

HALAL TOURISM AMONG GEN Z: ANALYZING THE EFFECT OF HALAL AWARENESS AND DESTINATION TRUST ON VISIT INTENTION WITH RELIGIOSITY AS A MEDIATOR

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors shaping Generation Z's interest in halal tourism, with a focus on evaluating the alignment of Java Island's destinations—Indonesia's most populous region—with halal standards. Emphasizing the necessity for heightened awareness of halal compliance in tourism, data were gathered from 416 Indonesian respondents planning trips to Java. Structural equation modeling via SmartPLS analyzed the relationships among halal awareness, destination trust, religiosity, and visit intention. Results demonstrated that destination trust exerted the strongest direct influence on visit intention, surpassing halal awareness. Furthermore, religiosity significantly mediated the relationship between destination trust and visit intention, validating the role of religious values shape travel decisions. These insights highlight that halal tourism appeal hinges not only on transparent halal practices but also on fostering trust and integrating religiosity into destination planning. The study advocates for targeted strategies to enhance halal literacy and reinforce ethical tourism frameworks tailored to Gen Z's evolving needs.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors and significantly contributes to the global economy, including Indonesia. In addition to creating jobs, this sector also supports sustainable development (Chanin et al., 2015). According to data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, the number of domestic tourist trips reached 60.33 million in November 2023, an increase of 12.02% compared to the same period the previous year. The total trips from January to November 2023 reached 749.11 million, showing a 15% increase compared to 2019 (indonesia.go.id, 2024). The International Air Transport Association (IATA) projects that international travel will experience significant growth in 2023 and potentially surpass pre-pandemic levels in 2024 (Purwowidhu, 2023).

Indonesia, as a country with a majority Muslim population, has great potential in developing halal tourism. The halal principle encompasses not only food but also other products and services such as cosmetics, banking, and tourism (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015; Razzaq et al., 2016). The Global Muslim Travel Index 2024 by CrescentRating underscores the immense potential of the Muslim-friendly tourism market, projected to exceed \$300 billion by 2028, fueled by a rapidly growing Muslim population and a rising middle class prioritizing faith-aligned travel experiences. This sector, which already contributed over 12% of global tourism expenditure in 2023, is driven by younger generations seeking ethical, authentic, and digitally integrated services, alongside expanding niches (CrescentRating, 2024).

Halal tourism, which includes all aspects of travel in accordance with Islamic principles such as food, accommodation, and recreational activities, continues to grow rapidly in various parts of the world (Battour & Ismail, 2016). Indonesia itself has successfully ranked first as the best halal tourist destination in the world in 2023 according to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), up from second place the previous year (KNEKS, 2023). The Indonesian government continues to strive to improve facilities and halal certification standards to support halal tourism (Kurniawan, 2023).

According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the favorite destinations for domestic tourists in 2022 aiming for the island of Java reached 75.49% of the total domestic tourist trips in Indonesia. East Java was recorded as the main destination province with the highest number of trips amounting to 27.29% of the total domestic tourist trips. Furthermore, West Java and Central Java also became favorite destinations for domestic tourists with 123.53 million trips and 110.35 million trips respectively. The fourth destination was DKI Jakarta with 56.01 million trips. Banten followed in fifth place with 38.6 million trips. And also DI Yogyakarta with 25.74 million trips. This indicates that the interest in domestic tourist destinations has great potential, especially on the island of Java (BPS, 2022). Among those domestic tourists are the generation Z (Gen-Z) tourist who are increasing in the total number in the past few years and predicted as the future potential market for tourism. However, Gen Z market potential still have challenges by many factors such as fragmented Halal

certification standards, superficial cultural engagement, and geopolitical safety concerns threaten market cohesion, as destinations struggle to balance compliance with genuine inclusivity (CrescentRating, 2024).

Moreover, Haratikka (2023) presents that generation Z travels to relieve stress, enjoy vacations, discover new things, pursue hobbies, enjoy the scenery, and develop social relationships. But, according to Adrian and Gustati (2023), they are not influenced by Islamic branding when buying products because they consider the majority of products and services in Indonesia already comply with Islamic rules. Fauziah et al. (2021) found that they pay little attention to halal logos or certificates when consuming food and drinks. Therefore, to unlock this high-value market, stakeholders must address standardization gaps, invest in culturally sensitive infrastructure, and leverage digital innovation to meet the evolving demands of Gen Z Muslim travelers, ensuring sustainable growth.

