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Muslim Travel Behavior in Halal Tourism

Mohamed Battour

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Abstract

Destination marketers need to understand Muslim travel behaviour in order to satisfy his/her needs especially in Halal tourism industry. This chapter discussed the importance of getting the terminologies right in the field of Muslim-friendly or Halal tourism. Muslim tourist needs are identified when travelling abroad: Muslim-friendly hotels, Halal food, Muslim-friendly phone application, Muslim-friendly airport, Halal holiday, Halal tourism websites, Halal healthcare facilities and services, Halal cruise and Halal swimming suit. Implications related to Halal tourism are also discussed.

Keywords: Muslim travellers, Halal tourism, Islamic tourism, Muslim friendly, destination marketing

1. Introduction

The knowledge of Muslim tourist behaviour in the context of Halal tourism is pertinent to industry players, marketers, and policy makers alike in developing Halal tourism infrastructure and facilities, Halal travel packages and Halal travel activities. It will also help them design specific messages for marketing communication in order to attract Muslim tourists. Although the past or future Muslim populations size in the world does not reveal to what extent this population actively practises its faiths or how religious its members are or will be [1], Muslim customers are one of the fastest developing market segments, and its needs cannot be ignored by destination marketers and tourism operators [2–4]. According to the State of the Global Islamic Economy report [5], produced by Thomson Reuters in collaboration with DinarStandard, the global Muslim travel market was worth \$140 billion in 2013, which represents 11.5% of global expenditure. The same report predicts that the segment is expected to be worth \$238 billion in 2019 and represent 13% of global expenditure. **Figure 1** shows that

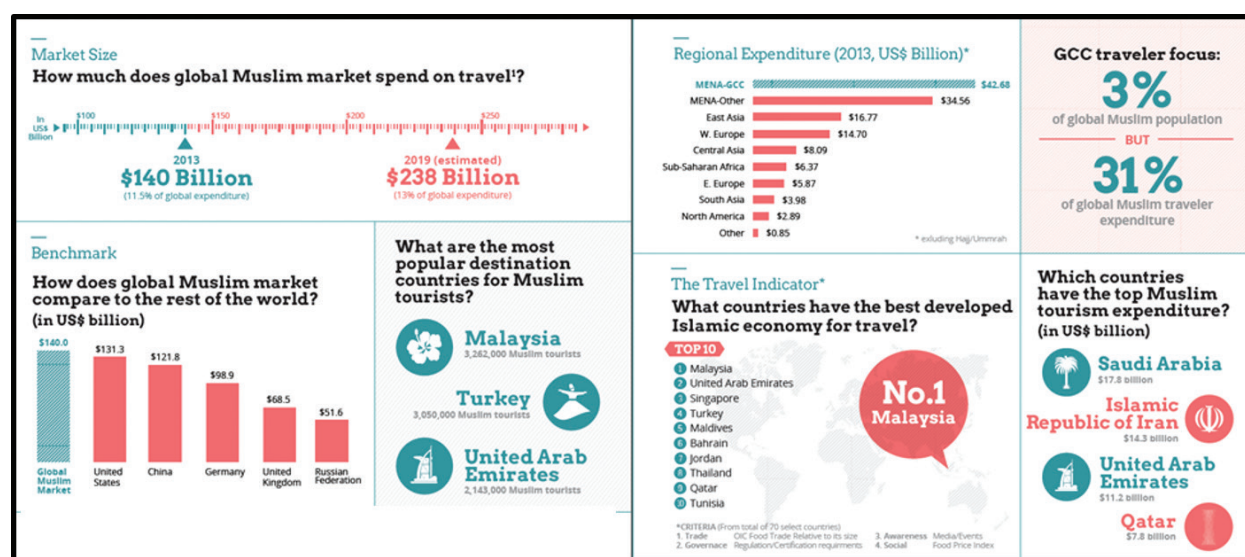


Figure 1. Global Muslim market. Source: State of the global Islamic economy 2014–2015 [5].

Malaysia, the UAE and Singapore lead the Halal Travel Indicator that focuses on the health of the family-friendly/Halal travel ecosystem a country has relative to its size.

