BRIDGING FAITH AND SUSTAINABILITY: MAPPING THE NEXUS BETWEEN HALAL TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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Abstract

This study is grounded in the growing transformation of halal tourism *from a concept primarily associated with* sharia *compliance and Muslim travel needs into a broader discourse linked to sustainable tourism development. However, the literature addressing the relationship between* halal tourism *and sustainable tourism remains fragmented and lacks an integrated scholarly mapping. This study aims to examine the evolution of the literature, identify the distribution of research characteristics, and explain the conceptual and practical interconnections between* halal tourism *and sustainable tourism. The study applies a* systematic literature review *combined with bibliometric analysis. Data were collected from the* Scopus *database on March 23, 2026, resulting in 81 initial records, which were filtered through an adapted* PRISMA *procedure to obtain 51 eligible journal articles. The findings reveal that publication output increased significantly after 2022 and peaked in 2025, with Indonesia and Malaysia emerging as the most dominant contributors. The thematic mapping shows that* halal tourism *functions as the central concept and is strongly associated with sustainable tourism, destination development, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention. Nevertheless, ecological sustainability remains relatively peripheral within the mainstream discussion. The literature synthesis further suggests that the relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism is emerging rather than fully integrated. Building on these findings, this study proposes a Faith–Governance–Sustainability (FGS) framework that conceptualizes how Islamic ethical values can be translated into sustainable destination development through four interconnected mechanisms: ethical governance, community participation, environmental stewardship, and digital transformation. The framework highlights that the contribution of halal tourism to sustainability depends on the effective integration of these mechanisms and the consideration of measurable sustainability outcomes.*

Keywords*: Halal Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Systematic Literature Review*, *Bibliometric Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism research has increasingly moved beyond growth-oriented perspectives toward questions of long-term responsibility, resilience, and balanced development (Dhama & Anil, 2025; Timur et al., 2025). In this broader shift, halal tourism has evolved from being treated primarily as a niche market for Muslim travelers into a more established field of inquiry concerned with destination attributes, service design, food assurance, and ethical hospitality (Ekka, 2024; Jabeen et al., 2025; Ruiz-Muñoz et al., 2025). Early studies framed halal tourism mainly around the provision of permissible products, facilities, and experiences consistent with Islamic principles, particularly in relation to destination offerings and halal food systems (Ekka, 2024; Ruiz-Muñoz et al., 2025).

Moreover, the interplay between halal tourism and sustainable tourism highlights the need for multi-stakeholder engagement, including policymakers, destination managers, local communities, and private sector actors (Abdullah et al., 2023). Research increasingly emphasizes that effective integration of sustainability principles in halal tourism requires not only adherence to religiously compliant services but also alignment with local environmental practices, community welfare, and inclusive governance mechanisms. This perspective underscores that the value of halal tourism extends beyond market segmentation, positioning it as a catalyst for broader sustainable development initiatives and responsible destination management.

At the same time, the academic conversation has begun to reposition halal tourism within the wider sustainability agenda (Khan et al., 2025; Romalee et al., 2025). Recent review-based studies argue that Islamic values are increasingly discussed alongside environmental responsibility, social inclusion, technological innovation, and the Sustainable Development Goals, suggesting that halal tourism is no longer examined only through the lens of religious compliance or market segmentation (Setiawan et al., 2024; Soehardi et al., 2025). Similarly, Timur et al. (2025) demonstrate that the literature is progressively framing halal tourism through the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of the Triple Bottom Line, indicating an important thematic shift toward a more integrated understanding of tourism development. This evolution makes the relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism an increasingly relevant area for systematic scholarly mapping.

However, despite this growing body of work, the literature remains fragmented in ways that justify a focused systematic literature review. Existing reviews have made important contributions, but they tend to emphasize

different and only partially overlapping concerns. Some studies map the broader field of halal tourism and hospitality in terms of publication growth, keywords, authors, countries, and citation structures (Idris et al., 2022; Supardin et al., 2025). Others discuss how halal tourism research differs across geographical and institutional contexts (Jabeen et al., 2025). More recent studies specifically address sustainability integration, SDG alignment, and bibliometric clustering, but they tend to focus on the sustainability turn itself rather than on a comprehensive mapping of how the halal tourism and sustainable tourism nexus has developed across time, actors, and ideas (Ahyani et al., 2025; Jabeen et al., 2025; Timur et al., 2025).