A survey by Dahlan et al. (2022) of 429 Gen Z identified that 51% are fairly religious, 35% are religious, 6% are very religious, 6% are less religious, and 1% are not religious at all. Although the majority have religious affiliations, their levels of religiosity vary significantly, and most tend to engage in religious activities selectively, based on personal preferences rather than strict adherence to religious norms. This finding indicates a shift in how younger generations perceive and practice religion, which may, in turn, influence their attitudes toward religiously guided consumption behavior, including halal tourism.

Such behavioral trends raise important questions about whether religiosity still plays a significant role in shaping Gen Z's travel decisions, specially in the context of halal tourism, which is inherently rooted in Islamic principles. While they may identify as Muslims, their degree of religious commitment could mediate the influence of halal awareness and trust in halal-certified destinations on their intention to visit those destinations. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the Muslim population will increase to 3 billion by 2060, which means the demand for tourism services that meet Islamic principles will also increase (Wibawa et al., 2021). With increasing awareness of the needs and preferences of Muslim travelers, the halal tourism industry offers great opportunities for economic growth and the development of tourism destinations (Rahmi, 2020), especially among Gen Z market segment.

However, challenges remain in the practice of halal tourism in Indonesia, including difficulties in effective branding and promotion as well as resistance from some regions to this concept. The concept of halal tourism is often misunderstood as Islamic tourism limited to Muslims only, whereas it is actually inclusive for all groups (Bank Indonesia, 2019). Nevertheless, the implementation of halal tourism emphasizes that Islamic teachings are universal (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*), and several non-Muslim countries are also developing halal tourism products and services to meet the needs of Muslim travelers (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015). This phenomenon should be also addressing the need of Gen Z's preference in performing travelling in the context of

halal tourism in Indonesia. Although Gen Z is predicted as potential market for halal tourism in the Muslim segment, but the specific studies in understanding their current behavior and preferences are still remain limited.

Thus, it is important to conduct studies on Gen Z's intentions to visit destination with the concept of halal tourism and the factors that influence it, such as halal awareness, destination trust, and religiosity. Although previous study claimed that Gen Z is the future potential market for halal tourism, however the finding of Adrian & Gustati (2023) reveals that halal related promotion is not Gen Z's priority in choosing specific tourist destination. We contrast this finding and propose our critical thinking that halal awareness is still important for Gen Z's decision making. Therefore, this study will elaborate the influence of halal awareness and destination trust toward visit intention. Moreover, according to Dahlan (2022), Indonesian Gen Z are still labelling themselves as religious individual. Hence, in this study, we will also analyze the role of religiosity among Gen Z in shaping their purchase decision.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Why do Muslim travelers choose halal tourism? The answer might lie in their purchasing behavior, which plays a huge role in shaping this fast-growing industry. Researchers often use the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) to dig deeper into what motivates Muslim tourists in their travel choices. While a good number of studies have explored this topic, there's still room for more real-world research to fully grasp these trends. This theory builds on an older one, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which also looked at intentions. Hussain et al. (2016) used TRA to study halal shopping habits in Pakistan, checking whether things like halal logos, food safety, religious values, and health concerns influenced buying decisions. They surveyed 500 people and found that most factors mattered, except for halal logos and health consciousness. This finding may be caused probably because Pakistan is mostly Muslim, so people already assume food is halal. Also, economic struggles might make health a lower priority when shopping (Hussain et al., 2016).

A similar study in Malaysia (Shah & Sayuti, 2011) confirmed that all three TPB factors (attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control) push Muslims toward halal products. But this study stuck strictly to the original TPB model without adding any new variables, which limits how much we can learn from it. Later, Memon et al. (2019) tried something different, they added religiosity to the mix, thinking it would strengthen the link between TPB factors and halal purchases. Surprisingly, it shows another finding, Their results showed that being more religious didn't necessarily make people more likely to follow through on halal buying intentions (Memon et al., 2019).

When it comes to travel, Jeaheng et al. (2019) tweaked the TPB model to see what makes Muslim tourists happy with hotels in Thailand. They looked at halal food, prayer spaces, privacy, and entertainment options, and all things that matter to

Muslim travelers. The study found that these features really do boost satisfaction and make travelers more likely to book again (Jeaheng et al., 2019).

