

The Importance Level of Islamic Tourism Attributes: Will Religiosity Distinguish?

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Abstract

Research Originality: How Islamic attribute fulfilment may influence Muslim tourists' preferences has been widely known. Yet, the way the model is examined the other way around is relatively scarce in halal tourism literature. The originality of this research lies in the model use in testing the effect of companion type and destination choice, moderated by different levels of religiosity, on Muslim tourists' assessment of the importance of Islamic attributes in halal tourism.

Research Objectives: This study aims to examine the effect of Muslim tourists' preferences in terms of companion type and destination choice, moderated by their level of religiosity, on their assessment of the importance of Islamic attributes in halal tourism.

Research Methods: Friedman and Cochran's Q non-parametric tests were conducted on 189 data collected online to examine the direct effects of companion type, destination choice, and religiosity on Muslim tourists' assessment of the importance of Islamic attributes. Model 1 of the Hayes Process Macro with binary logistic was employed to examine the moderating effect of religiosity.

Empirical Results: The results showed that companion type, religiosity, and destination choice significantly affected Indonesian Muslim travellers' assessment of the importance of Islamic attributes. However, the moderating role of religiosity was not observed.

Implications: The findings have implications for Muslim travellers' decision-making literature and may offer better strategies for tourism businesses to attract and retain more Muslim tourists.

Keywords:

halal tourism; Islamic attributes; religiosity; tourist preference

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INTRODUCTION

The global halal market, including halal tourism, is worth USD 580 billion annually (Olya & Al-Ansi, 2018). The fact that Muslim tourists' demand for services and facilities differs from the demands of conventional tourists explains the exponential increase in halal tourism (Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018). Halal tourism *per se*—despite the debate surrounding the term Islamic tourism or Muslim-friendly tourism (Suci et al., 2021)—is a concept of tourism that implements some Islamic values in its operation with the aim of providing for Muslims' needs during traveling (Wibawa et al., 2021). It has become a flourishing trend and shown a solid improvement in the tourism and hospitality industry, leading to a global recognition that this sector has a great impact on the global travel market, including in non-Muslim countries (e.g., Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018; Aji et al., 2021; Suci et al., 2021).

Halal tourism is considered a niche market with feature needs due to varied tourists' religiosity and preferences (Liberato et al., 2020). Thus, it is essential to involve tourists' decision-making when discussing their preferences for halal tourism. In that vein, decades ago, Wahab et al. (1976) introduced the travel decision-making theory, stating that the traveler's decision-making process is based on decision-making rationality. In its further development, Gilbert (1991) proposed that when reviewing the decision-making process, the emphasis of various considerations is based on the behavior of each individual. These earlier theories of tourist decision-making have been further developed in lengthy discussions of recent tourism studies (e.g., Aydin & Karamehmet, 2017; Bowen, 2022). In halal tourism, travelers across religions and cultures differ in behavior patterns, travel arrangements, leisure activities, motivations, destination choices (Aji et al., 2021), and travel preferences (Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2020). In short, travelers' destination preferences depend on their respective beliefs (Sudigdo & Khalifa, 2020).

Tourist preferences are tourists' perceptions and opinions after an actual visitation (Sun et al., 2017). Thus far, little halal tourism literature examines the relationship between Islamic/sharia attributes and travel preferences (Moghavvemi & Musa, 2018). Few past studies have examined the impact of fulfilling Islamic attributes on Muslim travelers' preferences (e.g., Hakimi et al., 2018; Moghavvemi & Musa, 2018; Rahmiati & Fajarsari, 2020). Critical attributes, such as halal food and beverages and praying facilities, significantly influence Muslim tourists' decision-making when choosing a particular tourist destination (e.g., Sudigdo & Khalifa, 2020; Sulaiman et al., 2022). For example, in the Muslim-majority region of Southeast Asia, Battour and Ismail (2014) found an effect of Islamic attributes on Muslim tourists' destination preferences in Kuala Lumpur. Similarly, Rahman (2014) concluded that the ability to fulfill various Islamic features could motivate the preferences of Malaysian Muslim tourists. In Indonesia, Rahmiati & Fajarsari (2020) found that fulfilling physical Islamic attributes impacted tourists' preferences, and so did fulfilling non-physical attributes, although the impact was insignificant in the latter case.

