



# Global Exploration of Halal Tourism: A Bibliometric Analysis of Research Trends and Collaborations

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## Abstract

Halal tourism has grown rapidly in response to the increasing demand for travel based on Islamic values and the needs of global Muslim travelers. However, there is no systematic mapping of research trends and scientific collaborations in this field globally. This study aims to analyze publication trends, collaboration between authors and countries, and major research themes related to halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal travel, and Muslim-friendly tourism during the period 2015-2025. This research uses bibliometric methods based on data from Scopus with a quantitative approach, keyword co-occurrence analysis, and visualization of collaboration networks using VOSviewer software. The results of the analysis of 591 documents show a significant increase in publication trends until 2024, with a temporary decline in 2025. Indonesia and Malaysia are the most productive countries and play a central role in research collaboration. Battour's 2016 article was recorded as the most cited work, signifying substantial influence in the development of halal tourism discourse. Dominant themes in this study include religiosity, customer satisfaction, halal certification, and destination management, with new topics such as artificial intelligence and sustainable development emerging. This research confirms that halal tourism is a rapidly growing multidisciplinary field, and the results of this mapping can serve as a strategic guide for researchers.

**Keywords:** Bibliometrics, Halal Tourism, International Collaboration, Publication Trends, Scopus

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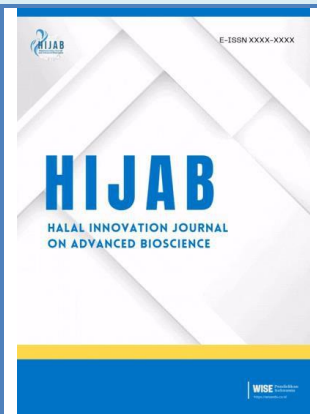
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## INTRODUCTION

The halal tourism industry has witnessed remarkable growth over the past decade, driven by the increasing awareness among Muslim communities regarding consumption and lifestyle choices aligned with Islamic principles (shariah). According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2023[1], released by Mastercard-CrescentRating, approximately 140 million Muslim travelers engaged in international travel in 2023, a figure projected to rise to over 230 million by 2028 [2]. This extraordinary growth positions the Muslim travel segment as a significant opportunity within the global economic landscape[3]. Halal tourism holds considerable potential for stimulating economic development, particularly in regions with Muslim-majority populations [3], and is recognized as a driver of economic growth[4]. Moreover, the development of halal tourism is supported by regulatory frameworks, such as fatwas issued by the Indonesian National Sharia Council (DSN-MUI), and by public demand for Islamic-compliant travel destinations[5]. Research further indicates that halal tourism is not limited to Muslim travelers but also seeks to enhance the comfort of non-Muslim tourists, thereby expanding the market reach[6].

Halal tourism refers to the provision of travel services that include halal food and beverages, prayer facilities, Muslim-friendly accommodations, and recreational activities that do not conflict with Islamic values[7]. Several Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey have invested in infrastructure and regulatory mechanisms, including halal certification systems, promotion of shariah-compliant tourism, and human resource training. Simultaneously, non-Muslim countries such as Japan, South Korea, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Australia have adopted a Muslim-friendly tourism approach by tailoring services and promotional strategies to meet the needs of global Muslim travelers [8].

This growth and diversification of approaches have spurred a significant increase in academic publications on halal tourism. Existing studies encompass a wide range of themes, including tourist perceptions and behaviors, halal marketing strategies, destination development, and the use of technology to enhance halal travel experiences[9], [10]. However, most of the literature remains descriptive or case-specific, lacking comprehensive bibliometric analyses that systematically map research trends, author collaborations, country-level contributions, and thematic distributions [11]. Bibliometric analysis is therefore essential to bridge this knowledge gap.

The absence of bibliometric studies in this area hinders a thorough understanding of how halal tourism literature has evolved both thematically and geographically. Systematic mapping is necessary to identify the most productive scholars, institutions, and countries; trace dominant keywords; and explore collaborative networks and emerging topical trends. Additionally, bibliometric analysis helps uncover research gaps and serves as a guide for early-career researchers in developing data-driven and strategic research directions. In response to these needs, this study aims to identify publication trends and citation levels in the areas of halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal travel, and Muslim-friendly tourism during the period 2015–2025. It also seeks to analyze author and country collaborations to understand the global scientific network and the contributions of key actors within the knowledge ecosystem. Furthermore, this study groups dominant themes and frequently appearing keywords in the literature to elucidate prevailing research focuses and thematic evolutions. A key contribution of this research is the presentation of bibliometric visual maps, which can serve as a reference for scholars in identifying strategic research topics and future collaboration opportunities. Through this approach, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the intellectual landscape of halal tourism research worldwide.

