









Mapping Halal Tourism as Sustainable Tourism Through the Lens of the Triple Bottom Line: Insights and Lessons Learned from a Scopus-Based Bibliometric Review (2017-2024)

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<https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.200709>

ABSTRACT

Received: 10 June 2025

Revised: 20 July 2025

Accepted: 25 July 2025

Available online: 31 July 2025

Keywords:

halal tourism, sustainable tourism, Triple Bottom Line (TBL), bibliometric, Scopus database, VOS Viewer

Tourism growth brings economic benefits through a multiplier effect but also poses environmental risks. As a rising trend, halal tourism offers Muslim-friendly destinations while promoting sustainability. This study aims to explore the scope of halal tourism within the sustainable tourism framework. This study employs a bibliometric method to uncover the intellectual structure of research on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" from the Scopus database. A total of 54 articles published between 2017 and 2024 were analyzed using Publish or Perish (PoP), Microsoft Excel, and VOSviewer. The findings show a rise in manuscript output from 2017 to 2024, despite fewer citations. The Journal of Islamic Marketing, Abdullah, Muhammad, Indonesia, and Sejong University are the most productive sources. Cuesta-Valiño et al.'s paper on Sustainable, smart and Muslim-friendly tourist destinations is the most cited. Seven main keyword clusters also emerged from the 54 articles analyzed. This study reveals a growing global interest in halal tourism as sustainable tourism, with increasing contributions from both Muslim and non-Muslim countries. It reflects a shift toward integrating religious values, ethics, and environmental sustainability in tourism. The findings of this study also highlight the importance of synergistically integrating the economic, social, and environmental aspects based on the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory to establish a concept of halal tourism that is ethical, sustainable, and globally relevant.

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has an important role in the economic growth of a country, both in the formal and informal sectors. The growth of the tourism industry in a country increases foreign exchange, creates jobs, and improves the community's welfare [1, 2]. Tourism industry activities involve various parties from various aspects, especially entrepreneurs at the micro, small, and medium levels, ranging from welcoming, accommodation, transportation, and experiences for tourists while they are in tourist destinations [3]. In addition, the tourism industry can have a positive impact on strengthening the country's image in the eyes of the world as an attractive tourist. However, research conducted by Lenzen et al. [4] elucidated that from 2009 to 2013, the worldwide carbon footprint produced by the tourism sector increased from 3.9 to 4.5 GtCO₂e. This statistic represents a minimum of 8% of the total worldwide greenhouse gas emissions originating from transport, shopping, and food, all of which are major drivers of the tourism sector. The major portion of this carbon footprint is produced by and in countries with high levels of income [5]. Therefore, the reduction of tourist-induced excursions can have a beneficial impact on environmental

quality. This is supported by the amelioration of air quality in various prominent urban areas during the COVID-19 worldwide epidemic, which immediately adversely affects the worldwide tourism industry [6, 7].

Halal tourism is a fast-growing trend and innovation within the global tourism sector [8]. Halal tourism is defined as a tourism service that focuses on fulfilling aspects of sharia, fulfilling the needs of Muslims obtained by this [9]. The development of the halal tourism industry for the economy and society, such as increasing income and employment, strengthening the competitiveness of tourist destinations, and increasing tolerance and harmony between religious communities [10, 11]. Hassib and Ibtissem [12] divide the concept of halal tourism into several types, namely religious travel, scientific and investigative travel, business travel, tourism travel, and political and diplomatic travel.

Although long-term longitudinal studies remain limited, market-based projections indicate a growing interest in halal tourism. According to the Mastercard-Crescentrating report [13], approximately 110 million Muslim international tourists were expected to account for 12% of all international arrivals in 2022, representing around 68% of the levels observed in 2019 prior to the pandemic. This corresponds to about 68% of

the levels observed in 2019 before the epidemic. Based on the available statistics, it is projected that Muslim tourist arrivals will rise to 140 million in 2023, then rebound to pre-pandemic levels of 160 million in 2024, and ultimately reach 230 million by 2028. The projected spending among these tourists is expected to amount to USD 225 billion [13].

The present trajectory of halal tourism development is highly intriguing for practitioners and academics seeking to broaden their understanding of the implementation of sustainable halal tourism. Multiple studies demonstrate the correlation between halal tourism and the promotion of environmentally friendly prudent sustainable tourism [14-17]. The sustainability aspect is one of the considerations of a tourist when visiting a halal destination [9]. The development of sustainability aspects in the tourism industry, especially halal tourism, is still a discussion among scholars and practitioners. Mukherjee et al. [18] explained that tourism, in the context of sustainable development, integrates three main interrelated components that can accelerate sustainable tourism, namely economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Hassib and Ibtissem [12] mention that the sustainability of the halal tourism industry can be measured from the balance between economic and social development. It is intended that the tourism industry can be managed in line with good management of human and natural resources and provide benefits to others [19, 20]. Some studies define sustainable tourism in an environmental context where humans have the right to exploit the natural resources inherited by God but with more focus on ensuring the needs of the present without neglecting the needs of future generations [21-25]. With this definition, it is clear that sustainable development is a multi-dimensional process based on sound resource management and considers future generations [11, 26].

Prior bibliometric research has been undertaken by scholars focusing on halal tourism, Islamic tourism, Muslim tourism, Muslim-friendly tourist, and tourism with an Islamic Sharia foundation. Nevertheless, it has been observed that the majority of bibliometric studies undertaken have not comprehensively investigated the correlation between the performance of halal tourism from its beginning and its current success as sustainable tourism. None of the previous bibliometric studies have addressed the origins of halal concerns in tourism and their evolution into a tourist concept that promotes economics, social, natural and environmental sustainability. It is imperative for academics and practitioners to comprehend the inception of halal concerns in the tourism industry.

Therefore, this study adopts the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework as its primary theoretical lens to conceptualize sustainability in the context of halal tourism. The TBL approach, introduced by Elkington [27], emphasizes the interdependence of three core dimensions: economic viability, environmental responsibility, and social equity. In halal tourism, these dimensions manifest in the form of ethical business practices, environmentally conscious travel options, and respect for religious and cultural values. By integrating TBL, this study aims to provide a structured understanding of how halal tourism initiatives can align with broader sustainability goals, offering both theoretical grounding and practical direction for future development.

