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A Systematic Literature Review: Muslim Friendly Tourism Based on Hepta Helix

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Abstract

Muslim-friendly tourism has emerged as a rapidly growing segment in the global tourism industry, driven by the increasing number of Muslim travelers seeking services that align with Islamic values. However, the development of this sector still faces fragmented coordination among stakeholders and the lack of a comprehensive collaborative framework. This study aims to review and map the scientific literature on the development of Muslim-friendly tourism using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, and to analyze the integration of the Hepta Helix model in its management practices. The Hepta Helix model involves seven key stakeholders—government, academia, business actors, community, media, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and technology—as strategic elements in shaping an inclusive and sustainable halal tourism ecosystem. This study examines articles published between 2021 and 2024, sourced from databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and ERIC, using keywords including "Muslim-friendly tourism," "halal tourism," and "Hepta Helix." The findings indicate that most studies remain focused on conceptual aspects and basic balal tourism services, while collaborative integration among actors within the Hepta Helix framework is still rarely discussed explicitly. These results highlight an urgent need for strengthened cross-sector coordination, supportive regulation, and the utilization of digital technology to enhance the competitiveness of halal tourism at both local and global levels. This study is expected to contribute to the development of more integrative policy and research directions in the field of Islamic value-based tourism studies.

Keywords: Systematic Literature Review, Muslim-Friendly Tourism, Halal Tourism, Islamic Economy, Hepta Helix.

Abstrak

Pariwisata Ramah Muslim telah berkembang sebagai salah satu segmen yang tumbuh pesat dalam industri pariwisata global, didorong oleh meningkatnya jumlah wisatawan Muslim yang mencari layanan sesuai dengan nilai-nilai Islam. Namun, pengembangan sektor ini masih menghadapi tantangan berupa koordinasi antar pemangku kepentingan yang terfragmentasi dan belum adanya kerangka kolaboratif yang menyeluruh. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meninjau dan memetakan literatur ilmiah mengenai pengembangan pariwisata ramah Muslim dengan menggunakan pendekatan *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR), serta menganalisis integrasi model *Hepta Helix* dalam praktik pengelolaannya. Model hepta helix melibatkan tujuh pemangku kepentingan utama, yaitu pemerintah, akademisi, pelaku bisnis, komunitas, media, LSM, dan teknologi sebagai elemen strategis dalam membentuk ekosistem pariwisata



halal yang inklusif dan berkelanjutan. Studi ini mengkaji artikel yang dipublikasikan dalam rentang tahun 2021 hingga 2024 dan diperoleh melalui basis data seperti Scopus, Google Scholar, dan ERIC menggunakan kata kunci seperti "muslim friendly tourism", "halal tourism", dan "hepta helix". Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar penelitian masih berfokus pada aspek konseptual dan layanan dasar wisata halal, sementara integrasi kolaboratif antar aktor dalam kerangka hepta helix masih jarang dibahas secara eksplisit. Temuan ini menunjukkan adanya kebutuhan mendesak untuk penguatan koordinasi lintas sektor, regulasi pendukung, dan pemanfaatan teknologi digital guna memperkuat daya saing pariwisata halal di tingkat lokal maupun global. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi dalam pengembangan kebijakan dan arah riset yang lebih integratif dalam studi pariwisata berbasis nilai Islam.

Keywords: Systematic Literature Review, Pariwisata Ramah Muslim, Pariwisata Halal, Ekonomi Islam, Hepta Helix

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector serves as one of the main pillars of economic growth for many countries. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism encompasses the activities of individuals traveling and staying outside their usual environment for a period not exceeding one consecutive year, for purposes such as recreation, business, or other objectives (Muflihah, 2024; Nugroho et al., 2023; Supiani et al., 2024). Alongside the increasing volume of tourist travel, there is a growing demand for destinations that not only offer recreational comfort but also reflect and accommodate cultural and religious values.

One of the fastest-growing segments in global tourism is Muslim-friendly tourism, also known as halal tourism. This type of tourism offers services, facilities, and tourist activities that align with Sharia principles, such as halal food, adequate prayer facilities, services that reflect Islamic ethical standards, and an environment free from alcohol and gambling (Abdul Shukor et al., 2023; Nugroho et al., 2021; Sutikno et al., 2023)(. According to the 2023 Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), the number of international Muslim travelers was estimated at 160 million and is projected to reach 230 million by 2028. Additionally, global Muslim tourist expenditure reached USD 189 billion in 2022 and is expected to rise to USD 225 billion by 2028 (Pranika et al., 2023; Sari & Aeni, 2023; Yunadi et al., 2024).