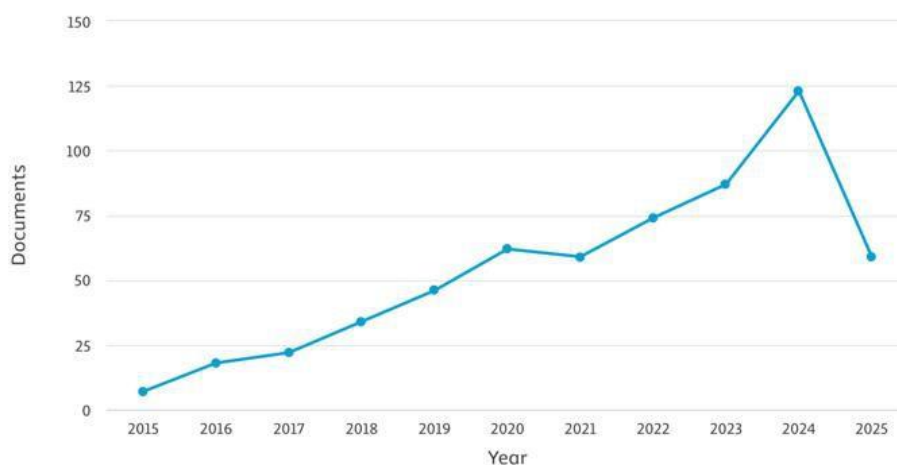
## METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative approach utilizing bibliometric methods to investigate the literature review process, collaboration among authors and institutions, and the evolution of research topics in the field of halal tourism at a global level. Bibliometric analysis enables a quantitative examination of publication metadata to identify key factors in the production and dissemination of knowledge (Donthu et al., 2021). Data were collected using the keywords: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("halal tourism" OR "Islamic tourism" OR "halal travel" OR "Muslim-friendly tourism"), with additional filters applied to document type (articles and conference papers), publication year, and relevant subject areas such as business, management, social sciences, and tourism. The primary data source used was the Scopus database, selected for its extensive journal coverage and high indexing quality. The analyzed literature comprised publications from 2015 to 2025. Metadata including titles, authors, affiliations, abstracts, keywords, publication years, and citation counts were downloaded for analysis. Manual screening was conducted to remove irrelevant publications—such as those discussing "halal" in non-tourism contexts—and to eliminate duplicates arising from database overlaps. Name normalization for authors and institutions was also carried out to avoid redundancy in collaboration analysis, ensuring consistency in abbreviations and name variations. The data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, descriptive analysis was employed to observe the annual publication trends in halal tourism and to identify the most active journals or conferences. Second, collaboration analysis was performed using VOSviewer to visualize inter-country research connections. Third, keyword analysis using the co-occurrence method was applied to identify main themes and topic clusters. Lastly, citation analysis was conducted to determine the most influential articles and authors, as well as to track the evolution of research topics over time.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### Publication Data 2015-2025

Based on data collected from [www.scopus.com](http://www.scopus.com) from 2015 to 2025, 591 documents were found. The most types of documents are articles totaling 424 articles. The trend of halal publications does not always increase every year. A decrease in the number occurred in 2017, 2021 and 2025, as shown in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1.** Publication Data with Theme ("halal tourism" OR "islamic tourism" OR "halal travel" OR "muslim-friendly tourism") from 2015 - 2025

Figure 1 shows that research trends have developed rapidly in the past ten years. At first, the number of publications continued to increase from 2015 until it peaked in 2024. This increase indicates a growing interest in research topics and encouragement from various parties to more actively publish research findings. A drastic decline occurs in 2025.