The establishment of halal tourism as a form of sustainable tourism is crucial for preserving environmental equilibrium. This is because it acknowledges the requirements of

developing a tourism industry that offers economic and social advantages while also assuming responsibility for the natural environment. This study seeks to thoroughly examine the phenomenon of halal tourism from its inception to its present manifestation as a sustainable form of tourism. An in-depth analysis of halal tourism will offer scholars and practitioners a thorough understanding and valuable ideas for the future development of sustainable halal tourism. The present work undertook a bibliometric analysis of scholarly papers published worldwide on the subject of halal tourism research. Query data using keywords, geographical area, study topics, and methodologies. The objective of this study is to offer valuable knowledge and comprehension of the fast-expanding halal tourist industry in several nations across the globe. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of prior research on study gaps and the extent of halal tourism research in the current literature is crucial for offering valuable insights and recommendations for future halal tourism science. Hence, the study aims to address the following research questions:

RQ1: How is the development of research related to the theme of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" in the world?

RQ2: Who are the authors, organizations, and countries that write and publish the most journal articles related to the theme of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" in the world?

RQ3: What are the dominant research clusters and themes in the global literature on halal tourism as sustainable tourism, and to what extent do they incorporate economic, environmental, and social sustainability?

RQ4: What lessons can be learned from the trends in research and publications related to "halal tourism as sustainable tourism," and what are their implications for future research and industry development?

RQ5: What insights can be drawn from the global research and publication trends on halal tourism as sustainable tourism, particularly in advancing the TBL dimensions?

A bibliometric analysis is conducted on all metadata pertaining to "halal tourism as sustainable tourism", sourced from the Scopus database, in order to obtain a thorough overview of the topic's evolution over time. Scholars have extensively employed bibliometric analysis to examine the findings of prior research by gathering metadata from the Scopus database. The metadata findings are subsequently analyzed to obtain a comprehensive summary of prior publications and identify areas of research that future scholars may explore. Furthermore, the outcomes of bibliometric analysis will offer extensive knowledge and analysis for scholars and professionals in the advancement of halal tourism as a sustainable tourism in the coming years.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study utilizes a literature-based system mapping research (SMR) approach, specifically employing bibliometric analysis. The bibliometric study of coupling, co-citation, and direct citation is often regarded as the most dependable and precise method for mapping research literature. This study used a bibliometric approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis to explore trends in the literature on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism." Quantitative analysis examined publication volume, citations, and author collaborations, while qualitative analysis identified key themes from keywords, titles, and abstracts. Data were sourced from the Scopus database, known for its broad academic

coverage [28], focusing on publications from 2017 to July 2024 due to limited earlier research on sustainability in halal tourism. The search, conducted in July 2024, used keywords such as “Halal Tourism” OR “Muslim Friendly Tourism” OR “Halal Ecotourism” OR “Halal Friendly Tourism” OR “Halal-Friendly Tourism” OR “Muslim-Friendly Tourism” OR “Islamic Tourism” OR “Muslim Tourism” OR “Islamic Tourism” OR “Sharia Tourism” AND “Sustainable” OR “Sustainability” (see Figure 1).

At the initial stage, a total of 68 articles were retrieved. To ensure the relevance of the study and its alignment with the predetermined research questions, a screening process was conducted based on several inclusion criteria (see Table 1). First, two articles were excluded due to their irrelevance to the core topic of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism." Second, nine articles were eliminated because they were review papers—six bibliometric studies and three systematic literature reviews. Third, one article was removed due to duplication or high similarity with another document. Fourth,

two articles were excluded as they were not written in English. After completing the screening process, a total of 54 articles met the criteria and were included for further analysis.

Table 1. Inclusion criteria

No.	Inclusion Criteria
1	Focuses on halal tourism and sustainable aspects
2	Written in English
3	Research articles
4	Excludes review articles
5	Full-text article must be accessible online

Analysis was carried out using VOS Viewer [29], which visually maps bibliometric networks and research trends. Additional tools, including Publish or Perish and Microsoft Excel, were also used to support data analysis. This approach helped identify key contributors, research clusters, and gaps in the field.