There is now a growing interest in Halal tourism from the perspectives of both industry and academic research. Many stress the fact that any strategy to develop or market Halal tourism products and services must be guided by Islamic teachings and principles in all their aspects [3, 6, 7]. There are several terms that define the concept of Halal tourism and provide a suggested guideline to help clarify the matter. Building on this foundation, this chapter proposes that there exist differences in the meaning of the terms 'Halal', 'Islamic' and 'Muslim-friendly' in the context of tourism. It is hoped that a clearer understanding of the above terms will address the concern among many researchers and marketers regarding Muslim traveller behaviour in Halal tourism.

2. Is it Halal or Islamic?

One challenge faced by academicians and practitioners is to identify the right terminologies as well as the proper clarifications of the concepts. At the moment, the most commonly used terms are 'Halal tourism' and 'Islamic tourism'. At the moment, due to the multidisciplinary scope of the subject matter, there exist confusions regarding the two terms. As a result, the terms are often used interchangeably by researchers in both conceptual and empirical papers as if the two concepts are similar [1, 3, 6, 8–12]. However, since the Quran does differentiate between the terms 'Mu'minoon' ('Islamic person') and Muslim (persons who profess to be Muslims), it is necessary to clarify the difference between the terms 'Islamic', 'Halal' and 'Islam related'.

At the outset, it must be understood that 'Islam' is the name of the religion, whose first prophet was Adam and whose final prophet was Muhammad. One of the meanings of the term Islam is 'a state of peace achieved through surrender to God' [13]. Another meaning of the term Islam is 'submission'. Therefore, the term 'Muslim' means a person who submits to God and is used for an adherent of the Islamic faith.

According to one very authoritative book entitled *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*, which was written by Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a globally respected Islamic scholar and chairman of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, the term Halal is defined as 'That which is permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists, and the doing of which the law-Giver, Allah, is allowed' [14]. Therefore, Halal term means 'permissible' according to Islamic teaching (Sharia law). Halal is also one of the five actions (*al-ahkam al-khamsah*) that categorize the morality of human action in Islam, others being *Fard* (compulsory), *Mustahabb* (recommended), *Makruh* (disliked) and *Haram* (forbidden) [15]. From Islamic perspective, Halal as defined above refers to any practice or activity in tourism which is 'permissible' according to Islamic teaching (Sharia). Therefore, using the term 'Sharia compliant' or 'Halal' is giving the same meaning.

The term 'Islamic' is precisely applied only to that which relates directly to the faith and its doctrines (such as Islamic law/Sharia, Islamic values, principles and beliefs, Islamic worship) [13]. It is therefore closer to the Arabic term 'Mu'minoon' [16]. This is because Islam indicates the faith as an ideal based on the core Islamic sources which are the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet [9, 17]. It therefore follows that Muslim men, women and country may not necessarily be Islamic and that 'Islamic men' and 'Muslim men' have different meanings [17, 18]. Moreover, another element needs to be present to make an activity 'Islamic' which is *Niyyah* or intention. An action or activity is accepted by God becomes Islamic when the intention of the person who performed it is to seek the pleasure of God [18, 19]. This is based on the very famous hadith by the Prophet Muhammad:

'Verily actions are by intentions, and for every person is what he intended. So the one whose "hijrah" (migration) was to Allah and His Messenger, then his "hijrah" was to Allah and His Messenger. And the one whose "hijrah" was for the world to gain from it, or a woman to marry her, then his "hijrah" was for what he made "hijrah" for' (Al-Bukhārī and Muslim).

The background to the above hadith was that the companions of the Prophet were discussing the actions of their fellow Muslims performing Hijrah (moving from the Holy city of Makkah to Madinah). The Prophet S.A.W divided the actions into two categories—those that are accepted by God and those that were not. The former is when the intention was to seek the pleasure of God, whilst the latter is when the intention or motives were for other than pleasing God [17, 19]. Therefore, an activity that is accepted by God and deserving of reward from him is categorised as 'Islamic'. Based on the above argument, using the terms 'Islamic' and 'Halal' as if they have similar meaning is inappropriate. It would be better to use 'Halal' as brand name rather 'Islamic' for any related product and service in tourism industry.

3. Halal tourism and Islamic tourism terminology

According to UNWTO definition, 'Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes' [20]. Cook et al. ([21]; p. 3) defined Tourism as 'the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs'. It is noted from the previous definition that the tourism

includes the movement of people—either Muslim or non-Muslim tourists—which represents the demand side and activities/facilities to cater to tourists' needs (destination) which represent supply side. The point here is, to understand Muslim tourists' behaviour, marketers need to understand the demand side: the needs of Muslim travellers in the context of Halal tourism.