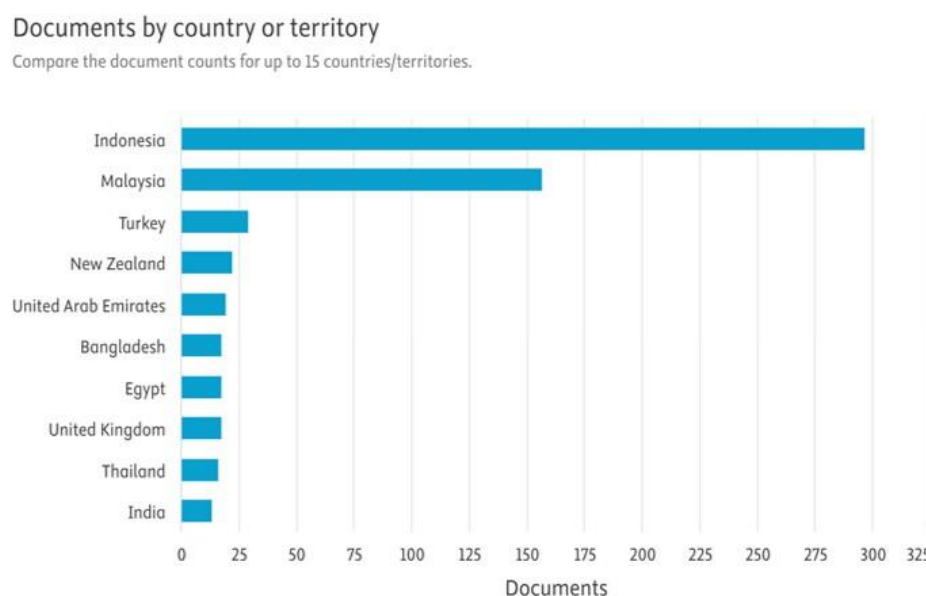
Analysis of the most cited publications in the study of "halal tourism," "Islamic tourism," "halal travel," and "muslim-friendly tourism" shows that this field is experiencing rapid development, both in terms of quantity and scientific quality. Table 1 shows that the article by Battour (2016), which reviews the concepts and challenges of halal tourism, has become a primary reference and has received the highest citation impact, reflecting the fundamental role of this study in shaping the foundational thinking in this field. Themes such as the satisfaction and loyalty of Muslim tourists, halal-friendly travel experiences [12] and perceptions of non-Muslim destinations have been extensively studied by other researchers and have garnered significant attention in the academic community. In fact, in recent publications, attention has begun to shift towards technological innovations—such as the use of artificial intelligence (AI)—to support the development of more adaptive and modern halal travel [13], [14] Overall, studies in the domain of Muslim-friendly tourism continue to demonstrate high scientific significance, making it a strategic topic that is not only academically relevant but also directly impacts global tourism industry practices [15].

**Table 1.** Researchers with the highest number of citations

No	Author(s)	Year	Article Title	Citations
1	Battour, Mohamed Mohamed	2016	<i>Halal tourism: Concepts, practices, challenges and future</i>	<b>369</b>
2	Han, H.	2019	<i>Role of halal-friendly destination performances, value, satisfaction, and trust in generating destination image and loyalty</i>	<b>252</b>
3	Al-Ansi, A.	2019	<i>Exploring halal-friendly destination attributes in South Korea: Perceptions and behaviors of Muslim travelers toward a non-Muslim destination</i>	<b>231</b>
4	Abror, Abror	2018	<i>Halal tourism: Antecedent of tourist's satisfaction and word of mouth (WOM)</i>	<b>126</b>
5	Rahman, M.K.	2020	<i>The impact of tourists' perceptions on halal tourism destination: A structural model analysis</i>	<b>116</b>
6	Ratnasari, Rinin Tri	2020	<i>Emotional experience on behavioral intention for halal tourism</i>	<b>97</b>
7	Suhartanto, Dwi	2021	<i>Tourist experience in Halal tourism: what leads to loyalty?</i>	<b>68</b>
8	Hanafiah, M.H.	2020	<i>Determinants of Muslim travellers' Halal food consumption attitude and behavioural intentions</i>	<b>49</b>
9	Mady, K.	2023	<i>AI-enabled technologies to assist Muslim tourists in Halal-friendly tourism</i>	<b>37</b>
10	Alam, A.	2023	<i>A systematic review of halal hotels: A word cloud and thematic analysis of articles from the Scopus database</i>	<b>11</b>