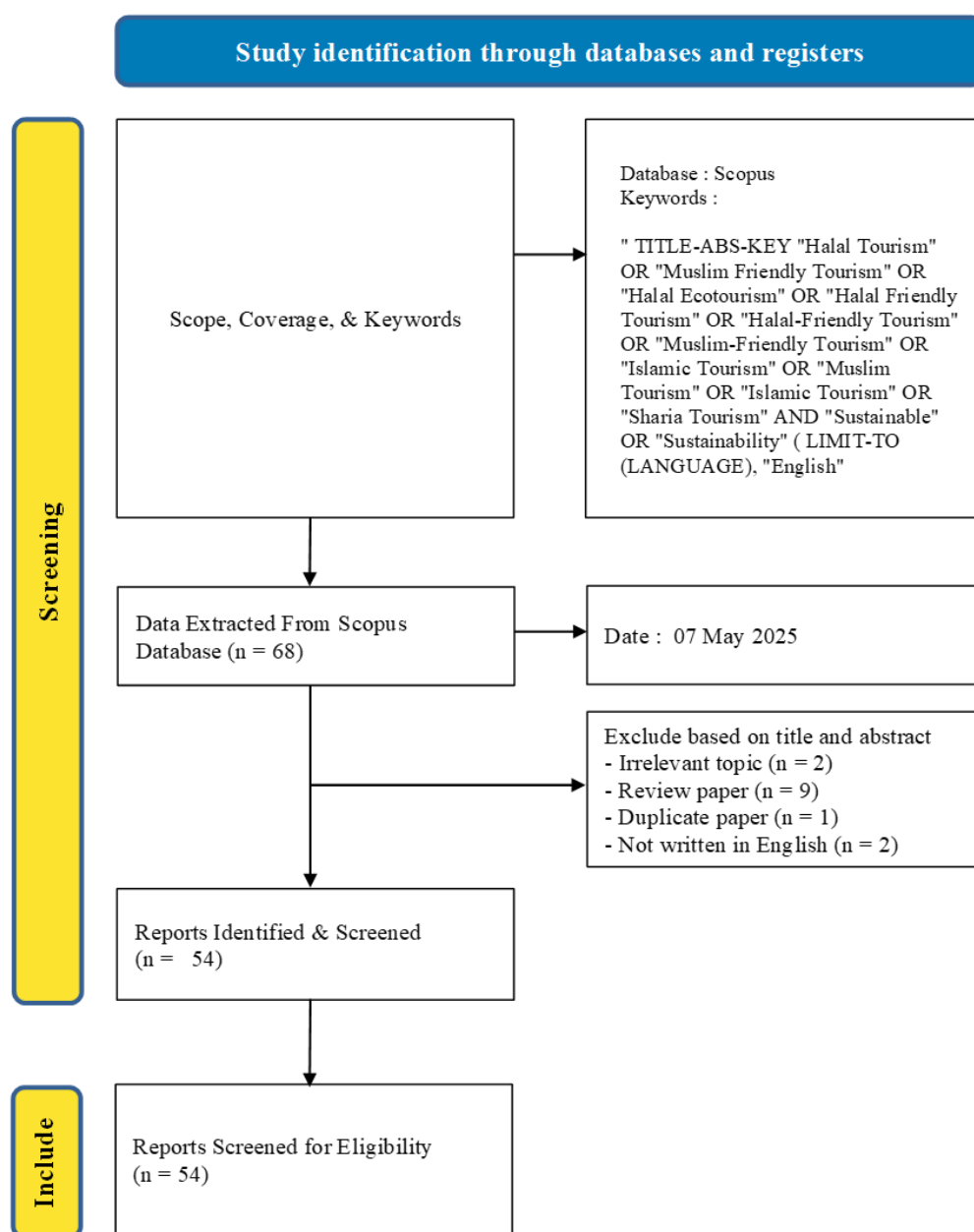


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Data statistics

Statistics data are used to answer RQ1 by examining trends and changes in the number of articles published each year and whether they have increased or decreased. In this study, Figure 2 shows the number of articles published from 2017 to July 2024. Researchers only display the last eight years (2017-2024) because publications under 2017 are considered less covered in the ten articles indexed by Scopus and have yet to display aspects of sustainability in halal tourism in terms of discussion.

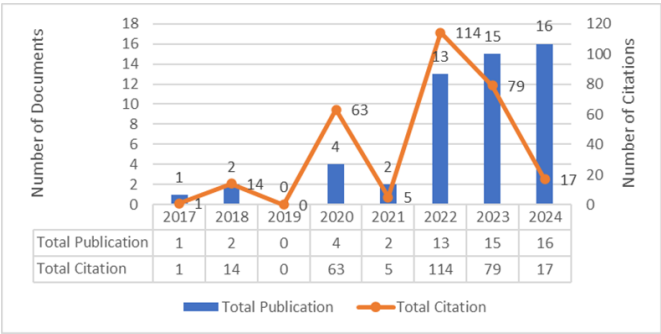


Figure 2. Number of Scopus-indexed documents from 2017 to 2024

Statistical data shows fluctuating interest in the topic of “halal tourism as sustainable tourism”. In 2019, an anomaly occurred in which no publications emerged, despite recorded publications in both the preceding year (2018) and the following year (2020). This absence may indicate a transitional phase in which the concept of sustainability within halal tourism had not yet garnered significant academic attention. The sharp increase in 2022, marked by 13 publications and a notably high citation count of 114, appears to be a turning point in the academic discourse. This surge likely reflects the publication of highly influential articles and growing academic and policy interest in halal tourism—particularly in the post-pandemic era, when sustainability and values-based travel became increasingly relevant and

prioritized by travelers. Another irregular pattern is observed in 2023–2024, where the rise in publication volume was not accompanied by a corresponding increase in citations. This discrepancy suggests a typical citation lag for newly published works, as recent articles generally require time to be discovered and cited. It may also indicate that the growth in publication quantity is not yet matched by theoretical depth or novelty, underscoring the need for greater scholarly rigor and innovation in future research.

3.1.1 What lesson can be learned?

This research shows that halal tourism, as a form of sustainable tourism, is gradually gaining academic attention. Despite fluctuations in publication and citation numbers, a notable rise in articles, especially from 2022 to 2024, reflects growing interest in integrating religious values, ethical consumption, and environmental responsibility into tourism studies. Studies like Jbir and Saâdaoui [30] and Zulvianti et al. [17] highlight that modern travelers increasingly favor destinations promoting sustainability. Although citations declined after peaking in 2022, this likely reflects a citation lag for newer publications. The absence of publications in 2019 and earlier variability indicates a developing field still in consolidation. Overall, the upward trend in research suggests halal tourism is emerging as a valid model within sustainable tourism, reflecting broader global shifts toward responsible, values-driven travel.

3.2 Bibliometric analysis

3.2.1 Most productive journals

Bibliometric methods have been used in fields like halal tourism [31-37]. In this study, 54 Scopus-indexed papers on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" were analyzed using VOS Viewer to explore citation patterns, keyword usage, and author affiliations. The analysis revealed connections between articles, key contributors, and research trends. It also highlighted research gaps and underexplored areas. Findings show active involvement from journal publishers across several countries in advancing this topic (see Table 2).

Table 2. Most productive journals

Journals/Books/Proceedings	Publisher/Country	H-Index	Number of Documents	Number of Citations
Journal of Islamic Marketing (Quartile: Q1)	Emerald Group Publishing Limited/UK	55	7	60
Sustainability (Switzerland) (Quartile: Q1)	Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI)/Switzerland	169	3	78
International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage (Quartile: Q1)	Technological University Dublin, Dublin/Ireland	14	3	11
IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science (Quartile: -)	IOP Publishing Ltd./UK	48	2	5
Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research (Quartile: Q3)	Emerald Group Publishing Limited/UK	30	2	3
International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning (Quartile: Q3)	International Information and Engineering Technology Association/Canada	23	2	2
Revista de Gestao Social e Ambiental (Quartile: Q3)	Associacao Nacional de Pos-Graduacao e Pesquisa em Administracao (ANPAD)/Brazil	8	2	0
Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing (Quartile: Q1)	Taylor and Francis Ltd./UK	104	1	31
Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam dan Kemanusiaan (Quartile: Q1)	Faculty of Sharia IAIN Salatiga/Indonesia	6	1	15
Current Issues in Tourism (Quartile: Q1)	Taylor and Francis Ltd./UK	108	1	11

The study also maps the research flow on “halal tourism as sustainable tourism” by identifying the most productive journals, as shown in Table 1. Based on Scopus data processed using VOS Viewer, the Journal of Islamic Marketing ranks first with 7 articles and 60 citations, reflecting its strong focus on this topic. With an H-index of 55 and Quartile 1 status, it stands out among other journals. Sustainability (Switzerland) ranks second with 3 articles but has the highest citation count at 78. Additionally, Emerald Group Publishing Limited is notable for having two journals in the top 10, Journal of Islamic Marketing and Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research.

3.2.2 What lesson can be learned?

A deeper bibliometric analysis reveals that halal tourism has evolved from a niche topic into a growing field of academic interest. Bibliometric methods help trace not only publication trends but also the intellectual networks shaping the field. The Journal of Islamic Marketing is the leading outlet, signaling halal tourism’s integration into Islamic marketing discourse, though this focus may limit broader discussions on environmental, ethical, or sustainability dimensions. In contrast, Sustainability (Switzerland), with fewer articles but higher citations, offers a platform for more interdisciplinary engagement. This shift suggests a growing global interest in viewing halal tourism beyond religious or cultural frames, as part of ethical and sustainable development practices. The prominence of publishers like Emerald Group Publishing, which contributes two top journals, highlights both opportunities for collaboration and risks of epistemic concentration. Such dominance could marginalize alternative or critical perspectives, reinforcing market-centric narratives over more inclusive, interdisciplinary approaches.