Some researchers have tried to define Islamic tourism and Halal tourism in tourism and destination marketing literatures [1, 3, 12, 22–24]. However, most have not taken into consideration the Islamic law (Sharia), the target customers (i.e. Muslims or non-Muslims), the location of activity (i.e. Muslim vs. non-Muslim country), the product and service offered (i.e. food, facilities) and the purpose of travel. Most of these definitions are loosely defined and used interchangeably. In other words, Halal tourism and Islamic tourism are treated as similar concepts. For example, Jafari and Scott [1] defined Islamic tourism as 'The encouragement of tourists likely to meet the requirements of Sharia law'. The definition focuses on Islamic law and its requirements to meet the tourist needs but ignored the religion of tourists (Muslims) and other dimensions. In our opinion, Jafari and Scott's definition is more appropriate for 'Halal tourism' rather than 'Islamic tourism'.

When Muslims travel to another destination for leisure less than one year, this travel is considered as tourism. The question that is often asked is whether the activity is to be referred to as Halal tourism or Islamic tourism. In our opinion, the activity can be referred to as Halal tourism if all the activities, facilities, actions and objectives are permissible according to Islamic teachings. The same thing applies in the case of non-Muslim tourists. So a non-Muslim tourist can claim that he/she consumes Halal food and attends Halal entertainment outlets as long as the activities related to his claim are genuinely permissible in Islam. However, to describe the traveling activities as being 'Islamic tourism' requires another very crucial element, that is, whether the activity is accompanied by *Niyyah* or intention on the part of the traveller.

If the intention of travelling is to seek the pleasure of God or in order to strengthen his faith, then it will be both Halal and Islamic. Therefore, the term 'Islamic tourism' is more appropriate. However, the place may not necessarily be located in a Muslim country or in religious locations. For example, if a man travels to London to visit the London museum in order to study the history of British colonization of the Muslim world for the sake of God, the travel can be classified as *Ibadah* (a religious act) deserving rewards from God and therefore can be appropriately referred to as 'Islamic tourism'.

However, if the intention is not in accordance with Islamic teaching, then the travelling is not Islamic. For example, even if a man travels to the holy city of Makkah or Madinah during Hajj seasons, but with the evil intention to steal things from *Hajj* or *Umrah* travellers, then the action cannot be classified as Islamic. To reinforce my point of the importance of the element of *Niyyah* or intention, I would like to highlight the fact that the term 'Islamic food' does not exist. The reason is food is not a living object and will never have any aspect of 'intention'. For food, therefore, the term to be used is *not* Islamic food but rather 'Halal or non-Halal food'.

The term 'Muslim-friendly' in tourism industry denotes an attempt to make the tourism experience enjoyable to observant Muslims. As such it is close to the concept of 'Halal tourism' but not the same. Using 'Halal' is a wider context than 'Muslim friendly'. So when the company provides Halal products and services, it should be fully Halal and not allowed to provide

non-Halal products and services. However, Muslim-friendly company could provide both Halal and non-Halal products and services but not in same place or section. In other words, Muslim-friendly destinations offer plenty of 'Halal' services (such as Halal food and beverages, sex-segregated swimming pools, etc.) along with comfortable places for Muslims to perform their daily prayers. Finally, the case of non-Muslims travelling to destinations in Muslim countries to visit Islamic historical religious and cultural sites could be an argument. Is it Islamic tourism? It is suggested NOT be referred to as Islamic tourism but rather 'Islam-related tourism'.

4. Muslim tourist needs

Muslims believe that the holy Quran offers direction in all aspects of human activities including tourism choices for both individuals and governments [1, 4, 9, 25]. It is noted recently that Muslim customers become sensitive to consume products and services that are Halal (Sharia compliant). Moreover, the awareness among Muslim increased to select Halal/Islamic options for their needs from the common of options currently offered [2, 26]. Therefore, some non-Muslim destinations such as Japan, the Philippines and Brazil offered Muslim-friendly solutions/options to scenario seen as problematic by Muslim travellers.