Despite its enormous potential, the development of Muslim-friendly tourism still faces a variety of challenges, including limited halal infrastructure, lack of stakeholder coordination, and the absence of a comprehensive and collaborative development framework. To address these issues, the Hepta Helix model of tourism development becomes particularly relevant. This model involves seven key actors—government, academia, business sector, community, media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and technology—working in synergy to build a sustainable tourism ecosystem (Kagungan et al., 2023; Winoto et al., 2024).

This study aims to review and map existing literature on Muslim-friendly tourism using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, with a specific focus on how the Hepta Helix approach has been studied or integrated in the context of halal tourism development. The study also seeks to identify research trends, thematic concentrations, and existing gaps in the

literature, which can serve as the basis for further studies and the formulation of more integrative development strategies.

In line with the study conducted by Rofiqo et al. (2022), which systematically reviewed halal tourism literature, this research contributes by incorporating a cross-sectoral perspective based on the Hepta Helix model. The findings are expected to enrich the discourse on sustainable and inclusive development of Muslim-friendly tourism and provide a roadmap for researchers, policymakers, and industry practitioners in Indonesia and beyond.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Muslim-Friendly Tourism

Muslim-friendly tourism, also known as halal tourism, refers to a form of tourism specifically designed to meet the needs of Muslim travelers (Anwar et al., 2023; Cipta, 2023; Sarastiani et al., 2022). As it has evolved, this concept encompasses the provision of products, services, and travel experiences that align with Islamic principles and teachings, covering aspects such as food, accommodation, services, and the overall environment of the destination (Irshad et al., 2022; Isnaeni et al., 2023). The emergence of this concept has been driven by the significant growth of Muslim travelers worldwide, who require specific facilities and services during their journeys (Mandalia et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2023).

The terminology "Muslim-friendly tourism" is often used interchangeably with "halal tourism" and "Islamic tourism." However, scholars have noted conceptual differences among these terms. Dabamona (2022) equates Islamic tourism and halal tourism, defining them as tourism activities intended for Muslim travelers and generally conducted in Muslimmajority countries. In contrast, Asyari and Rohman (2022) argue that Islamic tourism refers to the inclination of Muslim travelers to engage in tourism while adhering to Islamic law, including consumption patterns, accommodation preferences, and permissible travel activities.

Somadi (2022) further explains that halal tourism refers to tourism practices that are consistent with Islamic teachings, involving Muslim travelers who maintain religious observance during their trips. This includes the provision of halal food, accessible prayer facilities, prohibition of alcohol and gambling, and the upholding of modesty norms within the destination environment (Arifin & Abdul Wahid, 2022). This definition is reinforced by Noviarita et al. (2024), who state that halal tourism encompasses all tourism objects or activities permissible under Islamic teachings, catering to both Muslim and non-Muslim tourists.

According to DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016 on Guidelines for Organizing Tourism Based on Sharia Principles, halal tourism is defined as travel undertaken by individuals or groups for the purpose of recreation, self-development, and learning about tourist attractions that do not contradict Islamic principles (Suswanta et al., 2023). This provision has been adopted in regional policies, such as the Regional Regulation of West Nusa Tenggara Province No. 2 of 2016 on Halal Tourism, which governs destinations,

facilities, services, and tourism management that meet sharia-compliant standards to ensure safety and comfort for Muslim tourists.

Muslim-friendly tourism goes beyond religious activities such as Hajj and Umrah; it also includes broader travel services and experiences that align with Islamic values in everyday life (Hanafiah et al., 2021; Muslim & Harun, 2022). In the context of Muslim tourist behavior, previous studies have shown that factors such as travel motivation, destination trust, satisfaction, loyalty, and religiosity play important roles in influencing travel decisions (Mohammad Ali et al., 2022; Muflihin et al., 2023; Yuniningsih et al., 2023). Muslim travelers' needs for halal food, prayer facilities, a clean and alcohol-free environment, and interactions that uphold Islamic moral values are dominant factors in shaping their perceptions of destination quality (Jamaludin et al., 2023; Saad, 2023).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach as the primary method for collecting, evaluating, and analyzing a body of scholarly articles relevant to the topic of Muslim-friendly tourism within the framework of the Hepta Helix model. SLR is a systematic and structured technique used to identify available literature, assess the contribution of individual studies, and comprehensively synthesize findings in order to answer specific research questions or address particular topics (Ilmi & Ambariyanto, 2024; Pasaribu et al., 2025).