3.2.3 Most productive authors

Figure 3, generated using VOS Viewer, visualizes author productivity in the field of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism." In the map, larger and lighter-colored circles indicate higher publication output, while yellow intensity reflects the density of connections between authors. This visualization offers insights into key contributors and the overall structure of academic collaboration in this research area.

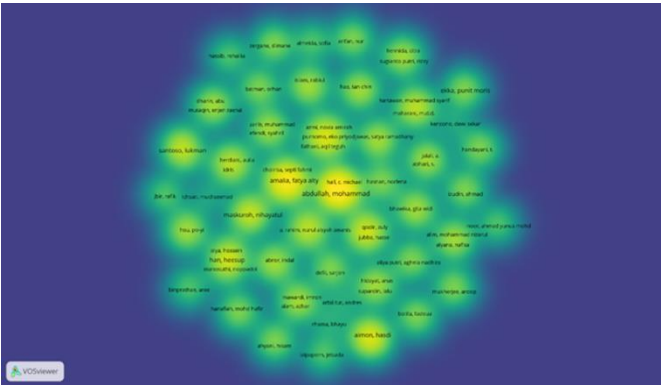


Figure 3. Bibliometric author mapping

The study identified the most productive authors on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" (see Table 3), aligning with the bibliometric mapping in Figure 3. Abdullah, M. is the leading contributor, followed by Chowdhury, M.A.F. and Sulong, Z., each with three publications. These authors have significantly shaped the field through their ideas and concepts.

Han H. ranks fourth with two publications and 38 citations, while Abror A. and Zulvianto N. follow with two publications each and 28 citations.

Table 3. Most productive author

Author	Affiliation	Number of Documents	Number of Citations
Abdullah M	Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM), Saudi Arabia	3	12
Chowdhury M.A.F.	Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia Sejong University, Seoul, Korea	3	12
Sulong Z.	Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia	3	12
Han H.	Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia	2	38
Abror A.	Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia	2	28
Zulvianti N.	Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ponorogo, Indonesia	2	28
Santoso L.	Indian Institute Of Management Sambalpur, India	2	16
Ekka P.M.	Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia	2	10
Aimon H.	UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia	2	4
Maskuroh N.		2	1

The mapping shows key authors, including Abdullah M., Chowdhury M.A.F., and Sulong Z., each with three publications and 12 citations. These authors are from Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, countries with established halal tourism research. An outlier, Han H. from Sejong University, South Korea, has only two publications but the highest citation count (38). This is notable since South Korea is a non-Muslim majority country, indicating Han's work is highly influential despite its smaller volume, likely due to strong methodology and global relevance. This underscores the growing international interest in halal tourism, even in countries with minority Muslim populations [38-40].

3.2.4 What lesson can be learned?

The bibliometric mapping using VOS Viewer reveals that the research field on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" is evolving, with growing scholarly collaboration. Prominent authors like Abdullah, M., Chowdhury, M.A.F., and Sulong, Z. drive core discussions, while newer contributors such as Han, H. and Zulvianto, N. add diversity. Larger and lighter-colored nodes represent influential, well-connected researchers. The fragmented clustering indicates that the field is still emerging, with limited institutional collaboration.

Notably, scholars from key halal tourism regions like Southeast Asia and the Middle East remain underrepresented in global literature (see Figure 3).

3.2.5 Most cited manuscripts

Next, Table 4 shows the research titles that have the greatest influence and contribute to research on the topic of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism." The manuscript titled "Sustainable, smart and Muslim-friendly tourist destinations"

by Cuesta-Valiño et al. [15] is the most influential work on the topic, with 31 citations and an average of 7.6 citations per year. Notably, two other 2022 manuscripts show the highest citation growth trends: "Investigating residents' support for Muslim tourism" by Manosuthi et al. [41] (10.3 citations/year) and "Discovering the importance of halal tourism for Indonesian Muslim travelers" by Wibawa et al. [42] (10.0 citations/year), highlighting their rising impact in this field.

Table 4. Most cited manuscripts

Title/Years	Number of Citations	Author
Sustainable, smart and muslim-friendly tourist destinations (2020) [15]	38	Cuesta-Valiño P.; Bolifa F.; Núñez-Barriopedro E.
Investigating residents’ support for Muslim tourism: the application of IGSCA-SEM and fsQCA (2022) [41]	31	Manosuthi N.; Lee J.-S.; Han H.
The influence of environmental and non-environmental factors on tourist satisfaction in halal tourism destinations in West Sumatra, Indonesia (2022) [17]	26	Zulvianti N.; Aimon H.; Abror A.
Discovering the importance of halal tourism for Indonesian Muslim travelers: perceptions and behaviors when traveling to a non-Muslim destination (2023) [42]	20	Wibawa B.M.; Pranindyasari C.; Bhawika G.W.; Mardhotillah R.R.
Effect of destination competitiveness attributes on tourists’ intention to visit halal tourism destination in Indonesia (2023) [20]	17	Lestari Y.D.; Saidah F.; Aliya Putri A.N.
Halal tourism regulations in Indonesia: trends and dynamics in the digital era (2022) [43]	15	Santoso L.; Triyanta A.; Thontowy J.
Islamic finance and halal tourism: An unexplored bridge for smart specialization (2020) [44]	14	Martín J.C.; Orden-Cruz C.; Zergane S.
Halal tourism demand and firm performance forecasting: new evidence from machine learning (2022) [45]	11	Sulong Z.; Abdullah M.; Chowdhury M.A.F.
The halal tourism – alternative or mass tourism? Indications of traditional mass tourism on crescent rating guidelines on halal tourism (2022) [46]	10	Rhama B.
Halal tourism beyond 2020: concepts, opportunities and future research directions (2024) [47]	10	Ekka P.M.

3.2.6 What lesson can be learned?

Table 3 highlights the most influential studies on halal tourism as sustainable tourism. Cuesta-Valiño et al.'s [15] work leads with 31 citations, reflecting growing interest in integrating sustainability, technology, and religious values. The application of technology in the field of management can provide higher levels of efficiency through business innovation and practical impact across all managerial sectors [48, 49]. Recent studies by Manosuthi et al. [41] and Wibawa et al. [42] show rising influence through methodological innovation and focus on Muslim traveler behavior, especially in Southeast Asia. These works challenge Eurocentric narratives and promote socially oriented sustainability. While high citation counts reflect relevance, long-term significance requires stronger theorization, broader geographic representation, and methodological rigor.