For example, Chambers of Commerce in Japan and the Philippine Travel Agencies Association [27, 28] organized seminars to train the tourism industry and restaurateurs to satisfy Muslim tourist needs. Moreover, prayer rooms are allocated at major airports, and restaurants offer Halal food in Japan. Muslim-friendly guide is also published to provide information on Halal food and prayer places [27]. The Department of Tourism in the Philippines launched in 2014 what it called 'Eid Play Love' packages to attract Muslim travellers from Saudi Arabia and the UAE during both Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The objective of packages was to promote the Philippines as a "Muslim- and family-friendly destination" [28]. Another example, Brazil's Federation of Muslim Associations (FAMBRAS) printed 65,000 copies of their 28-page 'Muslim Fan Guide' which details prayer times, mosque locations in host cities, emergency services and venue details to Muslim fans during the World Cup 2014 [29].

As it is mentioned earlier, to understand Muslim tourists' behaviour, destination marketers need to understand the demand side, the needs of Muslim travellers in the context of Halal tourism. The following needs are Muslim-friendly attributes that cater for Muslim tourists when travelling abroad. Muslim-friendly attributes which are applied in some destinations could be a benchmark for other destinations that target Muslim tourists and/or to market the destination as 'Muslim-friendly destination'.

4.1. Halal and Muslim-friendly hotels

In recent years, it has been observed that the numbers of Sharia compliant hotels is growing in some Muslim and non-Muslim destinations. For example, Al Meroz Hotel is a fully Halal hotel located in Thailand. Some destinations promote these hotels and claim to be 'Sharia compliant' as 'Muslim-friendly hotels' [4, 22]. Muslim-friendly hotels deliver Muslim guests with all services that compliant with Islamic teachings such as Qibla direction, Halal food,

alcohol-free beverages and prayer room with call for prayers [9, 11, 30, 31]. Japan is one of the non-Muslim countries that take initiatives towards training the hospitality staff by launching Muslim-Friendly Project [32]. The objective of this project is to offer training for hospitality industry employees in Japan to improve understanding of needs and concerns of Muslim tourists visiting Japan. Halal food will also be provided for Muslims at the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020. Another best practice in Halal tourism is Kyoto city which is located in the central part of the island of Honshu, Japan. Travel guide in Kyoto city website is provided for Muslims in four languages: Arabic, English, Turkish and Malay [33]. The website provides list with Muslim-friendly hotels. These hotels and inns provide Muslim visitors with a Qibla compass, a map for Kyoto Mosque and prayer mats and serve Halal food.

Aerostar Hotel in Moscow is Muslim friendly as one of the hotel's kitchens is certified Halal [34]. The hotel provides a copy of the Quran, a prayer mat and the Qibla direction in 20 of their rooms. The shampoo and soap provided in the rooms are certified Halal. Two prayer rooms are available: one for men and one for women. Fairmont Makati and Raffles Makati hotels in the Philippines become Muslim-friendly by providing Quran copy, prayer room and Arabic-language TV channels [28] (TTG Asia).

It is noted that Availability of Muslim-friendly hotel is considered one of the most important attributes that attract Muslim travellers and encourage them to visit the destination. The following attributes summarize the needs of Muslim guests in hospitality industry.

4.1.1. Muslim-friendly hotel room

- Quran copy
- Qibla direction
- Prayer mat
- Prayer timetable
- Family-friendly viewing TV
- Alcohol-free beverages in fridge
- Water usage-friendly washroom

4.1.2. Muslim-friendly hotel services

- Certified Halal food/kitchens
- Well-trained staff to satisfy Muslims
- Female staff for women
- Women-only floor/family-only floor
- Session for ladies in swimming pool/gym
- Prayer room (surau)
- Ramadan services and facilities

4.2. Halal food

Availability of Halal food and beverages is vital for destinations that target Muslim travellers. It is now common for Muslim tourists to request Halal food and beverages when they visit non-Muslim destinations [35]. According to Islamic law, it is not allowed for Muslim followers to eat pork or pork by-products, animals that were dead prior to slaughtering, animals not slaughtered properly or not slaughtered with pronouncing the name of Allah, blood and blood by-products, alcohol, carnivorous animals and birds of prey [3, 9, 11].

According to Euromonitor International report [35], the sales of Halal food increased in Europe, particularly in consumer food service outlets because of inbound Muslim tourists visiting Europe. Therefore, it is expected that the investments in Halal food market will be grown in non-Muslim destinations due to the growth of Halal tourism. For example, global Muslim expenditure on food and beverages (F&B) has increased 10.8% to reach \$1292 billion in 2013. This expenditure is expected to increase to a \$2537 billion market by 2019 and will account for 21.2% of the global expenditure. Furthermore, Middle Eastern full-service and fast food restaurants which serve Halal food for Muslim tourists are very prevalent in France, Germany and the UK, and some of their customers may be frequently non-Muslims.