However, such common knowledge may raise interesting critical questions: *"Is it a one-way relationship? Is the relationship possible to work in the opposite direction or even in reciprocal?"* Thus, whether a tourist's preferences influence their assessment of the

importance of Islamic attributes is a reflective question worth addressing to gain new insight into halal tourism literature. For example, will the importance level of one or more specific Islamic attributes be similar between solo- and family-oriented travelers? Or do tourists who prefer to travel to Muslim-majority countries or regions perceive the same level of Islamic attribute importance as those who like to travel to Muslim-minority destinations? Answers to these questions remain unclear.

Hence, the current study intends to test the opposite of such common knowledge, that Muslim tourists' travel preferences will possibly have the potential to determine the importance level of various Islamic attributes in halal tourism. To the furthest of our knowledge, this model has never been tested before, resulting in novel knowledge in the context of halal tourism. Tourist preferences determining the importance of Islamic attributes in halal tourism has a logical rationale. For example, a traveler's preference in choosing a companion to travel with (companion type) will influence their assessment of how important an Islamic attribute is to be satisfied in tourism products and services. Regarding companion type, Muslim tourists usually prefer the company of family members, friends, tour groups, and their own (Tang et al., 2020). Halal tourism *per se* is often linked with the concept of family-friendly tourism (e.g., Rehman, 2020; Junaidi et al., 2020; Suci et al., 2021), where a tourist environment free of alcohol, pornography, porn/adultery, and drugs is perceived as safe and ideal for families, especially children traveling with their parents.

Meanwhile, tourists, especially the younger generation who prefer to travel alone (solo travelers) or with peers, will likely have different assessments in perceiving the importance of Islamic tourism attributes. The global acculturation process of cultures and beliefs has shaped secular lifestyles among young people (Van Kligeren & Spierings, 2020). As a result, young people's religiosity, especially in Indonesia, is fading from time to time, creating a greater degree of permissiveness of alcohol use, sexual exposure, *awrah*-exposing fashion, and lifestyles that are contrary to Islamic values (e.g., Francis et al., 2019; Suhandi & Jaafar, 2020).

Another example in the context of tourist preferences is destination choice. Moghavvemi and Musa (2018) stated that fulfilling Islamic attributes is integral to tourists' destination choice. Muslim tourists likely decide to travel to an area/country that can provide, at least, their basic needs to carry out the obligations that they must observe as Muslims while traveling. The same thing has been proposed by Hassani and Moghavvemi (2020), suggesting that tourists with religious motivations tend to choose tourist destinations with Islamic attributes. Conversely, those not motivated by religious motives tend to avoid Islamic/sharia-oriented tourist destinations.

Furthermore, one aspect that should be embedded when discussing Muslims' travel behavior is religiosity—the extent to which religious knowledge, beliefs, and rituals are applied in individual activities (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015). Religious motivation is an integral part of the design of halal tourism (Haque & Momen, 2017; Moghavvemi & Musa, 2018; Abror et al., 2019), on the grounds of which tourism operators should meet various sharia attributes when offering their services to Muslim tourists. Travelers with

religious motives tend to choose destinations that satisfy their demand for maximum quantity and quality of Islamic attributes (Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2020; Abror et al., 2021; Suci et al., 2021). Many previous studies support the claim, indicating that religiosity is crucial in determining Muslim tourists' consumption patterns and behavior (e.g., Arli & Pekerti, 2017; Abror et al., 2019; Aji et al., 2021; Sulaiman et al., 2022).

Religiosity *per se* has been extensively studied by halal tourism researchers, particularly in its moderating role in the relationship between predictors and relevant response variables (e.g., Hakimi et al., 2018; Abror et al., 2021; Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2020; Rahmiati & Fajarsari, 2020). For example, Patwary et al. (2018) examined the association of halal awareness and subjective norms with the interest in choosing a halal hotel moderated by religiosity. Islamic attributes moderated by religiosity were once scrutinized by Hakimi et al. (2018) in determining Muslim travelers' satisfaction. Other previous studies have tested the effect of religiosity as a moderating variable within the relationship between Islamic attributes and service quality to Muslim travelers' loyalty (Riyanto et al., 2022), the relationship between involvement and Muslim travelers' satisfaction (Abror et al., 2021), and the relationship between perceived value and Muslim travelers' satisfaction (Preko et al., 2020). The results, in general, demonstrated a significant moderation effect of religiosity.