3.2.7 Most productive countries

Moreover, the bibliometric data of journal sources below (see Figure 4) demonstrates the visualization of publishing

countries mapping. From the diagram, it is evident that there are multiple groups of countries that have the highest number of publications focusing on the topic of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism". The figure below demonstrates that a larger circle of the publishing countries corresponds to a higher number of papers published by that country. It is evident that Indonesia possesses the greatest circle. This indicates that Indonesia has the highest number of publications focused on the topic of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" in comparison to other countries.

The analysis also examined the geographical distribution of authors and countries contributing to research on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism," with results shown in Table 5 and Figure 4. Indonesia leads with 31 publications, followed by Malaysia (13), and then Spain, Thailand, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia, each with three. Notably, countries like the UK, South Korea, and China, despite having non-Muslim majority populations, rank among the top ten contributors, reflecting global academic interest in the topic beyond religious demographics.

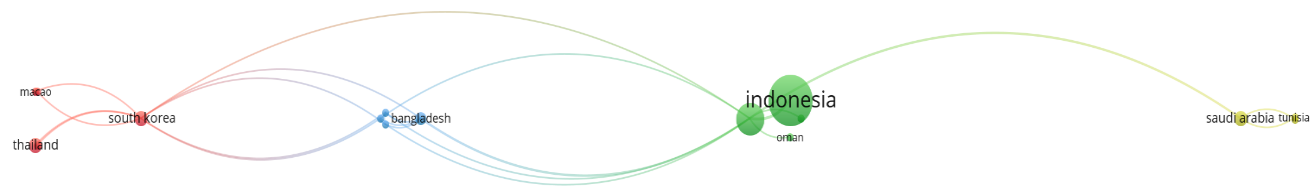


Figure 4. Bibliometric countries analysis

Table 5. Most productive countries

Countries	Number of Documents	Total Citations	Link of Strength
Indonesia	31	14	3
Malaysia	13	88	13
Spain	3	57	0
Thailand	3	45	2
South Korea	3	39	9
Saudi Arabia	3	15	4
India	2	10	0
Bangladesh	2	1	6
Hongkong	1	31	2
United Kingdom	1	7	2

This finding offers valuable insight: Indonesia, despite its significant potential in halal tourism, has yet to produce research that generates a strong global impact. This is evidenced by the relatively low number of citations (14) and weak link strength (3). Such indicators suggest that scholarly output from Indonesian researchers remains largely localized and has not been widely cited or integrated into the global academic discourse.

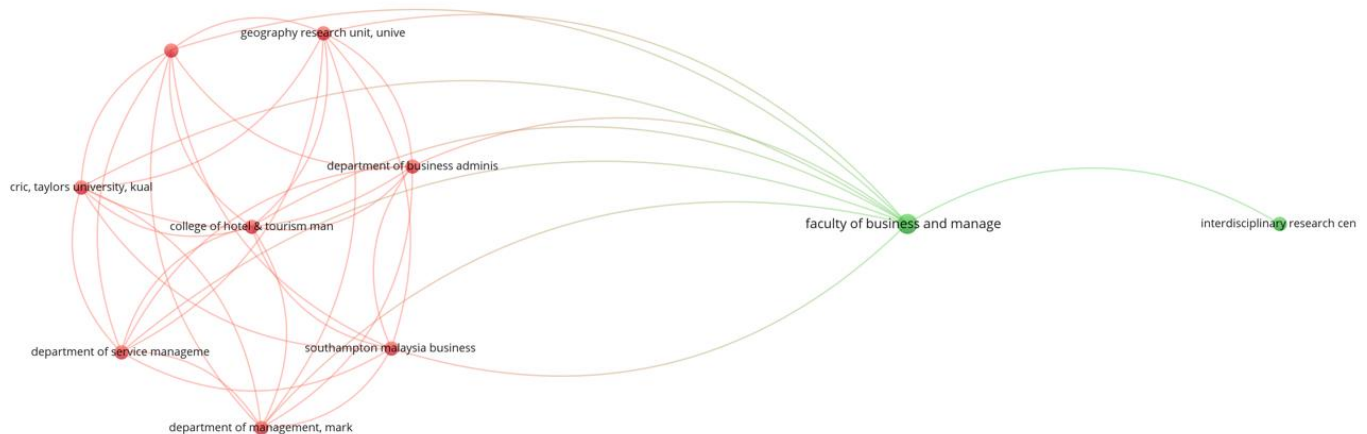
In contrast, Malaysia, although contributing a smaller number of publications (13), has achieved a substantially higher citation count (88) and stronger collaboration link strength (13). This indicates that Malaysian researchers are not only active in publishing but are also more deeply engaged in international research networks. This pattern reflects greater research influence and a stronger integration into the global scholarly dialogue. Collaboration has been identified as a critical factor and strategic approach in producing high-impact research, particularly in terms of citation outcomes [50, 51].

3.2.8 What lesson can be learned?

Figure 4 shows the geographical distribution of journal sources on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism," where larger circles represent higher publication volumes. Indonesia leads with 31 publications, followed by Malaysia (13), and then Spain, Thailand, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia with three each. The prominence of Indonesia and Malaysia aligns with their large Muslim populations and integration of Sharia-compliant tourism in national policies. Interestingly, non-Muslim-majority countries like the UK, South Korea, and China also rank among the top ten contributors. This reflects a broader global interest in halal tourism, driven not only by religious or ethical considerations but also by the economic potential of the Muslim travel market. However, a high publication volume does not guarantee theoretical depth or academic rigor. Future research should prioritize methodological quality and conceptual development. Moreover, fostering cross-country and interdisciplinary collaboration will help enhance inclusivity and relevance. Overall, the growing international engagement highlights halal tourism's potential as a multidimensional and globally significant framework within sustainable tourism development.

3.2.9 Most productive institutions

When it comes to the collection of research on the topic of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism," Figure 5 and Table 6 highlight the organizations that the writers are affiliated with during the course of their work. When it comes to the subject of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism," there are eleven affiliations that stand out as having the greatest number of publications that have been indexed by Scopus.