This fragmentation reveals a clearer research gap. The field still lacks an integrated review that simultaneously addresses three interrelated dimensions. First, there is limited synthesis of how the scholarly conversation on halal tourism and sustainable tourism has evolved over time. Second, although some bibliometric studies report leading authors, countries, institutions, and sources, these insights are usually presented either for the broader halal tourism field or for adjacent hospitality literature, rather than for the specific intersection with sustainability. Third, the existing literature has not yet been sufficiently consolidated to explain how the two concepts are interconnected both conceptually and practically, such as through ethics, governance, local adaptation, certification, competitiveness, and destination development. This gap becomes even more significant as research from non-Muslim destinations shows that halal tourism now extends beyond Muslim-majority contexts and increasingly overlaps with broader debates on inclusion, destination strategy, and responsible tourism development (Ekka, 2024).

Against this background, the present study aims to bridge faith and sustainability by systematically mapping the nexus between halal tourism and sustainable tourism in the existing scholarly literature. Specifically, this review seeks to identify how the literature has developed over time, how research is distributed across authors, countries, institutions, and publication sources, and how both concepts are linked in theoretical and practical terms. In line with this objective, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. How has the scholarly literature on halal tourism and sustainable tourism evolved over time?
RQ2. What are the key characteristics and distribution of research on halal tourism and sustainable tourism in terms of authors, countries, institutions, and publication sources?
RQ3. How are halal tourism and sustainable tourism conceptually and practically interconnected in the existing literature?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a systematic literature review combined with bibliometric analysis to examine the nexus between halal tourism and sustainable tourism. The data were collected from the Scopus database using a search string that combined terms related to halal tourism, such as “Halal Tourism,” “Islamic Tourism,” “Muslim-friendly Tourism,” and “Sharia Tourism,” with sustainability related terms, including “Sustainable Tourism,” “Responsible Tourism,” “Green Tourism,” and “Ecotourism.” Data extraction was conducted on March 23, 2026, yielding 81 initial records. This dataset served as the foundation for a structured review process designed to ensure both the relevance and quality of the literature, forming a basis for subsequent bibliometric and thematic analyses.

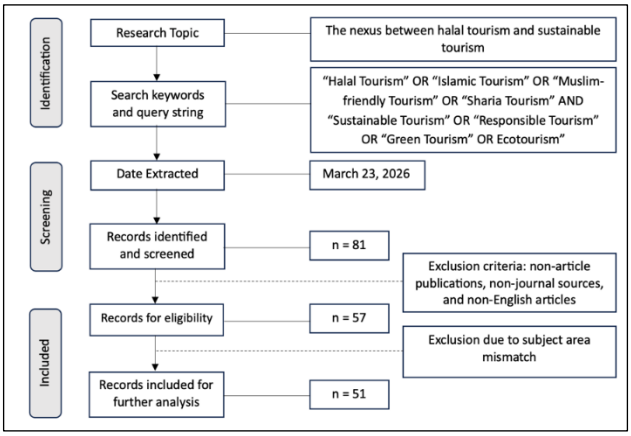


Figure 1. Study selection process using an adapted PRISMA-based flow diagram

The study selection process was organized using an adapted PRISMA-based flow diagram developed with reference to Bonang et al. (2025). As shown in Figure 1, the process started with 81 records identified from Scopus, which were reduced to 57 after the exclusion of non-article publications, non-journal sources, and non-English documents. A further eligibility assessment based on subject area relevance resulted in a final dataset of 51 articles for subsequent analysis.

The research team conducted the selection and eligibility assessment collaboratively. The researchers jointly

reviewed the records against the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to determine their relevance to the research objectives. The team addressed any differences in eligibility assessments through discussion until consensus was reached. This collaborative process was intended to ensure consistency in the selection decisions and the relevance of the publications included in the final dataset.

Regarding study quality, all 51 included articles were examined through full-text reading to assess their relevance to the research objectives, alignment with the research questions, methodological approaches, and main findings. The credibility of the publications was also considered based on their inclusion in the Scopus-indexed journal database. However, this review did not employ a standardized methodological quality appraisal tool or a formal risk-of-bias assessment. This approach was consistent with the study's primary objective of mapping the development, intellectual structure, and thematic patterns of research on halal tourism and sustainable tourism through bibliometric analysis and literature synthesis, rather than evaluating the methodological validity or risk of bias of individual studies.

The selected studies were analyzed descriptively and bibliometrically. The descriptive analysis examined publication trends over time and the distribution of authors, countries, institutions, publication sources, and subject areas. In addition, VOSviewer was used to conduct keyword co-occurrence analysis in order to identify thematic clusters, conceptual relationships, and temporal developments within the literature. This combined approach enabled the study to systematically map the evolution, structure, and emerging interconnections between halal tourism and sustainable tourism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This section presents the main findings on halal tourism and sustainable tourism based on 51 articles indexed in Scopus. The results are organized according to the research questions and are grouped into publication trends, research distribution, and the nexus between halal tourism and sustainable tourism.