The focus of this SLR is to understand the academic discourse surrounding Muslim-friendly tourism and to identify the involvement of actors within the Hepta Helix model, which includes government, academia, business sectors, communities, media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and technology in the development of this tourism sector. The objective of this approach is to map the existing research landscape, identify key trends, and reveal research gaps that remain unaddressed.

This review followed a structured sequence of steps, including: (1) formulation of research questions, (2) literature identification through academic databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and ERIC, (3) study selection based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, (4) data extraction and analysis, and (5) synthesis and mapping of findings. Keywords used in the search process included: "Muslim-friendly tourism," "Halal tourism," and "Hepta Helix."

The inclusion criteria for this review comprised articles published between 2021 and 2025, written in either English or Indonesian, and directly discussing the theme of Muslim-friendly tourism and/or collaborative stakeholder approaches. Articles deemed non-academic, lacking full-text access, or irrelevant to the Islamic values-based tourism and Hepta Helix framework were excluded from the analysis.

For data analysis, a simple bibliometric approach was applied to map core keywords, thematic trends, and conceptual linkages using tools such as PRISMA and VOSviewer. This analysis aimed to reveal the distribution of publications, frequency of term usage, and the interconnections between elements in the development of Muslim-friendly tourism—

particularly in the context of multi-actor collaboration as described within the Hepta Helix framework.

The SLR method was selected for its strengths in delivering an in-depth understanding of the topic in a structured manner, minimizing interpretative bias, and providing a robust foundation for future research development and more targeted policy recommendations (Rasuman & Saeed, 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

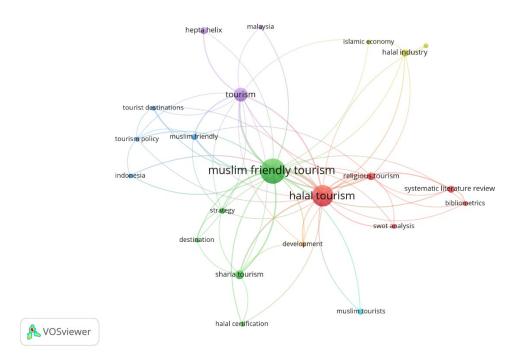
Result

Based on the results of the systematic literature review analysis using Prisma software, the following database processing results were obtained:

Figure 1. **SLR Analysis Result** Identification of new studies via databases and registers Records removed before screening: dentification Records identified from: Duplicate records (n = 20) Databases (n = 120) Records marked as ineligible by automation Registers (n = 30) tools (n = 5)Records removed for other reasons (n = 5) Records screened Records excluded (n = 120)(n = 16)Reports sought for retrieval Reports not retrieved Screening (n = 104)(n = 12)Reports excluded: Reports assessed for eligibility Abstract is not match (n = 10) (n = 92)Keyword is not relate (n = 7) New studies included in review (n = 75)

The results of the systematyc literatrure review analysis using VOSviewer software using the keywords "Muslim Friendly Tourism", "Halal Tourism", and "Hepta Helix" show the following results:

Figure 2.
Network Visualization Research Development Map "Muslim Friendly Tourism",
"Halal Tourism", and "Hepta Helix"



Based on the results of the network visualization analysis using VOSviewer, the keywords "Muslim-friendly tourism" and "halal tourism" occupy central positions with high connectivity to various other keywords, indicating that these two terms are the primary focus in research related to Islamic values-based tourism. These keywords are closely associated with terms such as sharia tourism, halal certification, strategy, and destination, reflecting both the operational and conceptual dimensions of halal destination development. Additionally, the keyword "Hepta Helix", although appearing with a smaller node size, is directly linked to the term tourism, indicating that the concept of cross-sectoral collaboration is beginning to receive attention in tourism studies. The presence of terms such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and tourism policy in the network also suggests the geographical and policy-oriented focus of the literature. Meanwhile, nodes such as systematic literature review, bibliometrics, and SWOT analysis illustrate the analytical and methodological approaches used in mapping the literature. Thus, this visualization confirms that research on Muslim-friendly tourism is not only evolving in terms of destination practices and services, but is also beginning to incorporate collaborative theoretical frameworks such as the Hepta Helix model, albeit still on a limited scale—thereby positioning this study as a novel contribution.

Based on the keyword "Muslim friendly tourism", here are some of the most cited journal data:

Table 1.