Those literature shows that Muslim behavior regarding halal purchase decision is still vary among Muslim, especially among Gen Z as the new potential Muslim population. Although Indonesia is known as Muslim majority country, however, the awareness on halal tourism during travel activities remain debatable. Therefore, this study is analyzing the muslim purchase behavior based on TPB theory by developing the factors into Visit Intention as dependent variable, Halal Awareness and Destination Trust as independent variable, and Religisoity as mediating variable among the relationships.

Visit Intention (VI)

Intention represents an individual's motivation and future behavior. Intention is a crucial element for the long-term sustainability of a company and for driving profitability. To conduct effective tourism marketing, one must first understand the factors influencing individual travel decisions, attitude formation, and the influence of various reference groups on travel behavior. Due to the diverse interpretations and practices of Islam, it is essential to evaluate halal visitor profiles to tailor tourism services to their needs and expectations (Lestari et al., 2022).

Yacob and Qomariyah (2019) define visit intention as the likelihood of a person traveling to a destination. Visit intention can be considered part of the decision-making process. Visit intention has a strong correlation between a person's perception and the values they perceive as a consumer when evaluating a product or service. Visit intention can also be interpreted as a result of a process that directs consumers to act and translate motivation into behavior (Juliana et al., 2023). According to Albarq (2014), the theory of visit intention is similar to purchase intention. Purchase intention is the motivation or desire indicating a person's readiness to engage in a buying behavior. Purchase intention is one of the stages in the Consumer Decision-Making Process (CDMP) theory proposed by Hawkins (2019).

Given the diverse interpretations and practices of Islam, evaluating tourist profiles is important to ensure that the tourism industry can align its services with tourists' needs and expectations. Tourists desire to visit halal destinations to maximize the benefits of Islamic culture during their travels, the application of Islamic cultural comfort at the destination, and the availability of places of worship (Lestari et al., 2022). Battour et al. (2018) define halal tourist destinations as places free from alcohol and gambling, and that adhere to Islamic dress codes. Therefore, Muslim visitors are likely to avoid places that do not accommodate Islamic principles (Battour et al., 2018). Conversely, tourists are inclined to visit destinations where they are free to express their religious identity and practices (Lestari et al., 2022).

Halal Awareness (HA)

Halal awareness has been proven to have a significant influence on purchase intention in previous studies (Bashir, 2019; Nurhayati and Hendar, 2019). This is supported by research from Aziz and Chok (2013), which shows that halal awareness appears to influence purchase intention (intention to buy halal products), as indicated by the hypothesis test results where consumers' halal awareness has a positive effect on the intention to buy halal products. Similarly, the study by Fitria et al. (2019) shows that halal awareness positively influences consumer purchase intention. Fitria et al. (2019) concluded that halal awareness has the most dominant influence on purchase intention compared to other independent variables used in their study.

Research conducted by Amalia and Gunawan (2022) demonstrates that the stronger the halal awareness of prospective Muslim tourists, the stronger their intention to visit a halal tourism destination. The halal label is an important indicator for Muslim tourists as it is perceived to facilitate their needs during travel. Therefore, it can be said that the higher the halal awareness of prospective tourists, the higher their intention to visit a destination. Consequently, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H1: Halal Awareness has a significant and positive effect on Visit Intention.

Focusing on the influence of Halal Awareness on religiosity, particularly in the context of Muslim consumer behavior, Bashir (2019) suggests that awareness of product halalness significantly impacts adherence to Islamic principles. Research by Nurhayati & Hendar (2019) also found that Halal Awareness contributes to an increased level of religiosity in the context of purchasing halal products. Additionally, a study by Amalia & Gunawan (2022) revealed that Halal Awareness not only affects purchasing preferences but also has a significant impact on the visit intentions of Muslim tourists to halal tourism destinations, positively correlating with an increase in religiosity among Muslim consumers. In a study of Indonesian Muslims aged 18–60, Kurniawati and Savitri (2020) found that religiosity is the most dominant factor in Halal Awareness. Based on these previous studies, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H2: Halal Awareness has a significant and positive effect on Religiosity.