Research Trend Analysis

During the early period from 2017 to 2021, publications on the intersection between halal tourism and sustainable tourism remained limited and sporadic. One of the earliest contributions was provided by Noor & Shah (2017), who examined Islamic tourism on Langkawi Island with an emphasis on sustaining Islamic values within tourism practices. In 2020, the literature introduced the idea of sustainable, smart, and Muslim-friendly tourist destinations, showing an early effort to connect halal tourism with sustainability and technological development (Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2020).

A clearer expansion appeared from 2022 onward. Studies in this phase examined halal tourism as an alternative or extension of mass tourism, assessed the sustainability of Muslim-friendly tourism in Indonesia, and explored post-pandemic changes in halal tourism attributes and perceptions (Martaleni et al., 2022; Rhama, 2022; Sarastiani et al., 2022). Destination-based studies also showed how halal tourism was being developed through local and community-based approaches (Izudin et al., 2022). The highest publication output occurred in 2025, with 21 publications. By contrast, 2026 records only 1 publication in the current dataset, which likely reflects an incomplete publication year rather than a substantive decline in scholarly interest.

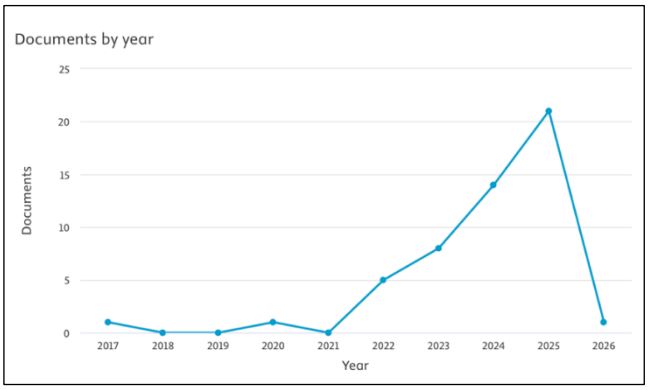


Figure 2. Graphic of article distribution from 2017 to 2026

Leading Countries, Institutions, and Authors in Halal and Sustainable Tourism Research

Figure 3 shows that Ahyani, H. is the most productive author with three publications. The other leading authors each contribute two publications, indicating a relatively even distribution of output among the most visible contributors in this field.

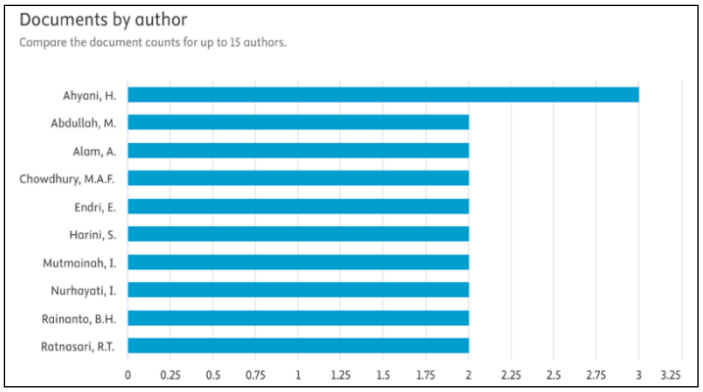


Figure 3. The most popular authors

At the country level, Indonesia is the dominant contributor, followed by Malaysia (see figure 4). Other countries, including Turkey, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Pakistan, Thailand, Spain, and New Zealand, appear with much smaller numbers of publications.

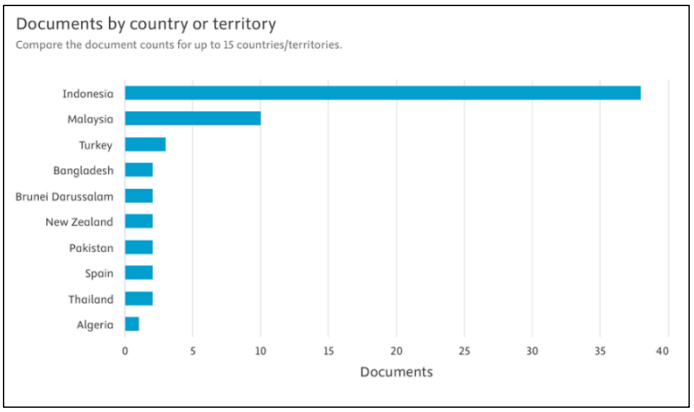


Figure 4. Top ten countries contributed to the publications

At the institutional level, Universitas Airlangga and Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin emerge as the most prominent affiliations in this research landscape, indicating their strong and sustained engagement with the study of halal tourism and sustainable tourism. Their leading position suggests not only a higher volume of publications, but also a more consistent institutional commitment to advancing scholarly discussion in this field.