A critical question that has not yet been widely discussed is: "*Would the perceived importance level of Islamic attributes be the same among Muslim tourists with different levels of religiosity?*" This crucial question is worth discussing given that the religiosity level of Muslims varies, possibly resulting in differences in how they understand and classify the level of importance of Islamic attributes in tourism (e.g., Eid & El Gohary, 2015; Junaidi et al., 2020; Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2020). It is especially the case for members of generations Y and Z, who are perceived as experiencing a "shock" to religious values in today's era of technology and openness (e.g., Van Klingeren & Spierings, 2020; Francis et al., 2019), including in Indonesia (Suhandi & Jaafar, 2020). Their perspectives on alcohol, inter-gender relations, clothing trends, and other lifestyles differ from those of previous generations. An answer to this question can, thus, expand our insight into the role of religiosity level in Muslim tourists' travel preferences.

From the abovementioned description, existing studies offer two significant research gaps to be addressed. First, unlike previous studies that mainly examined the effect of Islamic attributes on travel preference (e.g., Rahman, 2014; Battour & Ismail, 2014; Hakimi et al., 2018; Moghavvemi & Musa, 2018; Rahmiati & Fajarsari, 2020; Sudigdo & Khalifa, 2020; Sulaiman et al., 2022), the current study aims to test the effect inversely. That is, how Muslim tourists' travel preferences, consisting of travel companion type and destination choice, will possibly have the potential to determine the importance level (more versus less important) of various Islamic attributes in halal tourism is still relatively unclear. Second, how the different levels of religiosity (higher, moderate, lower) may moderate the effect of Muslim tourists' travel preferences on the importance level of various Islamic attributes in halal tourism has yet to be examined.

Therefore, the current study aims to investigate the effect of Muslim tourists' preferences, moderated by their level of religiosity, on their assessment of the importance of halal tourism attributes. This study's findings can offer a novel insight into Muslim travelers' decision-making process by investigating the role of companion type, destination choice, and religiosity level in assessing and classifying the importance level of various Islamic attributes in halal tourism. Moreover, the current study attempts to balance the common method of classifying the importance level of Islamic attributes in halal tourism, which has been predominated by government bodies and religious scholars, by employing the perspectives of Muslims as parties who will pay for halal tourism services. From the managerial perspective, understanding Muslim tourists' travel decision-making process could help tourism businesses offer better services that align with their target market's preferences and religiosity level..

METHODS

The current study employed a quantitative method, using online questionnaires to collect data from the Indonesian Muslim population. There were no specific criteria for respondent selection except for the minimum age requirement of 18 years—this random selection aimed to reach respondents with different religiosity levels, socio-economic backgrounds, and travel preferences. More than 250 Google questionnaires were distributed through social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram), 198 (79.2%) were responded to, and 189 were valid for subsequent processing (95.5%). The respondents were 56.1% men and 43.9% women. They were aged 37.6 years on average, with the youngest being 19 and the oldest 59 years. Fourteen-eight percent were respondents with no income (e.g., students, unemployed, homemakers), and the remaining 85.2% came from various professions. Most respondents spent IDR 4 to 7 million a year (29.6%) on self-booked (74.6%) traveling, mostly 2–4 times a year (52.4%), with family (58.7%), to Muslim-majority tourist destinations (78.8%). They preferred starred hotels for accommodation (42.9%). Nature was the most preferred destination choice for the respondents (67.2%).

Tourist preference was the independent variable in this study, encompassing companion type and destination choice. Companion type, which is the preference of tourists in choosing a travel companion, was measured by three dichotomous values: solo (coded 1), with friends or with a tour group (coded 2), and with family (coded 3) (Tang et al., 2020). Destination choice was measured by two dichotomous values: Muslim-majority countries or regions (coded 1) and Muslim-minority countries/regions (coded 2) (Moghavvemi & Musa, 2018; Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2020).