Most Cited	Inurnale	Research	Studies	Related to	Muelim.	-friendly	Tourism
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Rank	Author	Title	Cites	Year
1	(Nugroho et al., 2021)	Discourses of Muslim-Friendly Tourism (Indonesia Empirical Cases)	18	2021
2	(Hanafiah et al., 2021)	Muslim tourist behaviour and intention to revisit non-muslim countries: The role of muslim-friendly tourism (MFT) attributes	17	2021
3	(Muslim & Harun, 2022)	Exploring the Concept of Muslim Friendly Tourism	17	2023
4	(Takhim et al., 2023)	The Synergy of Islamic Banks and Muslim-Friendly Tourism: Patterns of Halal Industry Development in Indonesia	11	2023
5	(Irshad et al., 2022)	The Concept Of Muslim Friendly Tourism And Its Implementation In Malaysia	10	2022
6	(Yen et al., 2022)	Foreign Muslim Workers' Perspectives of the Basic Needs of Muslim-Friendly Tourist Services: An Empirical Analysis of a Non-Muslim Destination	10	2022
7	(Pranika et al., 2023)	Analysis of the Global Muslim Travel Index (Gmti) Muslim-Friendly Tourism in Improving Community Economy Reviewed From an Islamic Economic Perspective	9	2023
8	(Syaharani & Fahmi, 2024)	Examining Muslim Friendly Tourism as a Strategy to Embrace Halal Tourism Prospects	9	2024
9	(Mazlan et al., 2023)	Muslim Friendly Hotels As Islamic Tourism Products: Issues and Challenges	8	2023
10	(Asthu & Adwiyah, 2020)	Analysis of Muslim Friendly Tourism Indicators Toward the Number of Foreign Tourist Visitations	5	2020

Discussion

The literature indicates that the presence of formal regulations is a critical element in driving the growth of Muslim-friendly tourism. The government plays a central role as a policy director, standard setter, and provider of supporting infrastructure (Maskuroh et al., 2022; Yahya et al., 2022). Examples include the DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016, which serves as a reference for organizing tourism based on Sharia principles, and the Regional Regulation of West Nusa Tenggara Province No. 2 of 2016 on Halal Tourism, which provides a legal and operational framework for tourism industry stakeholders at the local level (Agus & Ansori, 2024). However, many tourist regions in Indonesia still lack specific policies on halal tourism, making it necessary to strengthen the role of both national and local governments in formulating inclusive and accommodative regulations (Hajar et al., 2022).

Academics contribute to the development of halal tourism through scientific research, conceptual development, and mapping of trends and the needs of Muslim tourists. Academic studies also provide evidence-based policy input to both government and industry

stakeholders (Abdiska et al., 2024; Ibrahim & Syaharuddin, 2023). In this SLR, many studies highlight the importance of understanding Muslim tourist behavior such as motivation, trust, and satisfaction—as a basis for designing marketing strategies and destination experiences aligned with Islamic values (Hilmawan, 2024; Malihah et al., 2024). Moving forward, collaboration between universities and industry must be enhanced through impact assessments, human resource training, and the development of digital innovations.

Business actors including hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and transportation providers play a frontline role in delivering products and services that meet the specific needs of Muslim travelers. The literature shows that the availability of halal food, prayer facilities, ethical services, and alcohol-free hotel environments are key aspects in creating Muslim-friendly destinations (Asyari & Rohman, 2022; Fajaruddin et al., 2024). However, the implementation of these standards remains sporadic and lacks systemic integration, particularly in general tourist destinations that are not explicitly positioned as halal destinations (Bagaskara & Rohmadi, 2024). Therefore, service standardization and business incentives are needed to encourage the private sector to adopt Sharia principles in their operations (Athallah et al., 2023).

The economic potential of Muslim-friendly tourism based on the Hepta Helix approach is significant and strategic, as this sector not only offers opportunities to increase regional income, but also to create employment, empower MSMEs, and strengthen the national halal industry (Riadi et al., 2025; Saputra et al., 2025). Through the collaboration of seven key actors, the halal tourism ecosystem can be strengthened by fostering complementary synergies: the government provides regulations and infrastructure, academia contributes innovation and impact studies, businesses deliver high-quality halal services, local communities serve as active partners in the destination ecosystem, media disseminates positive narratives, NGOs advocate for ethics and sustainability, and technology enhances service efficiency and digital promotion (Darmawan et al., 2023; Farisma et al., 2023). When developed systematically, Muslim-friendly tourism has the potential to become a new economic driver based on Islamic values, with a multiplier effect extending to sectors such as culinary, transportation, hospitality, and local creative industries. Thus, the Hepta Helix model is not only a strategy for inclusive destination development but also an instrument for achieving sustainable economic self-reliance for Muslim communities (Purwantoro et al., 2023; Syaharani & Fahmi, 2024).