Figure 2 shows the distribution of scientific publications by country or region related to the topics of halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal travel, and Muslim-friendly tourism. From the graph, it can be seen that Indonesia is the country with the highest number of publications, reaching almost 320 documents. This position indicates

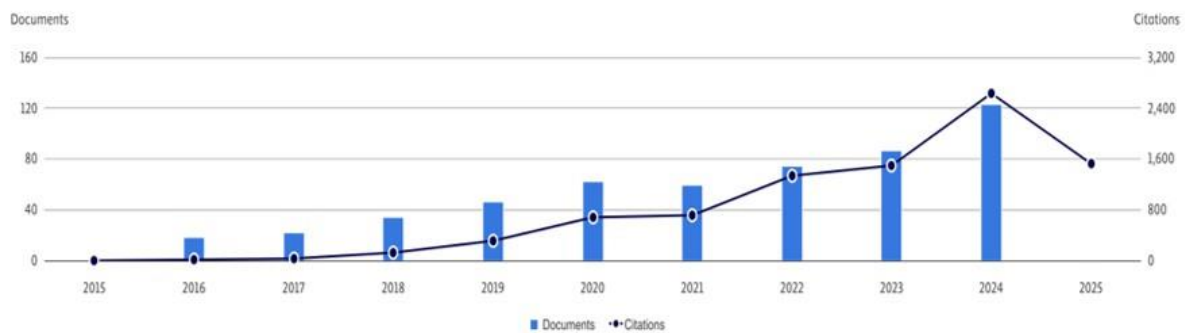
Indonesia's dominant role in the development of academic studies on halal tourism. Malaysia ranks second with more than 150 publications, reflecting the country's strong focus on the development of the sharia-based tourism sector. Other countries such as Turkey, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Thailand, and India also contribute to the scientific literature, although in smaller numbers. The dominance of Indonesia and Malaysia shows that Southeast Asia is a major center for research on halal tourism and its derivatives [16]. This can be attributed to the large potential of the domestic market, government policy support, and the increasing collaboration between academics, industry, and other stakeholders in developing Muslim-friendly tourism. Meanwhile, the participation of non-Muslim countries such as New Zealand and England shows that the issue of halal tourism has become a global cross-cultural concern, both from the service provider's side and the academic perspective. Overall, this data confirms that the study of halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal travel, and Muslim-friendly tourism has developed globally, with Indonesia as a major contributor in the production of scientific knowledge in this field. The study of halal tourism is not only developing in Indonesia but also receiving international attention. This reflects the growing demand for Muslim-friendly tourism, where this sector has the potential to make a significant contribution to the national economy [17], [18].



**Figure 2.** Countries with the highest number of published documents

Analysis of citation trends and the number of published documents from 2015 to 2025 is shown in Figure 3. Generally, it can be seen that both the number of documents and the number of citations have significantly increased over time. The number of documents began to gradually increase since 2016, and continued to show stable growth until reaching its peak in 2024. Along with that, the number of citations also showed a sharp upward trend, with the highest peak in 2024 reaching over 3,000 citations. This reflects that publications in this field are not only increasing in quantity but also gaining significant influence in the global scientific community. According to research conducted by Abdullah, there is a significant publication trend regarding halal tourism, indicating a

growing global interest in this field in line with the increasing Muslim population worldwide[19]. However, in 2025, there was a decline in both the number of documents and citations. This decline is most likely due to the incomplete data for the current year or the ongoing process of publication and indexing. Overall, this graph shows that publications in certain fields of study (such as halal tourism, Islamic tourism, and related themes) have experienced significant growth both in terms of quantity and citation impact, indicating that this topic is increasingly becoming a major focus in the global academic and research community.