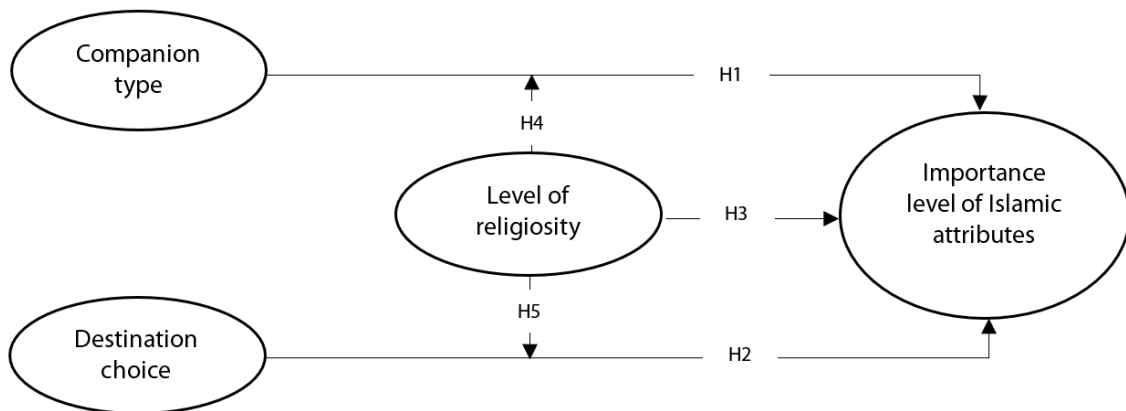
The dependent variable was the importance level of Islamic attributes ($\alpha = .93$), which refer to the symbols or elements of sharia attached to a halal tourist destination (Battour & Ismail, 2014; Riyanto et al., 2022). Previous studies (e.g., Eid & El-Gohary, 2015; Suci et al., 2021; Sulaiman et al., 2022) have suggested a number of Islamic attributes in the context of halal tourism, namely halal food and beverages ($\alpha = .93$), halal certificates ($\alpha = .92$), prayer rooms/mosques with separated sections for men and

women ($\alpha = .92$), prayer equipment ($\alpha = .92$), separated ablution spaces for men and women ($\alpha = .92$), locations with the concept of gender segregation of tourists ($\alpha = .92$), tourist facilities with the concept of gender segregation ($\alpha = .92$), elimination of non-sharia entertainment ($\alpha = .92$), prohibition of alcohol and drugs ($\alpha = .92$), restriction of access for unauthorized couples ($\alpha = .92$), a covered dressing code for tourists ($\alpha = .92$) and employees ($\alpha = .92$), gender matching between tourists and service employees ($\alpha = .93$), restriction of living-creature-like decoration ($\alpha = .93$), and sharia payment transactions ($\alpha = .93$). The measurement scale used was semantic differential with ten response ranges, where one represented "very unimportant" and ten represented "very important."

The moderating variable was the level of religiosity. Modifying the measurements from Hassani & Moghavvemi (2020), we measured it by four dichotomous values: practicing Islam strictly (coded 1), practicing Islam moderately (coded 2), practicing Islam limited to mandatory worship (coded 3), and not religious (coded 4).

As described in the previous section, all variables and their relationships are shown in Figure 1. A non-parametric method using Friedman and Cochran's Q tests was conducted to examine the effects of companion type, religious level, and destination choice on respondents' assessment of the importance level of Islamic attributes (H1, H2, and H3). Meanwhile, Model 1 of the Hayes Process Macro with binary logistic was employed to examine the moderating effect of religiosity on the impact of companion type and destination choice on the importance level of Islamic attributes (H4 and H5).