Destination Trust (DT)

Destination trust has been proven to significantly influence visit intention in determining whether to go to a place. The belief in the integrity of tourism service providers in delivering products or services at specific tourist destinations becomes crucial in building trust (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019). Travelers tend to lean towards visiting trustworthy, safe destinations that meet their needs (Lestari et al., 2022). Therefore, the higher the perceived level of destination trust by travelers towards a tourist destination, the higher their intention to visit that destination. Based on this elaboration, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H3: Destination Trust has a significant and positive influence on Visit Intention

One study supporting this is conducted by Yasin and Low (2019), which found that consumers who have high trust levels towards tourist destinations offering facilities and services aligned with religious values tend to exhibit higher religiosity in travel decision-making and behaviors. Meanwhile, according to Abror et al. (2021), perceived values significantly impact trust, thus religiosity plays a significant role in the relationship between perceived values and trust. Based on these studies, it can be concluded that destination trust has a significant influence on consumer religiosity in the context of travel and tourism. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H4: Destination Trust has a significant and positive influence on Religiosity

Religiosity (RE)

Religiosity reflects the Islamic values practiced in daily life by Muslims (Juliana et al., 2023). It also indicates an individual's level of adherence to their beliefs, values, and religious practices, which are then reflected in their daily actions (Worthington et al., 2003). Currently, the concept of religiosity has become a common factor influencing human behavior (Abror et al., 2021). In the context of marketing, religiosity has a significant impact on consumer decisions and choices in making purchases (Ramadhanti & Marsasi, 2023). Consumers consider religiosity when making purchases or consuming products, which directly affects their attitudes, perceptions, and preferences (Salam et al., 2019). This forms the basis for the following research hypothesis:

H5: Religiosity has a significant and positive influence on Visit Intention

Religiosity serves as a primary foundation for Muslims, guiding them to make consumption choices in accordance with Islamic teachings (Battour et al., 2017; Mohamed et al., 2020). A study by Quantaniah, Syakinah, and Syakinah (2013) found a significant relationship between an individual's level of religiosity and their intention to purchase halal products. This finding is supported by Patwary (2018), who stated that religiosity affects the relationship between halal awareness and the intention to purchase a product. Research by Amalia and Gunawan (2022) examined the impact of religiosity on halal awareness in the context of halal tourism. These studies lead the researcher to formulate a hypothesis regarding the mediating effect of religiosity on the relationship between halal awareness and visit intention, with the following hypothesis:

H6: Religiosity mediates the relationship between Halal Awareness and Visit Intention

Religiosity reflects the level of commitment and practice of one's religion, and this study aims to investigate the mediation between destination trust and visit intention among tourists. This theory is based on the understanding that religiosity can

influence consumer perceptions, attitudes, and preferences (Salam et al., 2019), especially in the context of halal brand purchase decisions (El-Bassiouny, 2014). In the tourism industry, destination trust is important as it affects tourists' intention to visit a destination (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019). However, its influence may be mediated by religiosity, given the significance of halal factors for Muslim tourists in choosing tourist destinations (Aji et al., 2020). Religiosity can also impact the consumption preferences and visit intentions of Muslim tourists towards halal destinations (Lestari et al., 2022). Considering this information, the research hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

H7: Religiosity mediates the relationship between Destination Trust and Visit Intention

