

The Factors of Tourist Intention to Revisit Muslim-Friendly Hotels in Klang Valley

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ABSTRACT

The increasing global Muslim population has significantly influenced the tourism industry, driving demand for Muslim-friendly services and products. Concepts such as Islamic hotels, Shariah-compliant tourism, and halal travel have gained international prominence, with Malaysia consistently ranked at the top of the Global Muslim Travel Index. This positions the country as a potential global hub for halal tourism. To capitalize on this opportunity, the hospitality sector must align with halal standards and ensure facilities meet the expectations of Muslim travellers. Certifications such as the Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Recognition (MFAR) offer strategic advantages by enhancing destination appeal. However, the success of these initiatives depends not only on compliance but also on maintaining visitor satisfaction, destination image, and engagement through quality service and social media visibility. This study investigates the factors influencing tourists' revisit intentions to Muslim-friendly hotels, focusing on social media influence, risk perception, satisfaction, and halal-compliant attributes. A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected from 202 respondents in the Klang Valley using non-probability convenience sampling. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify key predictors. The findings aim to guide the hospitality industry in enhancing infrastructure, marketing strategies, and overall readiness to serve the expanding Muslim travel market.

Keywords: Muslim Friendly Tourism, Tourist satisfaction, Islamic hotels, Shariah-compliant hospitality, Halal-compliant attributes

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of halal tourism has positioned Malaysia as a global leader in the Muslim travel market. With Malaysia consistently ranked first in the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), the development of Muslim-friendly hotels has become increasingly important. The introduction of the Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Recognition (MFAR) by the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) ensures that hotels align with Shariah-compliant principles while providing quality services. However, despite the growing demand, the hospitality industry must ensure that tourists' experiences encourage repeat visitation. This study investigates the factors influencing revisit intentions toward Muslim-friendly hotels in the Klang Valley, focusing on social media, Muslim-friendly attributes, satisfaction, destination image, and risk perception.

Problem Statement

Malaysia, in particular, has embraced this trend through initiatives such as the Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Recognition (MFAR) program, spearheaded by the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC), an agency under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (B, 2021; Kaur, 2021). Major hotels, including Sunway Hotels and Pearl Kuala

Lumpur, have joined the program, recognizing its potential to strengthen branding and attract a growing Muslim travel market. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the global Muslim-friendly travel sector was valued at approximately \$194 billion, underscoring its economic significance (Kaur, 2021). Despite pandemic disruptions, Malaysia retained its position as the leading destination in the international Muslim travel market, according to the Mastercard-Crescent Rating Global Muslim Travel Index (2021).

Malaysia's tourism arrivals, averaging around 5.15 million annually, further highlight its potential as a global hub for halal tourism (Harahsheh, Haddad, & Alshorman, 2020). However, differing perspectives on halal tourism products exist, reflecting the complexity of aligning industry practices with diverse visitor expectations (Ulfiy et al., 2021). The growing Muslim population worldwide continues to drive demand for Muslim-friendly tourism (COMCEC, 2016), but without proper understanding and management, this growth could face challenges. Research has identified several variables influencing tourist behaviour and revisit intention, including Muslim-friendly attributes, social media usage, risk perception, destination image, and visitor satisfaction.

Muslim-friendly attributes such as facilities, food and beverage options, service quality, and local behaviour significantly affect tourists' revisit intentions (Han, Al-Ansi, Olya, & Kim, 2019; Ulfiy et al., 2021; Wang, et al. 2019). Halal certification also plays a crucial role in shaping tourist behaviour and trust (Ratnasari et al., 2020). In addition, social media has transformed tourism by enabling information sharing, travel storytelling, and influencing decision-making (Joo et al. 2020; Güçer et al, 2017). Studies confirm that social media usage significantly impacts tourist behaviour and revisit intention (Idris et al2017).

Destination image also plays a vital role, as positive perceptions of Muslim-friendly hotels enhance satisfaction and loyalty (Erawan, 2020; Loi, So, Lo, & Fong, 2017). Numerous studies confirm that destination image strongly predicts satisfaction and post-visit behavioural intentions (Le & Le, 2020; Lee & Xue, 2020; Timur, 2018).