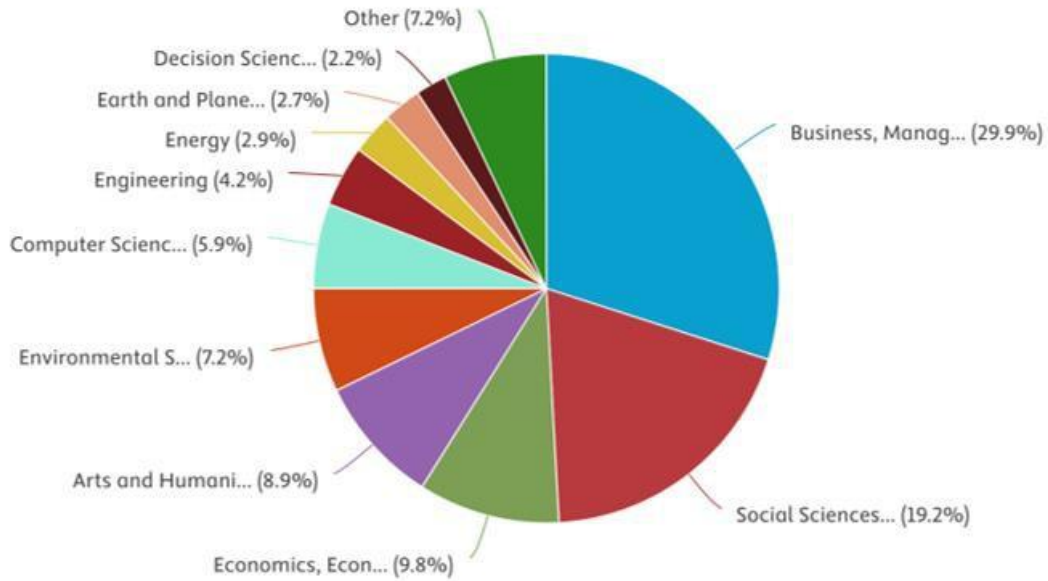
**Figure 3.** Citation analysis from 2015-2025.

Based on the network visualization of co-authorship by country shown in Figure 4, it can be concluded that research collaboration in the fields of halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal travel, and Muslim-friendly tourism is global but heavily influenced by the dominance of Southeast Asian countries, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia. These two countries appear as the main centers of collaboration, marked by large node sizes and central positions within the network. Indonesia forms strong relationships with countries such as Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Australia, while Malaysia has close connections with Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as other Asian countries.

This visualization also shows that cross-country collaboration does not only occur among Muslim-majority countries but also involves non-Muslim countries such as the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Finland, and Portugal. The development of halal tourism is not limited to Muslim countries, and countries like the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Finland also play a significant role in entering this market [20]. This shows that the issue of halal tourism has become a multidisciplinary and cross-geographical topic, involving knowledge contributions from various cultural and academic backgrounds. In addition, the involvement of countries such as Egypt, Bangladesh, and Turkey also strengthens the role of Asia and the Middle East in shaping the global research ecosystem in this field. Overall, this collaboration map reflects a high level of interconnection and integration among countries in supporting the global development of halal tourism literature, with Indonesia and Malaysia playing the leading roles. These findings are consistent with research showing that the halal tourism industries in Indonesia and Malaysia are not only major contributors but also central actors in the collaborative network at the international level in halal tourism studies [21], [22].



## Documents by subject area



**Figure 5.** Main themes and research topic groups.

Based on the results of keyword network visualization through co-occurrence analysis using VOSviewer (Figure 6), it can be concluded that the term "halal tourism" is the most dominant keyword and serves as the center of the research network map, as indicated by the largest node size and extensive connections with various other keywords. Other prominent keywords in this network are "Islamic tourism," "Muslim-friendly tourism," "Muslim tourists," and "religiosity," which reflect the main focus of the research on religious aspects, Muslim consumer behavior, and tourism experiences based on Islamic values. In addition, the emergence of keywords such as "tourist destination," "tourism development," "marketing," and "customer satisfaction" indicates that the economic and managerial dimensions remain an important part of the development of halal tourism literature. On the other hand, the presence of terms such as "halal certification," "halal food," "hospitality," and "sharia hotel" indicates attention to the infrastructure and services that support the halal tourism ecosystem. Keywords such as "sustainable development," "ecotourism," and "local wisdom" are also beginning to emerge, indicating the connection between halal tourism and the sustainable development agenda. This keyword map reflects that research related to halal tourism is evolving towards an increasingly multidimensional direction, encompassing religious, social, economic, technological, and sustainability aspects[21]. This indicates that the topics of halal tourism, Islamic tourism, halal travel, and Muslim-friendly tourism have become extensive and relevant fields of study within various interdisciplinary approaches [26].




comprehensive overview of the intellectual landscape of halal tourism research. These findings are expected to serve as a strategic reference for researchers and stakeholders to identify potential topics, strengthen research collaborations, and develop more targeted and data-driven research agendas in the future.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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