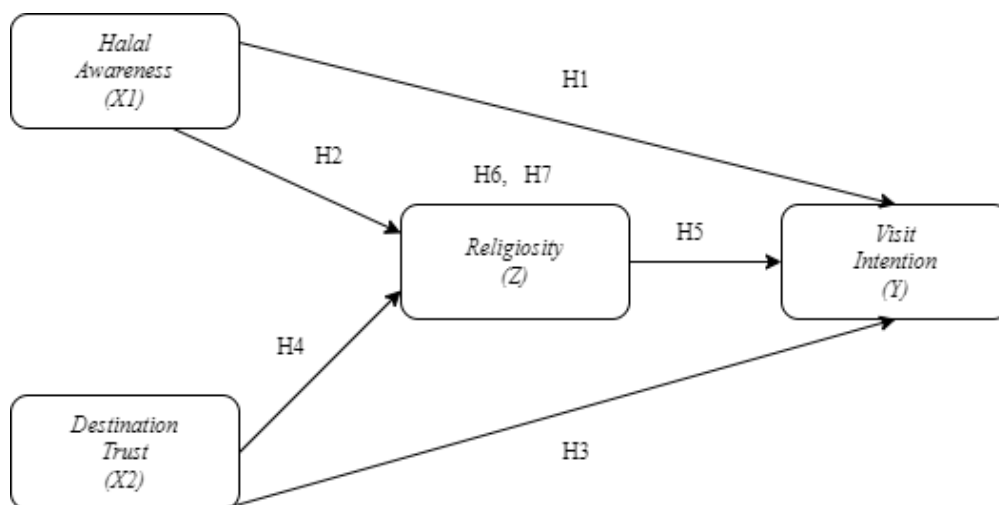


Figure 1. Research Framework

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research methodology with a conclusive research design aimed at testing specific hypotheses. Data were collected once per sample from the population, indicating a cross-sectional approach (Sugiyono, 2019; Maholtra, 2020). The data collection involved both online surveys distributed via Google Forms and offline surveys using printed questionnaires. The authors conduct online and offline data collection methods in this study. Since most people in Indonesia are using Google services, the online questionnaire is created in Google Form. This web-based survey platform provides easy and free access for public users. Then, the link of the google form is distributed to target respondents through social media and text message applications such as Whatsapp, Line, and Facebook messenger. Meanwhile, offline questionnaire is also printed to be distributed directly to the target respondent. On the first page of the questionnaire, the authors asked for consent from each respondent before continuing their participation in the study. Each latent variable was measured using metric data on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

The sample used in this research consists of respondents from the Muslim Generation Z in Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the study purpose. Based on data from Indonesia Statistic Bureau, there are more

than three millions Gen Z population in Jawa Island. Therefore, based on the Krejcie & Morgan Sampling table, the minimum sample size for the study is 385 respondents. However, in this study, the authors collect more respondents exceed the minimum sample size requirement of the study (Sugiyono, 2019). Data were analyzed using PLS with SmartPLS 3.2.9 for Windows to simultaneously test the measurement and structural models (Hair et al., 2011). The variables were measured based on indicators from previous studies to identify and predict relationships within the context of Generation Z. Thus, the detail of variable measurement is presented in Table 1 as follow.

Table 1.
Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Operational Variables (<i>Indicators</i>)	References
Halal Awareness	- HA1: "I believe consuming halal is an obligation in Islam"	Amalia & Gunawan (2022); Rafiki et al. (2023)
	- HA2: "Consuming halal strengthens my beliefs"	
	- HA3: "Whenever I consume food, I always ensure its halal composition"	
	- HA4: "I understand what halal is"	
	- HA5: "Buying halal products has become my lifestyle"	
	- HA6: "Every producer should be responsible for the availability of halal food products"	
Destination Trust	- DT1: "I think destinations prioritizing halal can be trusted"	Han et al. (2021); Hariani & Hanafiah (2024)
	- DT2: "I trust destinations that adhere to halal principles"	
	- DT3: "I believe destinations adhering to halal principles have high integrity"	
	- DT4: "I believe halal-compliant tourism can meet my needs and satisfaction"	
	- DT5: "Halal tourism certification standards are crucial for ensuring product and service quality"	
	- DT6: "Government involvement in developing halal tourism is very important to me"	
	- DT7: "I support the involvement of relevant parties in managing halal tourism destinations"	
Religiosity	- RE1: "I believe Islam provides me direction for a better life"	Ramadhanti & Marsasi (2023); Amalia & Gunawan (2022); Rafiki et al. (2023)
	- RE2: "Religion plays a very significant role in my personal life"	
	- RE3: "As a Muslim, I strive to avoid actions considered sinful"	
	- RE4: "I regularly perform obligatory prayers as a Muslim"	
	- RE5: "My faith in Islam influences all aspects of my life"	
	- RE6: "I enjoy spending time with people from my religious affiliation"	
Visit Intention	- VI1: "I am interested in exploring halal-friendly tourism destinations"	Lestari et al. (2022); Amalia & Gunawan (2022)
	- VI2: "Halal tourism is my top priority"	
	- VI3: "I prefer tourism destinations that adhere to halal principles"	
	- VI4: "I recommend halal tourism to others"	
	- VI5: "I still consider visiting halal tourism even if the prices increase"	
	- VI6: "I have a preference for choosing halal tourism"	

RESULT

The data processed for the study were obtained from 418 respondents through a questionnaire using Google Forms, distributed over a period of 15 days, from Sunday, May 23, 2024, to Thursday, June 6, 2024. Out of these 418 respondents, 416 indicated that they planned to travel to a city or district different from their residence within the year 2024, had an understanding of halal, and were Muslim. The 416 respondents will be used in this study as they meet the required respondent criteria. Table 2 shows the demographic data of the respondents.

