the development of the halal meetings, incentives, conferences, and MICE events industry through the preservation and assimilation of traditional culture, which can increase interest among both local and international tourists. Echchabi et al. (2022) stated that sustainable practices that led to the choice of halal tourism in the UAE are the diversity of halal food, social and cultural activities, Muslim-friendly communities, and family entertainment events that support social and economic sustainability.

In another context of sustainability practices, Rahmawati et al. (2025) found that the availability of prayer rooms was a significant factor in increasing Muslim tourist visits to Japan, particularly those from Indonesia and Malaysia. Azizah et al. (2023) also stated that several tourist attractions in Japan already have Muslim-friendly facilities, such as prayer rooms. Meanwhile, Marlinda et al. (2023) found that sustainability practices in South Korea focused on providing Muslim-friendly facilities, such as halal restaurants and prayer rooms, despite challenges in aligning policies with local culture. Sustainability here also encompasses socio-cultural aspects, with the majority of the community supporting these policies despite some resistance.

Hadiasali et al. (2022) state that the completeness of prayer facilities is an essential factor that makes Sharia hotels more competitive and affects guests' intention to stay. The importance of prayer facilities is also emphasised by Haron et al. (2025). In addition, Djamali et al., (2025) explain the importance of technical aspects such as the provision of prayer rooms in Muslim tourist attractions, they also emphasise that the development of halal tourism must be carried out in a way that encourages economic and social inclusivity, ensuring that all communities, regardless of religion, benefit from the growing tourism sector because Manado is a Muslim minority area.

Furthermore, environmental protection is also a crucial factor in the development of halal tourism. Maskuroh (2023) emphasises an inclusive approach to halal tourism development, specifically through eco-friendly tourism, which supports not only socio-cultural inclusion but also sustainable tourism practices. Pongsakornrungsilp et al. (2024) even stated that tourist visits to a destination are related to the local community's commitment to protecting the environment and preserving local culture. A study by Saraç et al. (2023) stated that Halal-Sensitive Tourists (HSTs) tend to choose tourism services that are pro-environment and promote Islamic values. This finding aligns with Sukma et al. (2025), who found that environmentally conscious Muslim tourists tend to choose eco-friendly tourism options. Therefore, innovations that integrate sustainability principles, such as waste management and renewable energy, can increase tourist loyalty and satisfaction.

Studies conducted by Şen Küpeli et al. (2017) and Suhartanto et al. (2025) also emphasise the importance of good waste management. Another study by Maftukhatusolikhah et al. (2024) outlines various methods to sustain halal tourism, including effective waste management, biodiversity and nature conservation, and the preservation of local wisdom. Kalyan & Ekka (2024) stated that environmental sustainability is a factor in the decision-making of the Indian Muslim generation when choosing halal tourism. Danarta et al. (2024) stated that religion is the foundation of sustainable halal tourism practices through cultural and natural conservation. To ensure the sustainability of tourist attractions, Syufa'at et al. (2024) emphasise the importance of integrating

the concepts of Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability (CHSE) with Islamic values. Ultimately, neglecting environmental management, waste management systems, and a clean tourist environment can negatively iimpact tourist satisfaction (Pattaray & Sumaryadi, 2024).

The next important aspect is the use of technology in developing halal tourism. Noviarita et al. (2024) found that adopting digital tourism can increase tourist interest and market expansion while also balancing economic growth, environmental protection, and social protection. The push for digitalisation was also advocated by Hanafiah et al. (2022) to enable tourist destinations to reach a wider audience, including young Muslim communities and the general public. The lack of technology utilisation can be a barrier to the development of halal tourism, as Hariani & Hanafiah (2024) noted that the still minimal adoption of technology in tourism development in Aceh, unlike in Jakarta, is one of the obstacles to halal tourism development in Aceh. Furthermore, Madjid et al. (2024) stated that adopting technology through E-Commerce and Online Marketing, and diversifying halal food menus, coupled with inclusivity for non-Muslims, can contribute to sustainable tourism. The importance of inclusive halal tourism for non-Muslims and local communities in sustaining halal tourism is also emphasised by Wazin et al. (2025).

Furthermore, it is also essential to pay attention to service quality to ensure sustainable halal tourism. Ratnasari et al. (2020) stated that managing service quality is crucial to ensuring the sustainability of halal tourism. Sarastiani et al. (2022) also stated that service quality significantly influences the sustainability of halal tourism. Jaelani et al. (2023) stated that service quality, product provision, and tourism management based on Sharia principles are inherent aspects of Sharia tourism management. On another point, research conducted in Spain by Boll (2020) found that one form of cultural sustainability in tourism is the Spanish government's ability to highlight the Islamic heritage left by the Andalusian civilisation. In line with the research of Domingues & Almeida (2023), they underscored the need to preserve Portugal's Islamic heritage, as this could help attract Muslim tourists.

Several other important factors have been identified by researchers, including Wibawa et al. (2023), who stated that halal tourism attributes, such as a halal social environment, halal food and beverages, halal facilities, halal services, and halal local staff, can increase the number of tourists. Yagmur & Aksu (2020) found that cognitive images, including a good climate and the quality of infrastructure, positively affected tourists' decision to stay in hotels with the concept of halal tourism. Other elements, such as strategic location, culture, history, annual events, iconic buildings, and nature, are mediating variables for the intention to visit halal tourism (Lestari et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Aimon et al. (2023) emphasised the importance of cultural exchanges between residents and visitors as a means to achieve sustainable tourism development.