Figure 1. Research Model



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before examining the effect of tourists' preferences on their assessment of the importance level of Islamic attributes, we initiated a descriptive analysis by determining the mean scores of such attributes, totally and individually. Table 1 shows that on a scale of ten, the importance level of Islamic attributes in halal tourism for Muslim tourists was relatively high. The next step was to determine which attributes could be grouped as more and less critical attributes for Muslim tourists by recoding them into a new

dichotomous variable called the “importance level of Islamic attributes.” Using the total mean score as the cut-point, we grouped those attributes into more important attributes ($M > 8.01$) and less critical attributes ($M < 8.01$). The results show that seven attributes were more critical, while respondents perceived the other eight as less important Islamic attributes in halal tourism.

Table 1. Categories of Islamic Attributes

Attributes	N	M	SD
All	189	8.01	1.73
More important (> 8.01)			
Halal food		9.41	1.49
Halal certificate		8.99	1.85
Praying room with separation of male and female prayers		8.95	1.85
Prayer equipment (<i>qibla</i> direction, mat, sarong/ <i>muqna'ah</i>)		8.78	1.85
Ablution space with separation of male and female prayers		9.01	2.01
Alcohol prohibition		8.49	2.42
Access restriction for unmarried couples		8.50	2.49
Less important (< 8.01)			
Male and female tourist segregation		6.61	2.89
Facilities with separation of male and female tourists		7.25	2.84
No facilities prohibited by Islamic norms		7.70	2.95
Covered dressing code for tourists		7.98	2.54
Covered dressing code for employees		7.89	2.48
Gender matching between tourist and service employee		7.32	2.75
No living creature decoration (statues, paintings, etc)		6.92	2.82
Transaction using sharia account		6.29	2.91

Source: Data processing

Table 2 demonstrates that the difference in companion type generally determined the respondents’ assessment of the importance level of Islamic attributes, thus supporting H1. Of the three types, group-oriented and family-oriented travelers were more concerned with more important Islamic attributes than solo-oriented ones. These results indicated that people who preferred traveling in groups and with family members were more concerned about how tourism operators would provide some basic needs of Muslim tourists, such as halal food and beverages, praying rooms, equipment, and ablution spaces with a gender segregation policy. The restriction on alcohol, drugs, and adultery was also the primary concern of this kind of tourists. Family-oriented tourists were most concerned with fulfilling Islamic elements in halal tourism. It was contrary to solo travelers, who might not see the urgency to differentiate the level of importance of these attributes in tourism services. This finding is logical because most family-oriented tourists were married and had children. In such a case, their norms and values were more conservative than solo travelers, mostly young (under their 30s) and single, who saw the world more open-mindedly. On the other hand, parents must protect their family members, especially the children, from indecent exposures, such as alcohol consumption, adult nightlife, and sensuality. Not surprisingly, the term *family-friendly* is also classified as *Muslim-friendly* in the contestation of World Halal Travel (Junaidi et al., 2020; Suci et al., 2021).

Table 2. Tourist’s preference on the importance level of Islamic attributes

Model	N	X ²	^a Asymp. Sig.
Companion type → Importance level of Islamic attributes	189	85.48	.00***
Solo (less important more important)	20 15	.71	.40
Group (less important more important)	13 30	6.72	.01***
Family (less important more important)	41 70	7.58	.01***
Religious level → Importance level of Islamic attributes	189	19.96	.00***
Higher (less important more important)	23 30	.93	.34
Moderate (less important more important)	31 60	9.24	.00***
Lower (less important more important)	11 18	1.69	.19
Not religious (less important more important)	9 7	.25	.62
Destination choice → Importance level of Islamic attributes	189	^b 54.61	.00***
Muslim-majority (less important more important)	60 89	5.64	.02**
Non-Muslim-majority (less important more important)	14 26	3.60	.06