Visitor satisfaction, defined as the evaluation of the gap between expectations and actual performance, is widely recognized as a key determinant of revisit intention (Lee et al , 2020). In the context of Muslim-friendly hotels, satisfaction reflects the overall pleasure derived from services aligned with Islamic values. Revisit intention, a marker of behavioural loyalty, is essential for sustaining tourism growth (Han et al., 2019; Fajriyati et al, 2020). Positive links between satisfaction and revisit intention have been observed in halal tourism products (Al-Ansi et al., 2019).

Research Objectives

This research is concerned with finding out which aspect influences the tourist behavioural revisit intention towards Muslim-friendly hotels in Malaysia. The research reveals numerous aims that can be accomplished by conducting this study:

- To examine the significant impact of social media use and behavioural revisit intention of tourists in Malaysia toward Muslim-friendly hotels.
- To study the significant impact between destination image and satisfaction of tourist in Malaysia towards Muslim-friendly hotels.
- To study the significant impact between risk perception and satisfaction of tourist in Malaysia towards Muslim-friendly hotels.
- To identify the significant impact of satisfaction and behavioural revisit intention of tourists in Malaysia towards Muslim-friendly hotels.
- To determine the significant impact of Muslim-friendly attributes and behavioural revisit intention of tourists in Malaysia towards Muslim-friendly hotels.

Research Questions

The following research questions are provided to help advance the goal of this study:

- Does the significant effect of the intensity of social media use and re-visit intention among tourists existed?
- Does there any significant effect between destination image and satisfaction of tourists?
- Does there any significant effect between risk perception and satisfaction of tourists?
- Does there any significant effect between satisfaction and tourists' re-visit intention?
- Does there any significant effect between Muslim-friendly attributes and tourists' re-visit intention?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Halal tourism has evolved into a vibrant and expanding segment of the global travel industry, propelled by increasing demand for experiences that align with Islamic values. This tourism model encompasses a range of services and facilities tailored to the religious and cultural preferences of Muslim travelers, including halal-certified cuisine, accessible prayer spaces, and Shariah-compliant accommodations (Battour, 2018). As the Muslim travel market continues to grow, it becomes imperative for destinations to understand the determinants of tourist satisfaction and revisit intention to effectively attract and retain this demographic.

Management & Science University (2025), through its International Centre for Halal Studies (ICHLAS), conceptualizes Muslim-friendly tourism as a strategic pillar within halal science. The university emphasizes halal integrity, spiritual well-being, and inclusive hospitality as foundational elements of this tourism model. MSU's scholarly initiatives, such as the SHaW 2025 Symposium, underscore the significance of stakeholder collaboration, halal certification, and service innovation in advancing Muslim-friendly tourism.

Muslim-friendly hotels serve as critical operational nodes in the delivery of halal tourism. These establishments typically offer alcohol-free environments, gender-segregated recreational amenities, and culturally sensitive service practices facilitated by trained staff (Han et al., 2019). The approach transcends regulatory compliance, aiming instead to foster inclusive and respectful environments for Muslim guests. Empirical evidence suggests that satisfaction with such services significantly influences revisit intention, a key metric of customer loyalty and destination sustainability (Fajriyati et al., 2020).

In parallel, social media platforms have reshaped how Muslim tourists interact with destinations. Channels such as Instagram and YouTube function as influential mediums for sharing travel narratives and shaping consumer decision-making (Joo et al., 2020). Positive digital portrayals of Muslim-friendly destinations enhance perceived value and trust, thereby increasing the likelihood of repeat visits. Multiple studies have identified core attributes contributing to Muslim tourist satisfaction. Hanafiah et al. (2021) highlighted the role of facilities, food quality, service delivery, and local hospitality, while Le and Le (2020) demonstrated that destination image both visual and emotional significantly affects satisfaction and revisit intention. Conversely, Al-Ansi et al. (2019) noted that perceived risks, particularly regarding halal compliance, can diminish satisfaction when expectations are unmet.