DISCUSSION

This study emphasizes that government policy is fundamental to the development of the halal industry. Strengthening government policies, such as adequate budget allocation, creates a legally binding halal industry ecosystem, resulting in improved growth. Other important aspects include the importance of promotion, outreach, and marketing that are relevant not only to current developments but also incorporate local values inherent in halal tourism. Internalising local values in the halal industry has become an attraction for both local and international tourists. Therefore, the consequence of this is the urgency of collaboration and synergy among various parties, including the government, financial institutions, the private sector, and even local communities, as noted by several previous authors. The integration of Islamic values, local wisdom, and

environmental protection is vital, not only attracting tourists resulting in economic and social benefits, but also as a form of protecting tourist locations that cares for nature and respects the environment, as stated by Harini et al., (2025) regarding the importance of harmony between culture, economy, and environment in the development of halal tourism.

The next fundamental dimension is the focus on developing halal certification. Halal certification in the halal industry must be comprehensive across all sectors, not just food, but also accommodation and other services, thus creating an ideal halal industry ecosystem. Halal certification is among the primary considerations for tourists visiting the halal industry, as noted by Sarastiani et al. (2022), Azizah et al. (2023), Domingues & Almeida (2023), Lestari et al. (2023), and Danarta et al. (2024). Ultimately, certification becomes a trust-building mechanism. However, this study also found a lack of uniformity in halal certification across countries. This will undoubtedly impact service quality and tourist trust. Furthermore, this paper also emphasises the importance of a simple and efficient halal certification process, as suggested by Šuligoj & Maruško (2017).

Furthermore, environmental preservation is not only a means of creating an inclusive tourism industry but also a factor influencing tourists to visit halal tourism destinations. This aligns with research by Kalyan & Ekka (2024). Ultimately, environmental preservation, such as good waste management, is an aspect that tourism operators cannot ignore if they want to create sustainable tourism. The socio-cultural aspect is also an integral part of halal industry development, as tourist interest in visiting a destination is also influenced by the preservation of local culture and the values of the local community. Therefore, empowering local communities is an integral part of the development of the halal industry. This aspect not only brings economic benefits but also serves as a step to maintain cultural heritage. Another aspect that is equally important for the halal industry to develop rapidly is that it should not be exclusive to Muslims, but must also be inclusive of non-Muslims, as stated by Madjid et al. (2024) and Wazin et al. (2025).

Ultimately, this study provides several strategic recommendations for future researchers. First, future researchers need to conduct more research on halal industry development strategies, especially in Muslim-minority countries. Previous research has found that most articles focused solely on development in Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia. Furthermore, a more in-depth exploration of the challenges of implementing halal standards and internalising Islamic values across diverse socio-cultural contexts is needed to contribute to a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of halal tourism development. The development of a model linking the three dimensions identified in this study also needs to be tested quantitatively and using mixed methods to make empirical contributions to the research. Finally, future researchers should delve deeper into the role of digital technology in increasing tourist awareness and accessibility of information about halal tourism destinations.

CONCLUSION

Research on halal tourism from the perspectives of policy, certification, and sustainability This research contributes to mapping previous empirical research on factors influencing the development of the halal industry. In the policy dimension, the author identified 13 concrete steps taken by the government to develop the halal industry. These aspects include emphasising the importance of promotion and marketing, formulating and strengthening laws, synergy and collaboration, adequate infrastructure development, training and human resource capacity building, support for MSMEs around halal industrial areas, access to financing from Islamic

financial institutions, the existence of air connection policies with Muslim-Majority Countries, strengthening the Locally Based Halal Supply Chain, land reform, and budget allocations in the form of incentives for halal certification.

In terms of certification, halal certification is essential for all business lines within the halal industrial area. Some aspects the author identified include ensuring the halalness of food through food and beverage certification; halal standards/certification for hotels; halal-certified restaurants; halal accommodation and travel; halal-certified entrepreneurs; halal cosmetics; halal pharmaceuticals; halal fashion; halal marts/markets; and halal spas. These aspects are integral to the development of the halal industry. However, based on our review, several establishments reject formal certification because they perceive it as exclusive to specific groups, thereby narrowing their target market. Therefore, increasing education and literacy about halal should ideally be inclusive. Standardising halal certification will establish a trust-building mechanism for tourists and businesses, which, in turn, will influence the development of the halal industry.

The author also mapped several essential sustainability practices to be implemented in the halal industry, which the authorthen categorised into four major components that must be integrated into halal industry development: environmental and natural preservation, socio-cultural aspects, economic aspects, and technology utilisation. These aspects include socio-cultural harmony, community-based halal tourism, preservation of local wisdom, cultural Exchange between residents and visitors, upholding the traditional way of life, environmental conservation, eco-friendly tourism, good waste management, use of renewable energy, quality of services, and technology adoption. For example, eco-friendly tourism not only reflects conformity with Islamic teachings but also meets the demands of increasingly environmentally conscious tourists.

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