**Figure 5.** Bibliometric institutions mapping**Table 6.** Most productive organizations

Organization	Number of Documents	Total Citation/Link of Strength
Sejong University, South Korea	2	38/4
University of Alcalá, Spain	1	3/0
Chulalongkorn University, Thailand	1	31/2
Hongkong Polytechnic University, Hongkong	1	31/2
Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia	1	26/1
Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Indonesia	1	20/2
Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia	1	20/2
Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia	1	17/0
Universitas Islam Indonesia Jogjakarta, Indonesia	1	15/1
IAIN Ponorogo, Indonesia	1	15

Table 6 reveals that Sejong University (South Korea) is the most prolific institution in the field of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism," with two documents and 38 citations. The University of Alcala (Spain) and Chulalongkorn University (Thailand) follow with three documents and 31 citations combined. These findings suggest a strong research presence from institutions in non-Muslim-majority countries, highlighting the global academic interest in this emerging topic.

3.2.10 What lesson can be learned?

The key takeaway is that halal tourism has evolved from a culturally and religiously specific concept into a globally recognized model within sustainable tourism. The significant contributions from institutions in countries like South Korea, Spain, and Thailand, where Muslims are a minority, demonstrate that halal tourism is gaining traction as an inclusive, ethical, and sustainability-aligned framework. This reflects a paradigm shift: halal tourism is increasingly seen not just as a religious obligation or niche service for Muslim travelers, but as a value-based tourism model that supports broader goals such as environmental protection, social justice, and ethical consumption, principles aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [52]. Furthermore, this trend signifies the growing openness of global academia to explore religiously informed practices as valid and valuable within mainstream tourism discourse. It encourages cross-

cultural and interdisciplinary collaboration, offering new avenues for mutual learning among scholars, practitioners, and policymakers from diverse backgrounds. In essence, halal tourism is positioning itself not just as an alternative, but as a compelling moral-economic framework that has the potential to address pressing global tourism challenges such as over-tourism, ecological degradation, and cultural homogenization. Its emphasis on ethics, moderation, and responsibility could contribute to more equitable, inclusive, and resilient tourism systems worldwide.

3.2.11 Co-occurrence network of keywords

This study examined and categorized the main themes of "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" to answer RQ3. This involved examining the words that are commonly associated with the most extensively studied subjects and concepts. This analysis using VOS Viewer also establishes a correlation between the most commonly used keywords in the database obtained from the Scopus database and the conceptual framework of the research topic (see Figure 6). An analysis was conducted on the co-occurrence of the author's keywords in Indonesia's sustainable tourism development text. Out of a total of 140 considered keywords, 65 interconnected keywords were identified. This mapping presents the frequency of certain keywords in "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" theme papers during the past seven years, along with their correlation to other keywords in seven clusters.

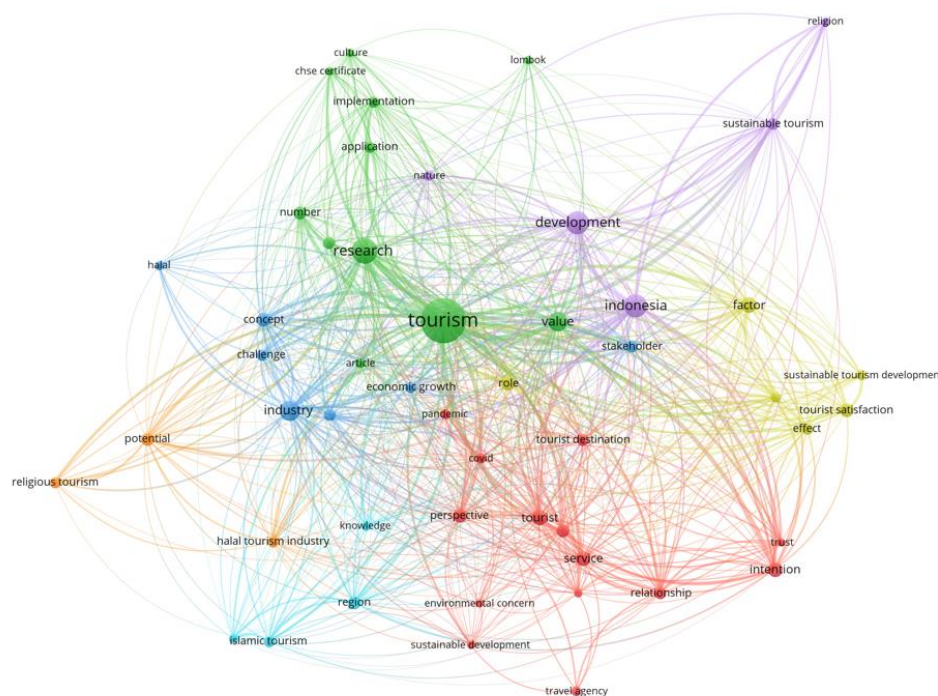


Figure 6. Keyword network visualization on halal tourism as a sustainable tourism

The first cluster highlights the importance of halal certification and the implementation of standards such as CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environment), which are critical components in the tourism industry. This cluster is associated with keywords such as Lombok, culture, and implementation, indicating how certification practices are applied in real-world settings and how they contribute to maintaining service quality standards in halal tourism. Sutono et al. [26] argued that CHSE certification enhances the

competitiveness of tourism destinations and signals their readiness to welcome tourists. The second cluster centers on halal products and environmental awareness, particularly in the post-COVID-19 context. Keywords such as pandemic, environmental concern, and sustainable development suggest a shifting consumer focus toward halal destinations that innovate in response to global challenges by promoting environmentally friendly tourism practices [17, 22].

Meanwhile, the third cluster addresses the role of

stakeholders in the halal tourism industry. Themes such as economic growth, challenge, and stakeholder emphasize the need for collaboration among industry players, government agencies, and local communities to foster a resilient halal tourism ecosystem. Sustainable tourism practices embedded within the halal tourism concept help mitigate potential conflicts by involving all relevant local stakeholders [53]. The fourth cluster raises the issue of halal awareness and knowledge, reflecting that halal literacy varies across regions. Limited public knowledge regarding halal products and services may hinder the adoption and broader development of halal tourism. Keywords like knowledge, region, and Islamic tourism highlight the crucial role of education in building an inclusive tourism ecosystem [54].

The fifth cluster focuses on the development of halal tourism, which is particularly explored in the context of Indonesia. Keywords such as religion, nature, and sustainable tourism indicate that halal tourism development is influenced not only by economic considerations but also by religious values and environmental sustainability [10, 55]. The sixth cluster underscores the importance of tourist satisfaction with halal tourism services and the factors influencing it. Terms like tourist satisfaction and sustainable tourism development suggest that individual experiences play a vital role in determining the long-term sustainability of halal destinations. This aligns with the social dimension of sustainability, where tourists' perceptions can significantly affect loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion [56]. Lastly, the seventh cluster emphasizes the strategic potential of the halal tourism industry, especially in the realm of religious tourism. Keywords such as halal tourism industry, potential, and religious tourism reflect the promising long-term prospects of halal tourism, provided it is managed with sustainable and forward-looking strategies [57].