Some of chain restaurants cater for Muslim tourist needs by serving dishes prepared in kitchens certified as Halal and using Halal chicken. For example, in the UK, About 100 KFC outlets and a fifth of Nando's restaurants serve Halal-certified chicken. Chicken Cottage, Dixy Fried Chicken, Pizza Express and Perfect Fried Chicken are using Halal chicken. Subway with sales of £488 million (EUR605 million) in 2014 used Halal meat in its sandwiches sold [11, 35, 36]. In addition, Manhattan Fish Market which is a leading chain restaurant in Malaysia opened, in 2015, its first outlet in Tokyo. The outlet is serving 100% Halal components for its menus [37]. Ryokans, the traditional Japanese hostels, are also serving Halal meals. The availability of Halal food in the destination allows Muslim tourists to experience famous cuisine in accordance with their beliefs and will motivate them to visit the destination.

4.3. Muslim-friendly phone application

One of the recent practices in Halal tourism industry is providing smartphone application that make the holiday enjoyable and Muslim friendly. Thailand is one of the non-Muslim countries that take initiatives to launch Muslim-friendly application to help further enhancement tourism industry in Thailand [38]. It helps visitors to find hotels and shopping centres with prayer rooms and restaurants that provide Halal food availability. The Tourism Authority of Thailand reported that the new application is available on Google Inc's Android and Apple Inc's iOS systems and available in English and Thai but will be expanded to include Arabic and Bahasa Indonesia. Stephenson [11] also reported that some Muslim-friendly interface applications for smartphone are available such as 'HalalTrip' and 'Muslim Pro'. Stephenson claim that applications help Muslim tourists to find Halal-friendly hospitality products and services, such as hotels, destination guides, holiday packages, airport guides and Halal restaurants [11]. It is expected that non-Muslim countries that target Muslim travellers will develop its own applications to make the country Muslim friendly.

4.4. Muslim-friendly airport

Muslim-friendly airport is recently one of the best practices to satisfy Muslim travellers. It was reported that the numbers of visitors from the Southeast Asian Muslim countries of Malaysia and Indonesia in recent year increased in Osaka [39]. Therefore, Kansai international airport (KIX) has taken initiative to satisfy Muslims. The airport allocates three prayer rooms for use of travellers and visitors. One room is located on the third floor on terminal one, and another two rooms are located at the international departure gate. The prayer rooms are segregated by gender. Washing space is provided to perform ablution for praying. The prayer rooms are opened for 24 hours a day for Muslim travellers with rental prayer tools and display Qibla direction. Fifteen restaurants prepare Halal food promoted as 'pork-free and alcohol-free menus', and three restaurants are 'Halal certified'. Moreover, Narita Airport and Haneda International Airport in Tokyo opened a prayer room in 2014 [27]. Using availability of Muslim-friendly airport as promotion tools to attract Muslim travellers is the best choice to increase inbound Muslim tourists and make the destination Muslim friendly.

4.5. Halal holiday

A new travel package in the tourism industry which provided full holiday services in accordance with Islamic beliefs and practices is called 'Halal holiday' [40–42]. These include Halal resorts and hotels which serve only Halal foods and non-alcoholic drinks. Other services offered may include separate pools, spa and leisure facilities for men and women, an open beach which separates males from females, private female-only beach, family-oriented facilities such as mixed beach areas for families with Islamic swimming dress code and Muslim prayer facilities. Some may even offer Islamic heritage tours for tourists to explore and discover the history and culture of the Islamic civilization. Some of the tour providers may stress that their activities are geared towards maintaining the values and modesty of Muslims who desire to follow the Quranic encouragement to travel throughout the Earth to see God's signs and patterns all over the world.

Crescent Tours and Islamic Travels and Halal booking started selling the concept in Turkey, the seat of the Islamic Ottoman Empire, which for six centuries was the centre of interactions between the East and West (www.crescentrating.com/). It is considered one of the preferable destinations that attracts Muslim tourists from around the world. Availability of Halal-friendly holiday could increase the recognition of destination to be Muslim-friendly destination and will attract Muslim tourists. It is suggested to use the term 'Muslim-friendly' holiday which is more appropriate instead of 'Halal holidays'.