Recent scholarship has further refined these insights. Mohd Yousoof et al. (2023) emphasized the impact of halal-friendly hospitality services on satisfaction and revisit intention among Malaysian Muslim tourists, underscoring the importance of religious amenities and respectful service practices. Benmehdi (2024) introduced religiosity as a moderating variable, revealing that highly devout travelers prioritize halal compliance and exhibit stronger loyalty toward destinations that meet their spiritual needs. Yahya et al. (2025) examined the influence of Muslim-Friendly Assurance and Recognition (MFAR) branding, finding that awareness of certification schemes enhances revisit intention through perceived behavioral control and subjective norms.

Collectively, these studies offer a robust framework for understanding the interrelationship between halal tourism services, customer satisfaction, and revisit intention. They highlight the necessity for destinations to go beyond religious compliance by fostering trust, delivering high-quality experiences, and leveraging branding

and digital engagement. As the halal tourism sector continues to expand, these findings provide actionable insights for stakeholders aiming to create meaningful and memorable experiences for Muslim travelers.

METHODOLOGY



The research framework illustrates the hypothesized relationships between independent variables, mediating variable (Satisfaction), and the dependent variable (Revisit Intention).

In the evolving landscape of global tourism, the demand for Muslim-friendly accommodations has gained significant traction. Understanding the factors that influence tourists' intention to revisit such hotels is crucial for enhancing service quality and fostering loyalty. This essay presents a conceptual framework that examines the interplay between independent variables, a mediating variable, and a dependent variable, all of which contribute to shaping revisit intention among Muslim travelers.

The framework begins with four key independent variables. First, social media (H1) plays a pivotal role in shaping tourists' perceptions, trust, and awareness of Muslim-friendly hotels. Through user-generated content, reviews, and targeted marketing, social media platforms influence travellers' expectations and ultimately their decision to return. Second, Muslim-friendly attributes (H2) including halal-certified food, prayer facilities, and Shariah-compliant services are essential components that directly impact revisit intention. These attributes not only meet religious requirements but also enhance the overall comfort and satisfaction of Muslim guests.

Third, the destination image (H4) significantly affects tourists' satisfaction. A positive perception of the destination, encompassing cultural acceptance, hospitality, and infrastructure, contributes to a favourable experience at Muslim-friendly hotels. Conversely, risk perception (H5), which includes concerns about halal compliance, hygiene standards, and safety, can negatively influence satisfaction. Travelers who perceive higher risks are less likely to feel content with their stay, thereby reducing the likelihood of revisiting.

At the heart of this framework lies the mediating variable satisfaction (H3). Satisfaction serves as the bridge between hotel attributes and destination perceptions, and the tourists' intention to return. It reflects the overall evaluation of the experience, encompassing both tangible services and emotional fulfilment. A high level of satisfaction strengthens the relationship between positive hotel features and revisit intention, while dissatisfaction weakens it.

Finally, the dependent variable, revisit intention, encapsulates the likelihood of tourists returning to the same Muslim-friendly hotels in the future. This intention is shaped by the cumulative effect of social media influence, hotel attributes, destination image, and perceived risks, all filtered through the lens of satisfaction.

By analysing these relationships, the framework offers valuable insights for hotel managers, marketers, and policymakers seeking to enhance the Muslim-friendly tourism experience. It underscores the importance of not only providing religiously appropriate services but also cultivating trust, safety, and positive destination imagery to encourage repeat visits.

The framework adopts a causal design, testing direct and indirect effects of the predictors on revisit intention. Satisfaction serves as a mediating factor, aligning with prior studies in hospitality and tourism research.

This study adopted a quantitative, causal research design. A structured questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms due to pandemic restrictions. The target population consisted of domestic tourists in Klang Valley who had previously stayed in Muslim-friendly hotels. Using convenience sampling, 420 responses were targeted.