Table 2.
Respondent demographics

n = 416		
Demographic variables	N	(%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	174	41,8
Female	242	58,2
<i>Age</i>		
18-23 years old	347	83,4
24-27 years old	69	16,6
<i>Highest education</i>		
High school/equivalent	196	47,1
Diploma	81	19,5
Bachelor's degree	135	32,5
Master's degree	4	1
<i>Residence</i>		
Greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek)	211	50,7
Java Island (excluding Greater Jakarta)	157	37,7
Outside Java Island	48	11,5
<i>Monthly Expenditure</i>		
< Rp 1.000.000,-	60	14,4
Rp 1.000.000,- - Rp 3.000.000,-	192	46,2
Rp 3.000.000,- - Rp 5.000.000,-	121	29,1
> Rp 5.000.000,-	43	10,3

Source: processed data

The data show the distribution of gender, age, highest education, residence, and monthly expenditure among the total 416 respondents surveyed. The majority of respondents are female (58.2%) and aged between 18-25 years (83.4%). In terms of education, most have a high school or equivalent background (47.1%) and reside in Greater Jakarta (50.7%). As for monthly expenditure, most respondents fall within the range of IDR 1,000,000 to IDR 3,000,000 (46.2%).

Outer Model Testing

This test is conducted to verify the validity and reliability of each question item for every indicator used to measure a construct. In this study, validity testing is performed using convergent validity and average variance extracted (AVE), while reliability testing is conducted using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. The results of the convergent validity test indicated good validity with loading factor values greater than 0.7 (Ghozali, 2016). According to the results shown in Table 2, the indicators used in this study have loading factors above 0.7, indicating that the

indicators for the variables of Halal Awareness, Destination Trust, Religiosity, and Visit Intention are valid for measuring each respective variable.

Subsequently, validity testing can be assessed by examining the AVE values. According to Ghazali (2016), a good AVE value is greater than 0.5. In this study, the AVE values for each variable are provided in Table 3, shows that AVE values for each variable exceed 0.5. This indicates that the model used in this study has good discriminant validity.

Table 3.
Factor loading and AVE results

Variable	Indicator	Outer loading	AVE	Result
<i>Halal awareness (X1)</i>	HA1	0,765	0,554	Valid
	HA2	0,740		
	HA3	0,740		
	HA4	0,745		
	HA5	0,700		
	HA6	0,772		
<i>Destination trust (X2)</i>	DT1	0,734	0,532	Valid
	DT2	0,745		
	DT3	0,770		
	DT4	0,689		
	DT5	0,712		
	DT6	0,745		
<i>Religiosity (Z)</i>	DT7	0,710	0,555	Valid
	RE1	0,740		
	RE2	0,748		
	RE3	0,738		
	RE4	0,748		
	RE5	0,715		
<i>Visit Intention (Y)</i>	RE6	0,779	0,541	Valid
	VI1	0,751		
	VI2	0,750		
	VI3	0,725		
	VI4	0,715		
	VI5	0,756		
	VI6	0,714		

Source: author's processed data

In the next stage, reliability testing is conducted based on composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values. Eisingerich and Rubera (2010) state that composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.7 indicate that the measured variables have good reliability. The results of the reliability measurement for the variables can be seen in Table 4. Table 3 shows that the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for all variables are ≥ 0.70 , which means that all variables have good reliability according to the minimum required threshold and can be relied upon for further measurement.

Table 4.
Reliability test results

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
<i>Halal awareness</i>	0,881	0,853	Reliable
<i>Destination trust</i>	0,888	0,839	Reliable
<i>Religiosity</i>	0,882	0,839	Reliable
<i>Visit intention</i>	0,876	0,830	Reliable

Source: author's processed data

Inner Model Testing

Structural model testing (inner model) is conducted to validate the hypotheses proposed earlier. The inner model predicts the causal relationships between variables that cannot be directly measured (Ghozali, 2016). The purpose of this test is to identify the relationships between constructs using t-tests in the partial least squares method and to evaluate the R-square values, which indicate the effects between variables. The classification of R-square values is: strong (0.67), moderate (0.33), and weak (0.19) (Haryono, 2016). Path coefficient estimates are obtained through bootstrapping, and two-tailed tests assess significance with t-statistics > 1.96 (5%) or > 1.65 (10%). Table 5 below provides the results and conclusions drawn from the structural model test.