4.6. Halal healthcare facilities and services

One of the growing markets for Muslim travellers is travelling for healthcare either for critical illness or wellness care. Therefore, developing Halal healthcare facilities and services for Muslim travellers is considered one of the pull factors that attract them to visit the destination. Halal healthcare provides services and facilities, which are in line with Islamic teachings at hospitals and other healthcare services. The following attributes are guidelines for Halal healthcare facilities and services [43] (Tourism):

- Doctors and nurses of the same gender as the patient
- Halal medications (as far as possible)
- Prayer rooms
- Rooms marked with the Qibla direction
- Availability of Halal food
- Water-friendly toilets

4.7. Halal cruise

One of the recent trends in global Halal market is Muslim-friendly cruise. It is the first Halal cruise which is launched by the Antalya-based Fusion Tour Company in Turkey. It sails to Greece without alcohol, pork-related products and gambling on board. It also includes segregated sports centres, single-sex spa facilities, separate Turkish baths and prayer rooms [44]. Moreover, Star Cruise is a Malaysian cruise company offering family-friendly/Halal cruises for Muslims. Halal cruise concept may be imitated from other religious communities. Kosherica, for example, is a company that deals significantly with cruise ship holidays for the Jewish community (<http://www.kosherica.com/>). Also, Christian Cruise.Net offers a range of holidays for different segments of its community (<http://www.christiancruises.net/>). It is expected that concept will be developed in Muslim and non-Muslim destinations catering for Muslim needs.

4.8. Halal swimming suit

Availability of Muslim swimming suit for women in destination may satisfy Muslim tourists. It sometimes called burqini or burkini swimsuit [35]. It is a type of swimsuit for women intended to comply with the Quranic admonition for Muslim women to dress modestly. The suit covers the whole body except the face, the hands and the feet whilst being light enough to enable swimming. It looks rather like a full-length wetsuit with built-in hood but somewhat looser and made of swimsuit material instead of neoprene [45].

Burqini is expected to gain importance as more Muslim and non-Muslim women recognize its multiple benefits, including sun protection, flexibility and modesty. In the case of Muslim women, particularly, the burqini has enabled Muslim women to be more involved in beach-related family activities and lifted limitations of those who felt confined in the domestic sphere [35]. However, some resorts in Morocco ban this in their pools, and this could be negative efforts by destinations to become more Muslim friendly, as several resorts in destinations such as Turkey, Egypt and the UAE are actually trying to become more Muslim friendly by creating women-only pools and welcoming the Muslim full bathing suit [45].

4.9. Halal tourism websites

In recent years there are many websites that provide information on Halal tourism. One of them is CrescentRating website (www.crescentrating.com/) which was established in 2006 to inform business tourists of Halal-friendly destinations. It has grown significantly in both

scope and content, containing global information on a variety of topics: Halal-friendly accommodation, resorts, restaurants, caterers, food and beverage manufacturers, shopping destinations, airports, Islamic art and cultural sites [11]. The company also rates hotels in accordance to detailed Islam-friendly criteria.

Halal booking website is also one of the pioneers of Halal tourism concept. It provides Halal holiday packages that allow Muslim tourists to relax, soak up the sun and enjoy sandy beaches, without compromising the values of their beliefs (www.Halalbooking.com/). Muslim-friendly website also enables Muslim tourists to book Halal hotel and resorts (www.muslimfriendly.com). Muslim-friendly website is created to market Osaka (www.muslim-friendly.jp.net/). It provides maps with the aim of helping Muslim travellers enjoy a more comfortable, meaningful and enjoyable stay in Osaka, Japan.

5. Discussion and implications

Destination marketers need to understand Muslim travel behaviour in order to satisfy their needs especially in Halal tourism industry. This chapter discussed the importance of getting the terminologies right in the field of Muslim-friendly or Halal tourism. One of the effective means of accessing Halal market is to make Halal food widely available in the destination initially which is considered the high priority for Muslim tourists. Furthermore, Muslim-friendly hotels should be available in the destination or at least separated sections in hotels where no alcohol beverages and no pork Halal food are provided. Finally, Muslim-friendly airport is considered a starting point that could be used in promotion tools to market the destination as a Muslim friendly.