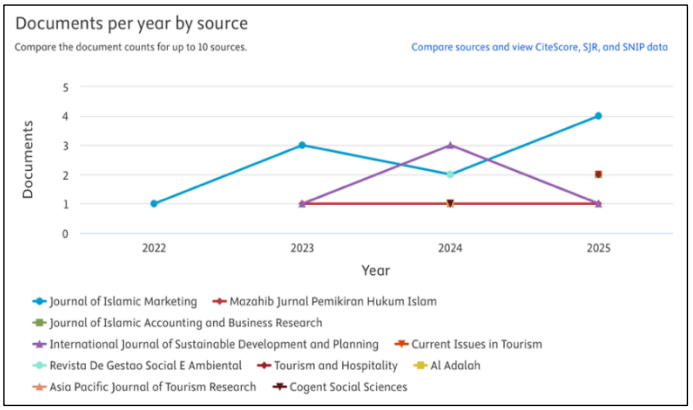


Figure 5. Top ten institutions contributed to the publications

They are followed by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, which also demonstrate notable academic productivity and strengthen the visibility of Southeast Asian institutions in the global conversation on religion-based tourism and sustainability. Meanwhile, other institutions, such as Institut Bisnis dan Informatika Kesatuan, Institut Miftahul Huda Al Azhar, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, International Islamic University Malaysia, University of Southampton, and Institut Teknologi Bandung, contribute more modest outputs. Nevertheless, their presence remains important because it reflects the widening institutional participation

in this area of study (see figure 5).

The top source titles reveal that the Journal of Islamic Marketing shows the clearest and most sustained growth pattern, especially from 2022 to 2025. This trend indicates that the journal has become one of the main academic platforms for disseminating research on halal tourism, destination development, Muslim traveler behavior, and related sustainability issues. Its stronger publication trajectory also suggests that discussions on halal tourism are increasingly being framed within broader debates on market dynamics, service quality, ethical values, and strategic development. In contrast, other outlets, such as International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning, Mazahib Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam, Cogent Social Sciences, Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, Tourism and Hospitality, Current Issues in Tourism, Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, and Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental, contribute more intermittently (see Figure 6).

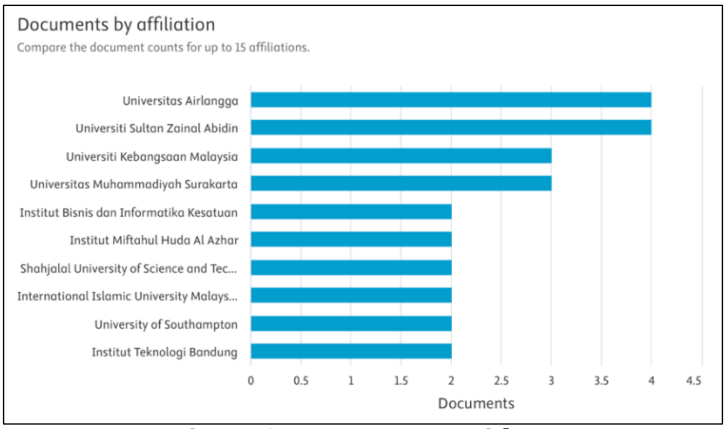


Figure 6. Top ten source titles

In subject area distribution (see Figure 7), Social Sciences contributes 35.5 percent of the publications, followed by Business, Management, and Accounting with 24.7 percent. Arts and Humanities contribute 15.1 percent, Environmental Science 10.8 percent, Energy 6.5 percent, Economics 5.4 percent, and Earth and Planetary Sciences 2.2 percent.