3.2.12 What lesson can be learned?

A comprehensive analysis of the seven clusters in halal tourism reveals a tightly interconnected and mutually reinforcing relationship among certification, environmental sustainability, stakeholders, awareness, innovation, satisfaction, and future potential (see Table 7). Halal certification (Cluster 1) serves as a fundamental foundation, ensuring cleanliness, safety, and Sharia compliance, which builds trust and enhances destination competitiveness, directly impacting tourist satisfaction (Cluster 6). Clear halal standards also bolster positive perceptions of environmental sustainability (Cluster 2), creating an authentic and eco-friendly tourism experience. The success of these efforts depends heavily on active involvement from stakeholders (Cluster 3), including governments, industry players, and local communities, who facilitate effective regulation, collaboration, and increase tourists' awareness and knowledge (Cluster 4) about halal tourism. Innovation (Cluster 5) acts as a key driver linking all clusters by enabling adaptation of products, services, and technologies to meet modern tourists' needs. For instance, the use of digital applications for halal tourism promotion in Bali expands market reach and provides easier access to information. Tourist satisfaction (Cluster 6) functions as a critical indicator of the success of this integration, where satisfied tourists contribute to loyalty and industry growth. The future potential of halal tourism (Cluster 7) largely depends on the effective synergy of these clusters, supported by smart technologies and sustainable environmental management. Nonetheless, challenges remain

in non-Muslim-majority countries, such as limited understanding and infrastructure, which must be addressed to enable equitable global development of halal tourism. Overall, these seven clusters constitute a complementary ecosystem driving the development of sustainable and competitive halal tourism. A holistic approach integrating certification, awareness, stakeholder collaboration, and innovation is essential for the long-term success and growth of this industry.

Table 7. Thematic clustering of keywords in halal tourism as a sustainable tourism

Cluster	Theme	Keywords
Cluster 1 in Green	Halal certification	Tourism, Research, Number, Value, Article, Application, Implementation, CHSE Certificate, Culture, Lombok Pandemic, Covid, Tourist Destination, Perspective, Tourist, Service, Relationship, Environmental Concern, Sustainable Development, Travel Agency, Intention, Trust
Cluster 2 in Red	Halal Product and Environment	Industry, Economic Growth, Challenge, Concept, Halal, Stakeholder
Cluster 3 in Blue	Stakeholder in Halal Industry	Knowledge, Region, Islamic Tourism
Cluster 4 in Light Blue	Halal Awareness and Knowledge	Indonesia, Development, Nature, Sustainable Tourism, Religion
Cluster 5 in Purple	Tourism Development	Factor, Role, Sustainable Tourism Development, Tourist Satisfaction, Factor
Cluster 6 in Yellow	Satisfaction on Halal Tourism	The potential of halal tourism in the future
Cluster 7 in Orange	The potential of halal tourism in the future	

3.2.13 Halal tourism through the lens of the Triple Bottom Line

To address RQ5, this study analyzes halal tourism (HT) as a form of Sustainable Tourism using the TBL dimensions, evaluating the economic, social, and environmental aspects related to halal tourism, based on a bibliometric review of Scopus-indexed publications from 2017 to 2024. The comprehensive discussion of halal tourism as sustainable tourism based on the TBL dimensions is fully presented in Table 8.

In the first dimension, the economic dimension, sustainable innovation and promotion are one of the key factors in positioning halal tourism as a sustainable tourism concept. This aspect of sustainable innovation and promotion is closely related to the second factor, which is the utilization of technology to enhance efficiency in business processes run by operators in the halal tourism sector, particularly by integrating technology into promotional strategies to reach a wider audience of potential tourists [58]. Technologies such as digital platforms can make halal destinations more inclusive by making it easier for tourists to identify which halal destinations they would like to visit [59].

In the social dimension, multi-stakeholder collaboration and local community empowerment become the next crucial factors that determine the sustainability offered by the halal tourism concept. As a new concept, halal tourism has the

potential to create misconceptions among the public [60]. Therefore, multi-stakeholder collaboration, especially among parties involved in the halal tourism ecosystem, is necessary for the concept to be accepted by all parties [10]. This collaboration includes the roles of government, the private sector, local communities, and religious institutions, each of which plays an important role in the development and management of halal tourism destinations. One key stakeholder in the success of halal tourism is the local community living in the area of the halal destination. In the process of developing and managing halal tourism, the local community plays a role in ensuring that the Islamic values offered by halal tourism are widely disseminated, strengthen local culture, and create inclusive and sustainable tourism [61]. The integration of the halal tourism concept does not erase local cultural values, but rather complements elements that were previously unavailable to the Muslim community.

The third dimension, the environment, highlights the importance of environmental care, such as maintaining cleanliness at tourist attractions and facilities, which is essential for creating a welcoming environment for tourists and ensuring the sustainability of destinations. One critical activity is ecological conservation programs, which help preserve natural resources and biodiversity, ensuring that tourism development does not harm the environment while maintaining a balance between economic growth and environmental protection [21, 23, 62]. Effective environmental management and waste recycling initiatives help reduce pollution, support eco-friendly practices, and minimize the environmental impact of tourism. The use of energy-efficient technologies in tourism infrastructure reduces

operational costs and carbon footprints, while constructing environmentally friendly buildings using sustainable materials supports green tourism principles and contributes to environmental preservation for future generations [23].

3.2.14 What lesson can be learned?

The integration of economic, social, and environmental aspects is crucial in the development of sustainable halal tourism. These three dimensions must work in harmony, as they complement each other. In the economic context, for example, sustainable innovation and promotion play a key role in attracting a wider market and strengthening the competitiveness of halal tourism destinations. Technology, such as digital platforms and automation systems, enables business operators to enhance operational efficiency and expand market reach. However, the successful adoption of these technologies cannot be achieved without the support of other stakeholders involved in this ecosystem. From a social perspective, the success of halal tourism heavily depends on multi-stakeholder collaboration and the empowerment of local communities. Engaged local communities serve as catalysts in the development and management of halal tourism by helping promote cultural and religious values, one of which is through introducing digital platforms as low-cost and inclusive promotional tools to increase public awareness of the halal tourism concept. Similarly, from an environmental perspective, the management of natural resources in an eco-friendly manner through ecological conservation programs and effective waste management will be more impactful if it can provide economic benefits to local communities and business operators at halal destinations.