The initiatives that are taken to make the destination Muslim friendly are considered a valuable progress in Halal tourism, but more innovative and creative options for Muslims still are needed in this huge market. Therefore, innovation is vital for the success of destination operators to satisfy Muslim and non-Muslim tourists. Tourism products and service providers should find innovative solutions that satisfy non-Muslim tourists and thus increase trip quality and value. Tourism operators could educate non-Muslim tourists about what Halal tourism rules are. The use of innovative technology could be introduced into all hotel rooms so that, for example, the call for early morning prayer would be heard by Muslim guests and not be heard by non-Muslim guests. The main challenge for Islamic destinations is finding the balance between catering non-Muslim tourists and satisfying their needs without coming into conflict with Islamic teachings. Innovative Muslim-friendly application should be available to satisfy Muslim travellers. Muslim-friendly airline would need creative aircraft facilities and more Islamic options, such as gender- and family-segregated seating and in-flight religious entertainment.

Although Halal tourism is a good business opportunity that can satisfy Muslim and non-Muslim tourist, however, non-Muslim tourists may not accept Halal tourism products and services as an option. For example, in Sharia-compliant hotels, alcoholic beverages are prohibited. In Islamic resorts, beaches are sometimes separated by gender. As a result, tourists from non-Muslim countries may not travel to a destination that practices Halal tourism where

such restrictions are applied. This could be a factor that discourages tourists from travelling to Muslim countries that observe this rule strictly, such as Saudi Arabia. However, burkini swimsuits might not be accepted by non-Muslim tourists and could be a travel constraint, but some of non-Muslim tourists might consider it as a new experience. Furthermore, gender segregation could be applied for non-Muslim tourists if the travel motivation is not to a swimming vacation.

With regard to Halal food, some non-Muslim tourists might refrain from eating Halal meat due to the method of slaughtering used. Some can accept the reality that they cannot consume meat and pork in quite the same way as in their home country. But they are willing to substitute those with Halal meat or with fish or vegetarian food. Some might not be happy with the banning of alcoholic beverages. Here again, innovative solutions should be applied to solve this situation such as providing similar beverages without alcohol or replacing them with non-alcoholic juice and tea. The more innovative the alternatives that comply with Sharia are, the more support for tourism development in the Halal tourism market there will be. Some non-Muslims might accept consuming Halal food as long as the taste is fine. This could be used as a promotional tool to attract non-Muslim tourists.

There is a fierce competition among destination marketers, as well as the saturated market place, and there is therefore a need for a proper understanding of the factors that influence Muslim tourist behaviour. Destination marketers must understand whether Halal tourism practices affect whether tourists will visit certain destinations or not. It is also important to examine whether Halal tourism practices are wanted by all segments or only to selected segments. The success of some destinations/organizations in Halal tourism market will encourage other competitors to enter the market. For example, it is expected that destinations such as Queensland and Australia could target Halal tourism market and to be a Muslim-friendly destination. Furthermore, worldwide global brands in hospitality industry such as Ritz-Carlton may address opportunity in Sharia-compliant hotel market.

The awareness among Muslims is expected to increase for selecting Halal travel and Muslim-friendly options to satisfy their needs from the common of options currently offered. Therefore, newer destinations are expected to become more Muslim-friendly such as south Africa, France, Spain, Australia, Maldives, and Korea. The challenge for new destinations that plan to be Muslim friendly is to harmonize the demands of developing Halal travel and the needs of those looking for modern international tourism. It is expected in 2017 that more attention will be given among new destinations to offer Muslim-friendly airport, Halal dining options, prayer space access and recreational facilities with privacy. Newer destinations are expected to become more Muslim friendly such as South Africa and France. The numbers of Sharia-compliant hotels and Halal resorts are expected to increase in non-Muslim destinations. Customization of Halal tours is expected to grow and be adopted by travel agencies: availability of Halal food, an itinerary built around prayer timings, visits to mosques and Muslim tour guides. Travel agencies have many Halal tourism opportunities in areas such as Halal business travel, family-friendly packages, Muslim-friendly services, luxury Muslim market segment and Muslim heritage souvenirs. Halal medical tourism might be grown in non-Muslim destination targeting Muslim tourists. Training programmes are expected to be offered to non-Muslim staff to understand Halal issues.

Author details

Mohamed Battour^{1,2*}

*Address all correspondence to: mohamedbator@gmail.com

1 College of Business Administration, Prince Sultan University, Riyadh, KSA

2 Faculty of commerce, Business Department, Tanta University, Tanta, Egypt

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