Table 5.
Bootstrapping results

Hypothesis	Direct Effects	t-statistic	Sig.criterion	p-value	Result
H1	<i>Halal awareness</i> → <i>Visit intention</i>	4,173	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted
H2	<i>Halal awareness</i> → <i>Religiosity</i>	9,898	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted
H3	<i>Destination trust</i> → <i>Visit intention</i>	4,836	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted
H4	<i>Destination trust</i> → <i>Religiosity</i>	11,657	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted
H5	<i>Religiosity</i> → <i>Visit intention</i>	7,240	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted

Source: author's processed data

The results of this study test five hypotheses regarding the influence of Halal Awareness, Destination Trust, and Religiosity on Visit Intention. Hypothesis 1 (H1) shows that Halal Awareness has a significant effect on Visit Intention (t-statistic 4.173). Hypothesis 2 (H2) shows that Halal Awareness has a significant effect on Religiosity (t-statistic 9.898). Hypothesis 3 (H3) shows that Destination Trust has a significant effect on Visit Intention (t-statistic 4.836). Hypothesis 4 (H4) shows that Destination Trust has a significant effect on Religiosity (t-statistic 11.657). Hypothesis 5 (H5) shows that Religiosity has a significant effect on Visit Intention (t-statistic 7.240). All hypotheses are supported, indicating that Halal Awareness and Destination Trust significantly affect Visit Intention and Religiosity. The mediation effect of Religiosity on these variables is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6.
Bootstrapping results with Religiosity mediation

Hypothesis	Indirect Effects	t-statistic	Sig. criterion	p-value	Result
H6	Halal awareness → Religiosity → Visit intention	5,755	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted
H7	Destination trust → Religiosity → Visit intention	6,280	> 1,96	0,000***	Accepted

Source: author's processed data

Based on the results from the PLS analysis presented in the two tables above, the following conclusions can be drawn. Hypothesis H1 indicates that Halal Awareness is statistically proven to have a significant effect on Visit Intention, with a t-statistic value of 4.173. Hypothesis H2 shows that Halal Awareness significantly affects Religiosity, as evidenced by a t-statistic of 9.898. Hypothesis H3 demonstrates that Destination Trust has a statistically significant impact on Visit Intention, with a t-statistic of 4.836. Similarly, Hypothesis H4 confirms that Destination Trust significantly influences Religiosity, supported by a t-statistic of 11.657. Furthermore, Hypothesis H5 reveals that Religiosity significantly affects Visit Intention, with a t-statistic value of 7.240. Additionally, the study finds that Religiosity statistically mediates the relationship between Halal Awareness and Visit Intention (H6, t-statistic = 5.755) and also mediates the relationship between Destination Trust and Visit Intention (H7, t-statistic = 6.280).

R-Square Testing

In this study, the R-Square values were also tested. The R-Square value is used to determine the extent of the influence between variables. Model evaluation is conducted by examining the R-Square values, which indicate the impact of the variables in the model. The classification of R-Square values is as follows: strong (0.67), moderate (0.33), and weak (0.19) (Haryono, 2016). Table 7 below shows the results of the R-Square value calculations in this study.

Table 7.
R-Square results

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Religiosity	0,833	0,833
Visit intention	0,805	0,833

Source: author's processed data

The R-Square value for Religiosity is 0.833, indicating that Halal Awareness and Destination Trust account for 83.3% of the variance in Religiosity, with the remaining variance attributed to other factors. The R-Square value for Visit Intention is 0.805, showing that Halal Awareness, Destination Trust, and Religiosity explain 80.5% of the

variance in Visit Intention, with the remaining variance influenced by other factors. These R-Square values indicate a strong model fit.