^a **p < .05; ***p < .01

^b Cochran’s Q

In fact, for many non-Muslim tourist destinations, such as Bali and North Sumatra, it is the preference of hoteliers to use the term *family-friendly hotel* instead of *halal hotel*, *sharia hotel*, or *Muslim-friendly hotel* because the latter three sound doctrinal and are not very well-accepted by the residents (Suci et al., 2021). Non-Muslim tourists and tourism businesses, in some cases, might misunderstand the concept of halal tourism, assuming that there will be a fundamental switch of hospitality services to Islamic business (Suci et al., 2021). The same fact is also found in Egypt (Khan & Callahan, 2017), showing that this country is reluctant to use specific religious terms and has settled on using *family tourism* instead. Such a term can embrace all types of tourists seeking more family-friendly tourism experiences regardless of their religious affiliations. Especially when the women in the family arrange the traveling plans, they will likely choose children-friendly attractions and amenities, safe and clean environments, and healthy food (Liberato et al., 2020). Besides, it is also relevant to the stages of human life, where older people, especially married ones, become more religious than younger ones (e.g., Nguyen, 2020; Kurttekin, 2020). This result matches the demographics of the respondents of the current study, who were married and aged 37.6 years on average.

Table 2 also shows that the difference in religiosity level, in general, determined how the respondents perceived the importance level of Islamic attributes, hence confirming H3. Today, religious nuance is not limited to sacred worship but also implies more pleasant Muslim activities like tourism (Lutfiyah, 2017). Thus, involving religiosity in examining the relationship between Muslim tourist preference and Islamic attributes in halal tourism might benefit in explaining Muslims' travel decision-making. Moreover, religiosity, in general, has been proven to be a determining factor in Muslim consumers' halal lifestyle and intentional behavior (e.g., Maulani et al., 2022; Salsabila & Ihsan, 2023). In support, Hopkins et al. (2014) suggested that religious people are more conservative and more concerned about moral standards, which in turn, could shape their behavior (e.g., Abror et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020; Sulaiman et al., 2022). Thus, specifically

in halal tourism studies, religiosity plays a vital role in Muslim tourists' decision-making (e.g., Abror et al., 2019; Sudigdo & Khalifa, 2020; Aji et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, only those with moderate religiosity were significantly more concerned with more important Islamic attributes than less important ones, while respondents with higher and lower religiosity and those who were not religious perceived no meaningful difference between more important Islamic attributes and less ones in halal tourism. This finding aligns with Suci et al. (2021), suggesting that Islamic attributes should not be applied rigidly. Instead, they must be used flexibly by considering tourism businesses' policies and business models and, of course, considering tourist acceptance of these attributes. This result is relevant to Elseidi's finding (2018), which suggests that Muslims' behavior varies and depends on how deep their commitment to the religion is. For example, in the concept of faith-based needs of Muslim travelers (COMCEC, 2016), it is said that about 60% of Muslim tourists are moderate, only 20% are devout, and 20% are not religious. This concept also categorizes food and prayer as the most critical attributes in halal tourism, while others are considered less important. Notably, the halal tourism program can be accepted and run successfully only by tolerating business interests and differences in tourist preferences and religiosity by applying Islamic values in the tourism business model (Suci et al., 2021).

Respondents who preferred Muslim-majority destinations placed more importance on Islamic attributes than those who chose Muslim-minority destinations. As such, this difference in destination choice determined the importance level of Islamic attributes, supporting H2. Here, we demonstrate that only when choosing Muslim-majority destinations did Muslim tourists consider separating Islamic attributes by the level of importance, especially those perceived as more critical, such as halal food and beverages, halal certification, prayer facilities and equipment, and restrictions on alcohol and adultery. It is relevant to other studies revealing the importance of destination attributes in choosing a country to visit (e.g., Sudigdo & Khalifa, 2020). Physical attributes, such as halal food and worship facilities, and non-physical attributes, such as any tourism services, are considered Islamic values of tourism destinations that can drive Muslim travelers' decision-making (e.g., Eid & El-Gohary, 2015; Rodrigo & Turnbull, 2019).

On the contrary, for Muslim tourists who chose Muslim-minority destinations, the difference in the importance level of these attributes was insignificant. This condition is likely because getting appropriate facilities for Muslim tourists in non-Muslim countries to carry out religious rituals is somewhat challenging; thus, they cannot be too selective. It may be due to the lack of knowledge of these non-Muslim countries of the needs of Muslim tourists (Wibawa et al., 2021), causing inconveniences to Muslim tourists when traveling to non-Muslim countries (Al Ansi et al., 2021). This condition could also explain why this study did not find any significant moderating role of religiosity level in the influence of destination choice on the importance of Islamic attributes. Moreover, many non-Muslim countries applying halal tourism realize that such kind of tourism is not "really Islamic tourism." Instead, they understand that it is merely a marketing strategy to meet Muslim tourists' needs so that they can attract more Muslim tourists

to visit (Aji et al., 2021). Still, these non-Muslim countries encounter severe problems in following and properly implementing "Islamic tourism" (El-Gohary, 2016), especially with the fact that there is a lack of halal operation standards in their countries (Suci et al., 2021).