Despite its enormous potential, the development of Muslim-friendly tourism still faces various complex structural and implementation challenges. One of the main obstacles is the uneven distribution of policies and regulatory support across regions, resulting in non-standardized and sporadic implementation of halal tourism principles (Gunawan et al., 2024; Takhim et al., 2023). Furthermore, a limited understanding among some industry players regarding the specific needs of Muslim travelers—such as halal food, prayer facilities, and services aligned with Islamic values—hinders the creation of truly Muslim-friendly destinations (Lubis et al., 2024; Wisker & Guler, 2022; Yen et al., 2022). In addition, constraints in human resource capacity, low digital literacy among local tourism actors, and minimal cross-sector collaboration also slow down the integration of the Hepta Helix

approach into destination management practices (Pujiastuti et al., 2024). Another critical challenge lies in strengthening perception and promotion of halal destinations, particularly in regions not yet widely recognized as religious tourism hubs, so that they can remain competitive in the increasingly globalized tourism market (Maulana et al., 2024; Mazlan et al., 2023).

Local communities play a vital role in creating a welcoming, safe, and Islamically appropriate atmosphere for Muslim travelers. Hospitable, tolerant communities that can warmly welcome tourists while preserving Islamic local cultural values are key attractions (Asthu & Adwiyah, 2020; Efendi & Khomairoh, 2025; Fathoni et al., 2025). In several studies, local communities have even been directly involved in providing halal homestay services, local transportation, and traditional halal culinary experiences (Ansori, 2024; Baran & Karaca, 2023). Therefore, community empowerment through training, mentoring, and inclusive participation in the tourism ecosystem is essential for supporting the sustainability of halal destinations.

The role of media both conventional and digital has become increasingly crucial in shaping public perceptions of halal tourism destinations. Media outlets help communicate information about halal facilities, share tourist testimonials, promote travel packages, and educate the public about the values of Sharia-compliant tourism (Janis & Ramli, 2022; Mandalia, 2023). Studies have shown that destination perception improves through promotional efforts that emphasize the halal features and comfort of Muslim-friendly travel experiences (Wahyuni & Nuraeni, 2023). However, a lack of integrated communication strategies and limited digital literacy in several destination regions remain ongoing challenges.

Digital technology is a key driver in the transformation of modern halal tourism. Online platforms such as halal tourism apps, mosque locator maps, halal food ordering services, and digital halal certification systems have evolved to meet the needs of global Muslim travelers (Fahmi et al., 2023). Recent studies show that the availability of technology that enhances information access and service convenience significantly influences tourist loyalty (Azam et al., 2024; Rifauddin & Ardiyawin, 2024). Moreover, technology also accelerates cross-sector collaboration in data management, marketing, and integrated digital service systems.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Muslim-friendly tourism is a rapidly growing sector with significant economic potential, particularly driven by the increasing number of Muslim travelers worldwide. However, the development of this sector still faces several challenges, including inadequate halal infrastructure, limited local regulatory frameworks, and weak stakeholder collaboration. The Hepta Helix approach—which involves seven key actors: government, academia, business, community, media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and technology—has been identified as a suitable framework to address these challenges in a collaborative and sustainable manner. The literature review reveals that the role of each actor within the Hepta

Helix model complements one another in building a tourism ecosystem that not only meets the spiritual and practical needs of Muslim travelers but also promotes inclusive growth of the tourism sector. Therefore, cross-sectoral integration, the strengthening of evidence-based policies, and the strategic use of digital technology are essential to support the development of a competitive and sustainable halal tourism industry in the future.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that the development of Muslim-friendly tourism in Indonesia be directed toward strengthening cross-sector coordination through a more systematic adoption of the Hepta Helix approach. The government should formulate more comprehensive and operational regulations, along with incentives for industry players committed to halal principles. Academics are encouraged to actively contribute through applied research and destination-based training, while business actors should be motivated to innovate Muslim-friendly services that meet international standards. Local communities need to be empowered through training and mentoring so they can be integrated into the halal tourism value chain. Media and NGOs can strengthen promotion as well as ethical and sustainability oversight, while digital technology must be maximally utilized to enhance service efficiency, information accessibility, and destination competitiveness. Strong collaboration among all actors within the Hepta Helix framework is expected to foster the realization of a Muslim-friendly tourism sector that is not only responsive to global market demands, but also socially, economically, and culturally sustainable.

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