Table 1: Variables and Measurement Items

Variable	Sample Item (Likert 1–5)	Cronbach’s α	Source
Revisit Intention (6items)	“I will consider Muslim-friendly hotels first when I plan to go for vacation.”	0.899	Fajriyati et al. (2020); Hanafiah et al. (2021)
Social Media (3 items)	“I search information about Muslim-friendly hotels in social media.”	0.817	Güçer et al. (2017)
Risk Perception (5 items)	“The thought of non-halal products gives me a bad feeling.”	0.923	Al-Ansi et al. (2019)
Destination Image (4items)	“Muslim-friendly hotels provide proper prayer facilities.”	0.810	Jeaheng et al. (2020)
Muslim-Friendly Attributes (5 items)	“Food and beverage provided in Muslim-friendly hotels are halal certified.”	0.859	Han et al. (2019)
Satisfaction (5 items)	“I am satisfied with the Islamic facilities provided in Muslim-friendly hotels.”	0.899	Jeaheng et al. (2020)

Analysis & Findings

The tourism landscape in Klang Valley has witnessed a growing interest in Muslim-friendly hospitality, particularly among domestic travelers. A recent study examining revisit intentions among tourists who have previously stayed in Muslim-friendly hotels offers valuable insights into the dynamics of satisfaction, perception, and decision-making behavior.

Respondent Profile

The majority of respondents were domestic tourists from various age groups, all of whom had prior experience staying in Muslim-friendly accommodations. This demographic diversity suggests a broad appeal of such hotels across generational lines, reinforcing the relevance of Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia’s tourism sector.

Descriptive Analysis

Tourists reported high levels of satisfaction with key Muslim-friendly features, notably halal food offerings, prayer facilities, and overall service quality. These elements appear to be central to the positive experiences of Muslim travelers. Additionally, social media emerged as a dominant source of hotel information, significantly shaping tourists’ choices and expectations. This highlights the importance of digital engagement and online visibility for hospitality providers aiming to attract and retain Muslim traveller.

Hypotheses Testing

The study tested five hypotheses to understand the relationships between various factors and revisit intention:

The results affirm the significance of social media (H1) as a powerful tool in shaping tourists' revisit intention. Supported by the data, social media platforms influence travelers by enhancing awareness, building trust, and shaping perceptions of Muslim-friendly hotels. This finding underscores the importance of digital engagement and reputation management in attracting repeat visitors.

Similarly, Muslim-friendly attributes (H2) such as halal-certified food, prayer facilities, and Shariah-compliant services—were found to have a direct and positive impact on revisit intention. The support for this hypothesis highlights the critical role of culturally and religiously appropriate amenities in meeting the expectations of Muslim tourists and encouraging their return.

Satisfaction (H3) emerged as a central mediating variable, with strong support for its influence on revisit intention. Tourists who reported higher satisfaction with their stay were significantly more likely to express intent to revisit. This reinforces the idea that satisfaction is not merely a result of service delivery but a key predictor of future behavior.

The study also confirmed that destination image (H4) positively affects satisfaction. A favorable perception of the destination—encompassing cultural acceptance, infrastructure, and hospitality—enhances the overall experience at Muslim-friendly hotels. This finding suggests that promoting a positive destination image is as crucial as the hotel's own offerings.

Interestingly, risk perception (H5) was only partially supported. While concerns about halal compliance, hygiene, and safety did influence satisfaction, the relationship was not as strong or consistent as anticipated. This partial support indicates that while risk perception matters, it may be moderated by other factors such as trust in the brand or prior experience.

These results affirm that social media, Muslim-friendly attributes, and overall satisfaction are significant predictors of tourists' intention to return. Moreover, a positive destination image enhances satisfaction, while risk perception though statistically significant negatively affects satisfaction levels.