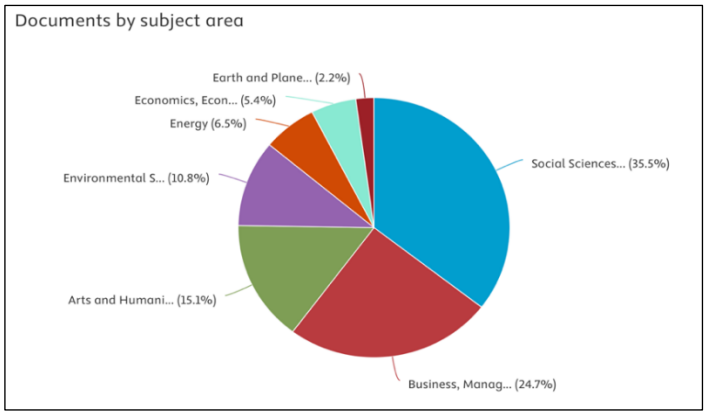


Figure 7. Documents by subject area

Nexus Analysis Between Halal Tourism and Sustainable Tourism

This subsection presents the empirical mapping of the relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism through keyword co-occurrence analysis and content-based synthesis. The keyword co-occurrence network positions halal tourism as the most central term and shows strong links with sustainable tourism, tourism, and Indonesia. The network also displays associated terms such as revisit intention, sustainable development, ecotourism, tourism economics, tourism development, tourist destination, Muslim travelers, trust, perceived value, environmental concern, and Muslim-friendly tourism.

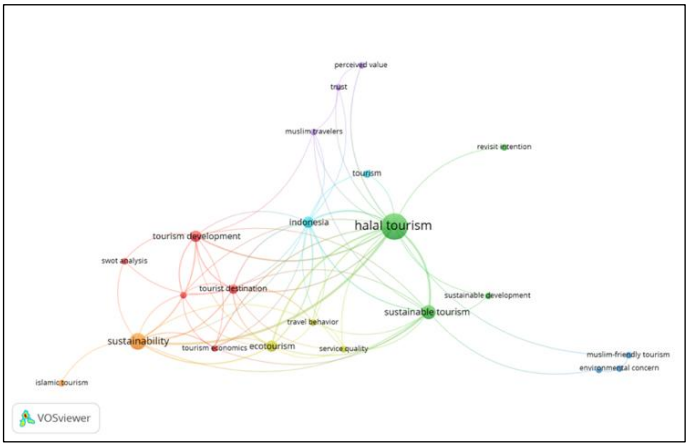


Figure 8. Network visualization of a keyword co occurrence

The overlay visualization indicates a temporal shift in research themes. Earlier studies were centered on sustainability, Islamic tourism, and tourist destinations. In the intermediate period, halal tourism, tourism, and Indonesia became more prominent. In the more recent period, attention expanded toward revisit intention, environmental concern, and Muslim-friendly tourism.

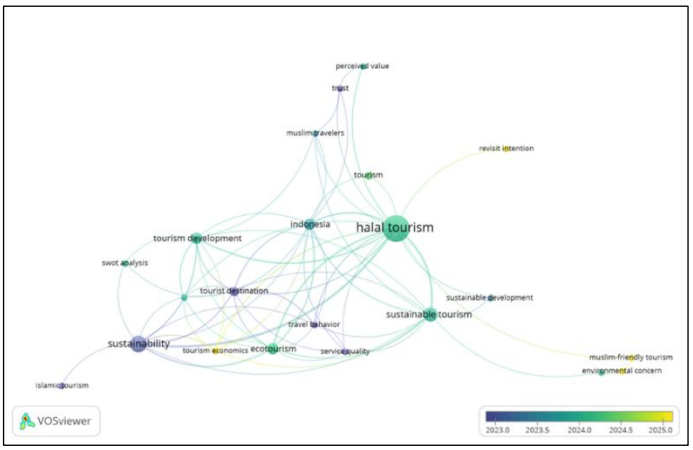


Figure 9. Overlay visualization of a keyword co-occurrence

To complement the bibliometric mapping, Table 1 summarizes the conceptual convergence between halal tourism and sustainable tourism across selected studies. Most studies identify an emerging degree of nexus, while a smaller group reports a strong nexus.

Table 1. Analytical Synthesis of Halal Tourism and Sustainable Tourism

Author(s)	Focus	Research method	Key insight
Danarta et al. (2024)	Exploring and analyzing the development of halal tourism in Indonesia, emphasizing the synergy between religion and sustainable tourism.	Qualitative descriptive method	Religion provides a moral foundation for halal tourism that aligns with sustainability, enhancing service quality and economic opportunities