Table 3. Moderation effects

Model	Coeff.	SE	z	p
Companion type*religiosity → Importance level of Islamic attributes	.12	.20	.58	.56
Destination choice*religiosity → Importance level of Islamic attributes	-.53	.48	-1.10	.27

Source: Data processing

The results in Table 3 revealed that no moderating effects were observed, thus causing H4 to be rejected. Figure 2 validates this finding that the most significant importance of Islamic attributes across all levels of religiosity was perceived by family-oriented tourists, followed by in-group tourists in the second, and those who preferred solo traveling in the rearmost. Similarly, religiosity did not moderate the effect of destination choice on the importance level of Islamic attributes; thus, H5 was not supported. Figure 3 shows that a nearly flat line occurred at almost all levels of religiosity in the context of Muslim-majority destination choices. However, in the case of Muslim-minority destinations, respondents with higher levels of religiosity showed a great deal of consideration for Islamic attributes of greater importance, followed by moderately religious respondents. Those with the most minor religiosity level showcased the most minor consideration.

This result is possibly explained by the highest importance placed by family-oriented tourists at all levels of religiosity on Islamic attributes. This result indicates that Muslim tourists strongly consider family interests when traveling (e.g., Oktadiana et al., 2020; Liberato et al., 2020), even those less religious. The implication is that many Islamic attributes beyond worship rituals, such as prayers, should align with the norms and interests of Muslim families. For example, the prohibition on alcohol and drugs consumption, access restrictions for non-*mahram* couples, an environment free from pornography and porn, and of course, the availability of healthy, clean, and safe processed food on which attention is focused in halal food certification in Indonesia not only reflect religious values but also represent an ideal condition expected by tourists, especially those traveling with family members, both religious and non-religious, Muslim and non-Muslim. That is why many non-Muslim tourists enjoy the new cultural experience of halal tourism. They can feel safer and more comfortable with several Islamic rules in tourist attractions (e.g., Battour et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2020). It further confirms that Islam is *rahmatan lil'alameen*; many practices in Islamic teachings bring virtue to all humanity. As such, when discussing these virtues, religiosity might no longer be relevant (Suci & Hardi, 2020), indicating that Islamic teachings can be rational instead of merely emotionally religious.

Figure 2. The Effect of Companion Type Moderated by Religiosity Level on the Importance Level of Islamic Attributes

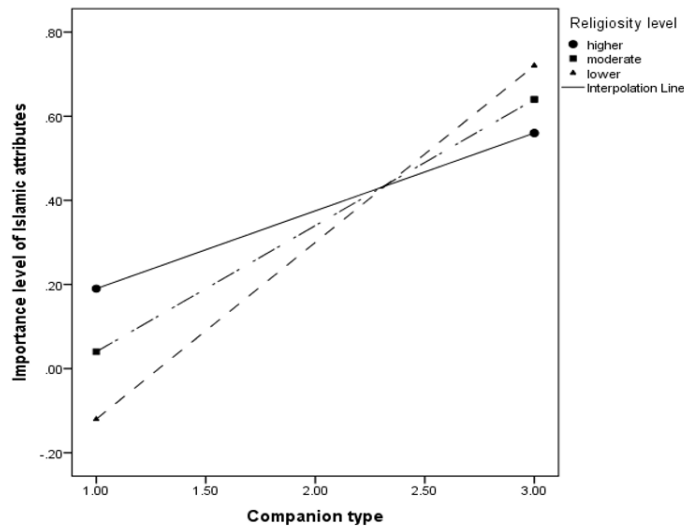
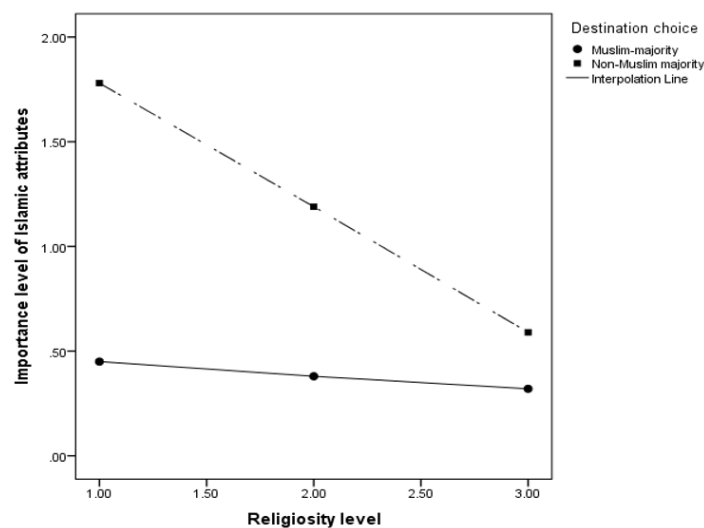