DISCUSSION

An interesting finding is summarized from our analysis that enhance the development of halal tourism study as a growing topic in the past few years (Ratnasari, 2024). The study reveals that halal awareness significantly influences visit intention resonates with Aziz and Najmudin's (2023) work in Banten, Indonesia, where halal compliance emerged as a non-negotiable criterion for halal or muslim-friendly tourism. In the same vein, Putriana (2022) observed that halal awareness directly strengthens religiosity, particularly among Muslim consumers of cosmetics. However, contrasting evidence exists. For instance, Battour et al. (2020) found that halal awareness had negligible effects on travel intentions among Muslim tourists in Europe, where halal infrastructure is less visible. This finding may stem from cultural relativism where in Muslim-majority regions like Java, halal norms are deeply ingrained, whereas in minority contexts, travelers may prioritize accessibility over strict compliance (Battour et al., 2020). Our results thus emphasize the importance of contextualizing halal awareness within socio-religious ecosystems, such as the community in Jawa Island, Indonesia.

Destination trust exerted the strongest direct influence on visit intention, aligning with Lestari et al. (2022) and Aldrian et al. (2022), who identified trust as pivotal for Muslim travelers. However, this contrasts with Eid and Gohary (2015) study, where trust in destinations depends on the muslim customer perceived value (MCPV). This divergence may reflect generational differences, where Gen Z as digital natives, rely heavily on social proof to validate trust, whereas older cohorts prioritize pragmatic factors such as destination attributes. Furthermore, our mediation analysis revealed that religiosity amplifies trust's impact, suggesting that Java's Islamic cultural fabric fosters a unique synergy between faith and trust. This aligns with Abdulrazak and Gbadamosi's (2017) assertion that religiosity enhances brand trust but diverges from Chen and Rahman's (2018) findings in multicultural Singapore, where trust was driven by secular factors like safety and service quality.

While religiosity significantly mediated the halal awareness to visit intention, our results somehow contrast with studies questioning its universal relevance. For example, Eid and El-Gohary (2015) found that religiosity is a moderator between muslim perceived value and muslim travel satisfaction. Conversely, Juliana et al. (2021) and Sudarsono et al. (2021) reported strong religiosity effects in Indonesia and Malaysia, where Islamic identity is central to lifestyle. This dichotomy suggests that religiosity's role is context-dependent. In Java, where Islamic traditions influence daily life, it acts as a mediator, whereas in more secular or diverse settings, its influence may diminish. Additionally, Gen Z's "unpredictable" behavior often driven by emotional or social factors may complicates this relationship. For instance, Rahman et al. (2022)

noted that Gen Z travelers in Thailand prioritized aesthetic experiences over halal compliance, even when religiosity was high. Therefore, the role of religiosity in predicting tourist behavior is still important to be elaborated by tourism provider.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the influence of religiosity, halal awareness, and destination trust on Generation Z's intention to visit halal tourism destinations in Java, Indonesia. The results show that while levels of religiosity among Gen Z vary, it still plays a significant mediating role in shaping travel intentions. Halal awareness and destination trust were found to be strong predictors of Gen Z visit intention. Therefore, government and business practitioner should work together in shaping the halal tourism industry to attract Gen Z tourist as the new potential segment in the market.

This research offers both theoretical and practical implications. Practically, this study encourages tourism stakeholders to prioritize authentic halal compliance and transparency to attract Gen Z target market. Moreover, the significant influence of halal awareness and destination trust toward visit intention confirm that destination management can improve their promotion strategy to boost halal branding in their marketing strategy. The continuous halal campaign can increase destination trust among Gen Z target market. Meanwhile regarding theoretical implication, this study also framing religiosity as a dynamic, context-based construct in tourism behavior studies. Although different study reveals different role of religiosity in various context of purchase decision, however, this study enhance the role of religiosity as mediating variable toward visit intention. Future study can validate this finding in another research context.

However, this study also declare several limitations. First, the scope of the study is only in Java Island, the most populous island in Indonesia. However, the finding may not reflect tourist behavior from other area or even from other muslim majority countries. Different study context may conclude different finding of this study. Second, the study is focusing only on Gen Z travel behavior. Meanwhile, other generational cohort may also perform other interesting travel behavior and their unique purchase decision in the halal tourism context. Future study can expand the research to compare between two generations, such as Gen Z and Gen Y toward their visit intention,

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All authors contribute to designing the research model and conceptual framework. First and Second author conduct data collection. All authors perform data

analysis. First and second author write initial draft of the manuscript. Third author edit, review, and revise the manuscript. Third author correspond to the journal editors.

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