Author(s)	Focus	Research method	Key insight
Martín et al. (2020)	Role of Islamic finance in developing halal tourism	Fuzzy mcdm (topsis)	Islamic finance supports halal tourism development and sustainability, but stronger sectoral synergy is needed
Jabeen et al. (2025)	Integration of Islamic principles and sustainability in halal tourism	Systematic literature review (PRISMA)	Halal tourism aligns with sustainability through an integrative framework linking religious values, sustainability goals, and technology
Gunawan et al. (2025)	Developing a Bayesian decision-making model using Markov chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) methods to enhance halal tourism governance in Pekalongan City, Indonesia.	Bayesian decision-making model utilizing Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) methods	The study demonstrates an indirect relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism, primarily mediated through economic performance, while environmental sustainability remains less influential
Laila & Zaman (2023)	Community participation in the formulation of halal tourism regulations and its legal implications in Bangkalan Regency	Empirical juridical (socio-legal) approach using interviews and qualitative inductive analysis	Community participation is essential for developing halal tourism regulations that support sustainable tourism and preserve local cultural and natural resources
Jaelani (2025)	Evaluation of halal tourism policies in NTB based on maqashid sharia for sustainable tourism	Empirical legal (socio-legal) qualitative study	Halal tourism supports sustainability through ethical, environmental, and social principles, but requires stronger regulations for long-term impact
Husain et al. (2020)	Development of sustainable smart sharia tourism and stakeholder dynamics	Systems approach using causal loop diagram (CLD)	Sharia smart tourism integrates sustainability but requires effective stakeholder management to address complexity, conflicts, and environmental impacts
Lumbanraja et al. (2025)	Impact of halal tourism policies on natural resources and local economy in Lake Toba	Mixed-methods (observation and literature review)	Halal tourism supports sustainable development through economic growth, cultural preservation, and community engagement

Author(s)	Focus	Research method	Key insight
Ahyani et al. (2025)	Development of waqf-based halal tourism in Teras Lembang	Qualitative case study	Waqf-based halal tourism supports sustainable development through social cohesion, ethical governance, and community involvement
Harini et al. (2025)	Impact of halal tourism village development on SDGs	Mixed-methods study	Halal tourism villages support SDGs through economic, social, cultural, and environmental improvements driven by stakeholder involvement
Nurhayati et al. (2025)	Development of halal tourism village (BTV) through digital transformation and community involvement	Mixed-methods study with swot analysis	Digital strategies and community involvement strengthen sustainable halal tourism across economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects
Alam et al. (2024)	Role of Instagram (@saviorangers) in promoting halal ecotourism and sustainability	Qualitative netnography	Digital campaigns enhance community engagement in sustainability, supporting halal ecotourism practices
Asbollali et al. (2025)	The research focuses on understanding how muslim women perceive, expect, and experience coastal tourism, particularly in the context of their cultural and religious backgrounds	Qualitative interpretive study with semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis	The study links halal tourism and sustainable tourism through environmental stewardship, emphasizing cleanliness and preservation as key ethical values for muslim women tourists
Aimon & Zulvianti (2023)	Antecedents of EWOM in halal tourism, including sustainability, destination performance, and tourist satisfaction	Quantitative study using SEM-PLS	Halal destination performance and psychological safety drive satisfaction and ewom, while sustainability shows no direct effect on satisfaction
Pongsakornrungsilp et al. (2024)	Muslim tourist lifestyle and halal tourism development in the Andaman coastal region	Mixed-methods study	Integrating halal and sustainable practices enhances destination appeal, supporting environmental conservation and cultural preservation
Noviarita et al. (2024)	Development of sustainable digital tourism villages based on sharia principles	Qualitative study using swot analysis	Sharia-based digital tourism supports sustainable development through economic growth, cultural preservation, and community involvement

Author(s)	Focus	Research method	Key insight
Cuesta-Valiño et al. (2020)	Role of digital technologies in developing sustainable muslim-friendly tourism destinations	Exploratory study with literature review	ICT supports sustainable muslim-friendly tourism through improved services, inclusivity, and community well-being

Discussion

This section interprets the findings and explains their implications for the development of halal tourism and sustainable tourism as an emerging research domain.

Interpreting the Growth of the Literature

The publication trend shows that research on halal tourism and sustainable tourism is still in a growth phase. The limited number of studies from 2017 to 2021 suggests that the field was initially fragmented and had not yet developed a stable research trajectory. The strong increase after 2022 indicates that scholarly interest has expanded as researchers began to connect religious values, destination development, post-pandemic recovery, and sustainability concerns within a shared analytical space.

The publication peak in 2025 suggests that the nexus between faith-based tourism and sustainability has become a prominent area of inquiry. This also means that the field is moving from a marginal topic toward a more established conversation in tourism studies. Even so, the concentration of publications in the most recent years shows that the literature is still relatively young and remains open to theoretical refinement and empirical expansion.

Interpreting the Distribution of Authors, Countries, Institutions, and Sources

The author distribution reflects a decentralized research landscape. Because no single scholar or small group has produced a dominant share of publications, the field appears to be shaped by many contributors rather than by a consolidated core of experts. This pattern is common in emerging and interdisciplinary topics, where theoretical traditions and long-term research programs are still being formed.