Figure 3. The Effect of Destination Choice Moderated by Religiosity Level on the Importance Level of Islamic Attributes



CONCLUSION

This study found that how Muslim tourists considered the importance level of Islamic attributes in halal tourism would depend on whom they liked to travel with, how religious they were, and where they preferred to travel. In other words, companion type, religiosity, and destination choice were crucial predictors for Indonesian Muslim tourists in determining which Islamic attributes were more or less essential to be embedded in a halal tourism package. These findings, thus, expand the literature on Muslims' travel decision-making by showing that Islamic attributes should differ by their level of importance; these are considered more and less important according to Muslim tourists' preferences in companion type and destination choice and their religiosity level. Here,

we demonstrate that family-oriented tourists were most concerned with fulfilling Islamic elements in halal tourism. It was contrary to solo travelers, who might not see the urgency to differentiate the level of importance of these attributes in tourism services. Another theoretical contribution to the Muslims' travel decision-making literature is the empirical findings showing that only when choosing Muslim-majority destinations did Muslim tourists consider separating the level of importance of Islamic attributes, especially those perceived as more critical, such as halal food and beverages, halal certification, prayer facilities and equipment, and restrictions on alcohol and adultery.

Meanwhile, for Muslim tourists who chose Muslim-minority destinations, the difference in the importance level of these attributes was insignificant. Additionally, the empirical results revealed that only moderately religious tourists chose more important Islamic attributes. In contrast, tourists with higher and lower religiosity and those who were not religious did not see the urgency in differing the importance level of those attributes, which might offer a novel insight into how religiosity may affect Muslim tourists' perception of the importance level of Islamic attributes.

This study practically contributes a broader perspective on the tourism business that will be useful in setting products and services by understanding what attributes are really and less critical for Muslim tourists with different preferences. Tourism businesses can selectively and adaptively incorporate those attributes in their operational programs in appropriate conditions, such as offering more halal attributes to family-oriented and in-group tourists but less to solo travelers. Accordingly, the policy recommendation of the current study is that the government should raise the attractiveness of halal tourism by promoting the flexible practices and benefits of halal tourism to a more prominent tourist base—not only to Muslim tourists but also to non-Muslims. As such, the digital realm may be leveraged to promote such a global campaign. In addition, the government should ease procedures and offer financial incentives for small and micro-tourism businesses to obtain halal certification.

Despite its contribution to expanding the knowledge on Muslims' travel decision-making regarding tourists' preferences, religiosity, and importance level of Islamic attributes, which are limited in literature, this study has few limitations. The respondents were only Muslims of Indonesian origin; thus, the findings might not be generalizable to other countries. Nevertheless, the average practice of Islam in Indonesia is moderate, similar to that in other Muslim-majority countries, thus opening up more significant opportunities for generalizing these results. However, the cultural aspects of certain nations can cause their Islamic practice to be distinctive. Thus, it is highly recommended that future researchers recruit Muslim respondents from different cultures, such as Central Asia, Turkey, Africa, or the Middle East.

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