Regression Analysis

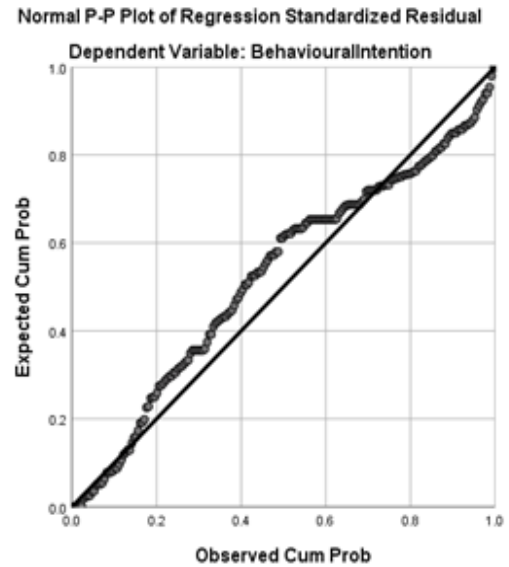
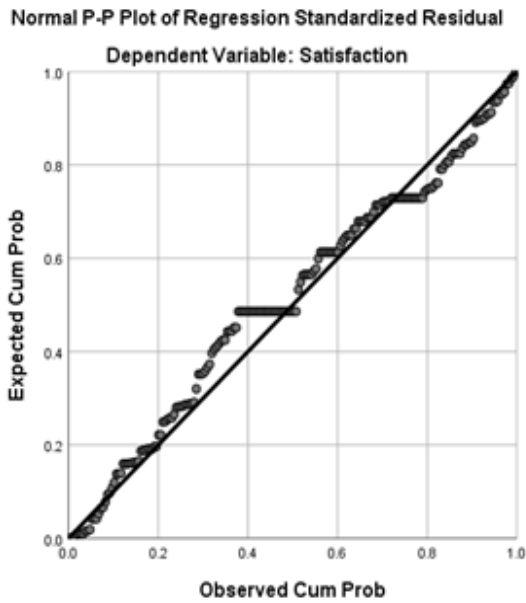
The regression analysis further substantiates these findings:

Regression Analysis Results

Predictor Variable	β (Beta)	t-value	Sig. (p)	Result
Social Media → Revisit Intention	0.214	4.322	0.000	Significant
Muslim-Friendly Attributes → Revisit Intention	0.198	3.874	0.000	Significant
Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	0.452	7.156	0.000	Significant
Destination Image → Satisfaction	0.336	5.987	0.000	Significant
Risk Perception → Satisfaction	-0.114	-2.018	0.045	Significant (negative)

Model Summary: $R^2 = 0.621$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.608$; $F = 52.34$; $p < 0.001$.

The strongest predictor of revisit intention is tourist satisfaction ($\beta = 0.452$), followed by social media influence and Muslim-friendly attributes. The model summary ($R^2 = 0.621$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.608$; $F = 52.34$; $p < 0.001$) indicates a robust explanatory power, suggesting that these variables collectively account for a substantial portion of the variance in revisit intention.



The plot illustrates a comparison between the observed cumulative probability of standardized residuals (X-axis) and the expected cumulative probability under a perfectly normal distribution (Y-axis). The diagonal line serves as a reference for ideal normality. In this study, the data points align closely with the diagonal, showing only slight deviations. This pattern suggests that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. Consequently, the assumption of normality in multiple regression is upheld, validating the use of statistical tests such as t-tests, F-tests, and p-values.

DISCUSSION

This study confirms that satisfaction is the most critical factor influencing revisit intention, followed by social media usage and Muslim-friendly attributes. Destination image significantly enhances satisfaction, while risk perception negatively impacts it. These results align with prior studies (Loi et al., 2017; Han et al., 2019) but also highlight new insights in the Malaysian Muslim-friendly hotel context.

The important is to coordinated effort among hotels, policymakers, and marketers is essential to sustain and grow Muslim-friendly tourism in Klang Valley. By aligning operational excellence with strategic communication and policy support, stakeholders can create a welcoming and enriching environment that resonates with the values and expectations of Muslim travelers worldwide.

CONCLUSION

The empirical analysis of the proposed hypotheses reveals a clear and compelling narrative about the factors influencing revisit intention to Muslim-friendly hotels. All five hypotheses were tested, with four receiving full support and one showing partial support.

Social media, Muslim-friendly attributes, and satisfaction were confirmed as direct and significant predictors of revisit intention, emphasizing the importance of digital engagement, culturally appropriate services, and overall guest experience. Destination image was shown to positively influence satisfaction, reinforcing the role of broader environmental and cultural perceptions in shaping tourists' evaluations. While risk perception did impact satisfaction, its partial support suggests that concerns around halal compliance, hygiene, and safety are influential but may be moderated by trust, prior experience, or other contextual factors.

Overall, the findings validate the conceptual framework and highlight satisfaction as a central mediating force. For hotel operators and tourism stakeholders, these insights offer actionable strategies to enhance service delivery, build trust, and foster long-term loyalty among Muslim travellers.

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