The country and institutional patterns reveal strong regional concentration in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia. This can be explained by the strategic relevance of halal tourism in Muslim-majority contexts, where policy support, market demand, and socio-religious factors make the topic academically and practically important. However, the limited representation of non-Muslim-majority countries also suggests that halal tourism is not yet widely positioned as a universal element within the broader sustainable tourism discourse.

The source title distribution shows that the field does not yet revolve around a single, fully established journal cluster. Instead, the literature is spread across multiple interdisciplinary outlets, with only a few journals showing sustained thematic commitment. The subject area distribution leads to a similar conclusion. Social and managerial perspectives dominate the field, while environmental and more technical perspectives remain less visible. This imbalance indicates that future studies need stronger interdisciplinary integration, especially if halal tourism is to be examined as a comprehensive sustainability framework.

Interpreting the Nexus Between Halal Tourism and Sustainable Tourism

The keyword network and overlay analysis show that the nexus between halal tourism and sustainable tourism is visible but not yet fully integrated. Current studies often connect the two concepts through destination development, tourist satisfaction, service quality, trust, and revisit intention. By contrast, environmental concern appears more peripheral, which suggests that ecological sustainability has not yet become a central pillar in mainstream halal tourism research.

The conceptual convergence table reinforces this interpretation. Most studies classify the nexus as emerging rather than strong, which means that halal tourism and sustainable tourism are widely viewed as compatible but are not yet consistently operationalized through the same policy and research frameworks. Stronger links appear when studies combine religious values with governance, digital transformation, stakeholder coordination, Islamic finance, and long-term development goals.

Overall, halal tourism should not be assumed to be sustainable by default. The evidence indicates that compatibility alone is not enough. Halal tourism becomes a stronger contributor to sustainable tourism only when religious principles are translated into concrete mechanisms such as community participation, ethical governance, environmental stewardship, inclusive planning, and measurable long-term outcomes. This finding confirms that the main challenge is not whether the two concepts can intersect, but how that intersection can be institutionalized more systematically in future research and destination practice.

Toward a Faith-Governance-Sustainability Framework

Building on the bibliometric patterns and the content-based synthesis, this study proposes a Faith–Governance–Sustainability (FGS) framework to explain how the normative foundations of halal tourism can be translated into sustainable tourism development. The framework conceptualizes the relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism as a process involving three interconnected layers: Islamic ethical values as the normative foundation, governance and implementation mechanisms as the means of translating these values into destination practices, and sustainability outcomes across economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions. Figure 10 illustrates this conceptual relationship. The first layer identifies faith and Islamic ethical values as the normative foundation of halal tourism. These values are reflected in commitments to halal integrity, ethical conduct, trust, and responsibility. However, the presence of a religious or ethical foundation does not, by itself, demonstrate that a destination has achieved sustainable outcomes. This distinction is consistent with the broader finding that halal tourism should not be assumed to be sustainable by default.

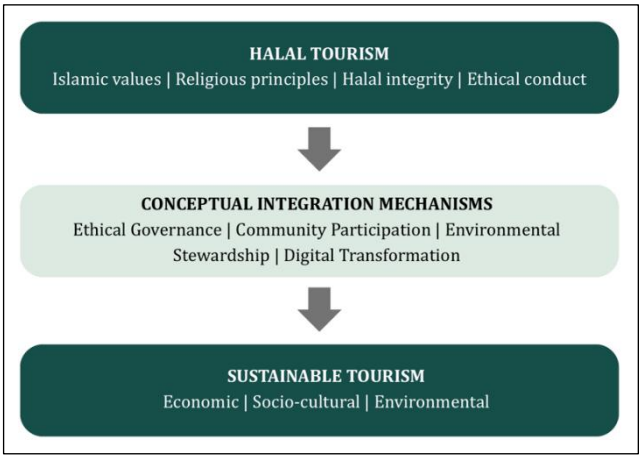


Figure 10. Conceptual integration of halal tourism and sustainable tourism based on the reviewed literature

The second layer comprises the governance and implementation mechanisms through which normative commitments can be translated into destination-level practices. The reviewed studies point to several complementary mechanisms, particularly ethical governance and adaptive regulation (Danarta et al., 2024; Gunawan et al., 2025; Jaelani, 2025), community participation and stakeholder coordination (Husain et al., 2020; Laila & Zaman, 2023), local and cultural adaptation (Harini et al., 2025; Pongsakornrungsilp et al., 2024), Islamic finance and waqf-based resource mobilization (Martín et al., 2020; Ahyani et al., 2025), digital transformation (Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2020; Nurhayati et al., 2025), and environmental stewardship (Alam et al., 2024; Asbollali et al., 2025).