Table 8. Relationship between halal tourism aspects and triple bottom dimensions

TBL Dimension	Halal Tourism Aspects	Description	Selected References
Economics	Increase in Community Income	The development of halal tourism increases job and business opportunities for the local community through the halal products and services offered, contributing to income growth.	[63-68]
	Sustainable Innovation and Promotion	Innovations in halal products and services that are Muslim-friendly, along with digital promotion, expand market reach and attract more tourists.	[10, 20-22, 24, 58, 61, 69-71]
	Enhancing SME Capacity	Training for local SMEs in providing halal facilities such as accommodations and restaurants will improve service quality and support halal tourism development.	[54, 63, 65, 72]
	Technology Integration	The use of technology for destination management, booking systems, and promotion enhances operational efficiency and convenience for halal tourists.	[10, 15, 18, 56, 58, 59, 61, 71, 73]
	Islamic Finance Support	Sharia-compliant financing supports the development of infrastructure and facilities for halal tourism, enabling investments that align with Islamic principles.	[44]
	High-Quality Service	Providing services in accordance with Sharia standards, such as halal food and prayer facilities, increases tourist satisfaction and loyalty to the destination	[17, 74]
Social	Halal Certification	Halal certification for tourism facilities and products ensures quality and builds tourist trust, enhancing the reputation of halal destinations	[17, 61, 63, 75-78]
	Provision of halal food and prayer facilities	Ensuring that halal food and dedicated spaces for prayer are available in tourism destinations supports the spiritual and dietary needs of Muslim tourists, enhancing their overall experience and satisfaction.	[10, 22, 43, 62, 63, 66, 74, 75, 79-82]
	Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration	Collaboration among the government, private sector, local communities, and financial institutions strengthens the sustainable development and promotion of halal tourism	[10, 26, 41, 57, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67-70, 72, 75, 78, 82-86]

Environment	Involving local communities in development	Engaging local communities in the development and management of halal tourism ensures that the benefits are shared, fosters cultural exchange, and strengthens the social fabric of the destination.	[10, 17, 41, 43, 46, 57, 60, 61, 63, 68, 75, 79, 80, 85-87]
	Balancing development with cultural and religious values	Integrating local traditions, customs, and religious principles into tourism development helps maintain cultural authenticity, creating a tourism model that is both respectful and sustainable.	[17, 26, 62, 73, 84]
	Clean tourist attractions and facilities	Maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in tourist spots and facilities is crucial for creating a pleasant and welcoming environment for visitors, ensuring sustainability and positive impressions	[43, 66]
	Ecological conservation programs	These programs help preserve natural resources and biodiversity, ensuring sustainable tourism by balancing development with environmental protection.	[12, 17, 20-22, 24, 46, 53, 57, 61-64, 69, 71, 80, 81, 87, 88]
	Environmental management, and waste recycling initiatives	Efficient waste management and recycling reduce pollution, support eco-friendly practices, and minimize the environmental impact of tourism.	[21, 63]
	Energy efficiency	Incorporating energy-efficient technologies and practices in tourism infrastructure reduces operational costs, supports sustainability goals, and minimizes the carbon footprint of tourism activities.	[23, 63]
	Environmentally friendly buildings	Constructing buildings that are eco-friendly, using sustainable materials, and optimizing energy use aligns with green tourism principles and contributes to the preservation of the environment for future generations.	[23]

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study's findings reveal a substantial rise in the literature concerning "halal tourism as sustainable tourism" in the Scopus database from 2017 to 2024. The most significant contributions to this theme came from authors situated in Indonesia and Malaysia. Nonetheless, publications and institutional outputs from non-Muslim-majority nations, like the United Kingdom, South Korea, Spain, and Thailand, have also significantly influenced scholarly debate on this topic. The increase in research since 2022 shows that more and more academics are interested in combining religious beliefs, ethical consumption, and environmental responsibilities in the sector of tourism. Indonesia and Malaysia are the main voices in the conversation, but institutions in non-Muslim-majority countries are also getting involved. This shows that halal tourism is becoming more important around the world, beyond its traditional cultural roots. The bibliometric analysis shows that this field is growing but is still not very organized. There are seven interrelated groups, halal certification, environmental sustainability, stakeholders, awareness, innovation, tourist satisfaction, and future potential, that make up a complex ecosystem that helps halal tourism grow. Halal certification is a key part of developing trust and following Sharia law. It also makes destinations more competitive and tourists happier. These benefits are made even better by sustainable environmental practices and active engagement among stakeholders. Innovation, particularly via digital technology, is essential for adapting services and expanding markets, with tourist satisfaction being a key measure of success. Even if these achievements are encouraging, there are still problems to solve when it comes to making things more inclusive, improving the rigor of methods, and fixing infrastructure problems, especially in places where Muslims are not the majority. Halal tourism is changing from a limited religious service to a more open, ethical, and environmentally friendly model that fits with global aspirations for sustainable development. This could change the way tourism works around the world in the future. Finally, from the context of the TBL theory, it is concluded that the economic, social, and

environmental aspects of halal tourism must operate synergistically. The economic benefits of innovation need to be supported by a social structure that fosters collaboration and cultural inclusivity, and both must align with environmental management practices that benefit local communities and ensure the long-term sustainability of the destinations. This holistic approach positions halal tourism not only as a sharia-compliant service but also as an ethical, sustainable, and globally relevant tourism model.

This study had many limitations, even though it made important contributions. Three search queries were used on the title, abstract, and keywords fields to produce the dataset. However, this method may have left out papers that didn't clearly have the chosen keywords, but the chance of this happening is quite low and doesn't have a big effect on the total results. Furthermore, this study did not conduct a comprehensive screening of titles and abstracts to confirm that all retrieved articles were exclusively centered on "halal tourism as sustainable tourism." As a result, there is still a chance that some significant research were left out by mistake. However, insights from the most productive journals and the most-cited papers indicate that the studied data are certainly consistent with the study theme. It is also important to remember that the keywords selected in this analysis were mostly about general sustainability. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) said in the Brundtland Report (1987) that sustainability has three parts: environmental, social, and economic. Consequently, this study presents various recommendations for subsequent research. First, future studies should perform a more comprehensive evaluation of titles and abstracts to guarantee extensive coverage of literature pertaining to halal tourism and sustainability. It is also highly encouraged to use other databases like Web of Science, Dimensions, and Google Scholar to get a wider range of sources and reduce the chance of bias that could come from only using Scopus. Second, using more specific keywords that include all three aspects of sustainability, social, environmental, and economic, would help you find a wider range of literature that is more relevant. Ultimately, for a more profound and nuanced analysis,

subsequent studies could amalgamate bibliometric techniques with systematic literature review processes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to Universitas Negeri Surabaya for the valuable support and resources provided throughout the course of this research. The institutional assistance and conducive academic environment have played a crucial role in the successful completion of this study.

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