Within these mechanisms, four interconnected dimensions are particularly relevant to the integration of halal tourism and sustainable tourism: ethical governance, community participation, environmental stewardship, and digital transformation. Ethical governance provides the institutional foundation for translating Islamic ethical values into responsible destination management. Community participation supports social inclusion, local empowerment, and the distribution of tourism benefits. Environmental stewardship connects ethical responsibility with resource conservation and the management of ecological impacts. Digital transformation supports destination management, information accessibility, and the development of tourism services. These four dimensions highlight important pathways through which halal tourism principles can be connected with sustainability objectives. Nevertheless, they should be understood as an interpretive synthesis of recurring themes in the reviewed literature, rather than as an exhaustive or universally applicable set of mechanisms.

The third layer concerns the outcomes through which sustainability can be assessed. Economic outcomes include local economic opportunities, competitiveness, and destination resilience. Socio-cultural outcomes include community well-being, inclusion, and cultural preservation. Environmental outcomes concern resource conservation and the management of ecological impacts. The relative peripherality of environmental concern in the keyword network indicates that this third dimension remains less visible in the mainstream research conversation. The framework therefore highlights environmental stewardship and measurable ecological indicators as areas requiring stronger conceptual and empirical attention.

The central proposition of the FGS framework is that the contribution of halal tourism to sustainable tourism is mediated by governance and implementation mechanisms. Faith-based values establish an ethical orientation, but their sustainability implications depend on how destination institutions, businesses, and communities

operationalize them. The framework also incorporates monitoring, accountability, and measurable indicators as a feedback process through which destination governance can be adjusted over time. As this framework is derived from a literature mapping and interpretive synthesis, it should be treated as a conceptual proposition for subsequent empirical testing, not as a validated causal model.

Implications for Research and Destination Practice

Theoretically, the study advances halal tourism research by distinguishing the normative compatibility between Islamic values and sustainability from the institutional and operational conditions required to achieve sustainable outcomes. The FGS framework specifies the mechanisms linking these two domains and provides an organizing structure for examining how ethical governance, community participation, cultural adaptation, finance, digital innovation, and environmental stewardship contribute to the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions of destination sustainability. It also clarifies that ecological sustainability should not be treated as an assumed consequence of halal compliance, particularly given its relatively peripheral position in the mapped literature.

At the policy level, the findings highlight the importance of aligning halal tourism policies with explicit sustainability objectives. Religious-compliance requirements need to be complemented by coordinated regulations, participatory planning, transparent benefit-sharing arrangements, and destination monitoring systems that incorporate environmental indicators alongside economic and socio-cultural measures. These policies should also encourage destination managers and tourism businesses to integrate halal service assurance with responsible resource management and local cultural protection. Such an integrated approach would ensure that halal tourism development is not assessed solely in terms of service provision, certification, or market performance, but also in relation to its broader contribution to destination sustainability.

For future research, the framework offers a basis for testing relationships that remain insufficiently examined in the current literature. Priority areas include the development of measurable environmental indicators, comparative studies across Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority destinations, longitudinal assessments of policy implementation, and empirical testing of how governance mechanisms mediate the relationship between halal tourism practices and sustainability outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism has developed into an increasingly important academic discourse, although it has not yet been fully established as an integrated research framework. The findings indicate that halal tourism extends beyond the provision of services that comply with Islamic principles and has the potential to contribute to broader sustainable destination development. Based on the bibliometric mapping and thematic synthesis, this study conceptualizes the integration of the two fields through four interconnected mechanisms: ethical governance, community participation, environmental stewardship, and digital transformation. These mechanisms illustrate how Islamic values and ethical principles can be translated into practical approaches that support the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions of sustainable tourism. Accordingly, the main contribution of this study lies in clarifying that the relationship between halal tourism and sustainable tourism is not automatic but depends on the systematic integration of religious values, institutional arrangements, community engagement, and environmental responsibility.

At the same time, the findings also reveal that the scholarly landscape remains geographically and disciplinarily concentrated, especially in Southeast Asia and within social and managerial perspectives. This condition opens opportunities for future research that is more interdisciplinary, cross-national, and empirically robust, particularly in testing environmental sustainability indicators, policy impacts, destination governance, and inclusive practices in non-Muslim regions. From an applied perspective, these findings suggest that the future development of halal tourism should be designed not only to meet market preferences, but also to build destinations that are resilient, inclusive, competitive, and sustainable. Therefore, future studies have the potential to expand the integration model between halal tourism and sustainable tourism so that it may serve as a stronger foundation for destination policies and practices that are more operational, measurable, and relevant in the global context.

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