



# Integrating the Halal Tourism Value Chain into Global Destination Management Frameworks

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## OPEN ACCESS

ISSN xxxx xxxx (online)

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Citation: Adam Voak, Hana Catur Wahyuni,  
Ahmad Dahlan (2025)  
*Integrating the Halal Tourism Value Chain  
into Global Destination Management  
Frameworks. 1 :1*  
doi:

**Abstract.** This paper explores current perspectives regarding the Halal Tourism Value Chain (HTVC), a crucial and burgeoning segment in the international tourism sector, focused on fulfilling Muslim travellers' unique requirements. The chain is designed to adhere strictly to Islamic principles, as is required by followers of this faith. The paper offers a comprehensive examination of aspects of the HTVC, discussing the essential components of the chain and identifying all the participants who are involved in providing its essential services. Through a synthesis of the literature, the discussion will elucidate the spectrum of activities involved in the Halal tourism chain, which must be tailored to meet the Muslim demographic's requirements. The findings highlight the significance of certification bodies, travel agencies, hospitality providers and regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, the study discusses the difficulties encountered within the sector, which relate to market segmentation, cross-cultural sensitivities and certification inconsistencies. The study concludes with strategic recommendations for enhancing the HTVC, emphasising the significance of cooperation between service participants, the importance of technological integration and the development of standard guidelines to ensure a seamless and guaranteed Halal travel experience. This investigation is purposefully designed to provide a meaningful contribution to the HTVC, offering practical insights for industry practitioners aiming to capitalise on this rapidly expanding market.

**Keywords:** Halal Tourism Value Chain; Halal Tourism; Halal Accommodation; Halal Certification

## INTRODUCTION

Halal tourism, a rapidly expanding facet within the international tourism sector, is dedicated to fulfilling the Muslim traveller's specific needs by ensuring strict compliance with Islamic principles (Azam & Abdullah, 2020; Chandra, 2014; Junaidi & Wulandari, 2020; Ladiqi et al., 2018). This paper explores the nature of the HTVC, emphasising its significance in providing practical strategies that will allow industry practitioners to meet the required Islamic standards. (Hutabarat et al., 2024). The HTVC encompasses a range of essential components, including Halal-certified food production, accommodation, transportation, entertainment and marketing strategies tailored to the needs of the Muslim demographic (Muhardi et al., 2023). This research aims to enhance our understanding of the operational dynamics, interrelationships, and interdependencies involved in developing and maintaining Halal tourism by closely examining these factors.

The magnitude of the rapid expansion of the HTVC in the international travel sector cannot be overstated (Al-Ansi et al., 2023; Wazin et al., 2024). Clearly, as the Muslim population expands, the need for travel experiences that reflect their religious and cultural values also increases (Moshin et al., 2020; Putra & Tucunan, 2021). The ability of the HTVC to meet this demand is crucial for the industry's sustained growth and sustainability. This paper presents a comprehensive examination of the existing elements of the HTVC, highlighting and discussing the essential components identified in the chain and identifying the participants involved in servicing the integrated parts of the chain. Through a synthesis of existing literature, the paper aims to thoroughly understand how these components interact and how they can contribute to a seamless and quality Halal travel experience.

The key participants in the HTVC include certification bodies, travel agencies, hospitality providers, transportation staff and interpreters of regulatory frameworks (Hutabarat et al., 2024; Sarpini & Aziz, 2023). These entities play vital roles in maintaining the integrity, servicing and appropriate growth of Halal tourism. This is a complex undertaking, and in this research paper, issues dealing with (i) inconsistencies in meeting certification requirements, (ii) dealing with cultural sensitivities at all stages along the chain, and (iii) managing issues relevant to market segmentation are explored. It is widely acknowledged that addressing these challenges is essential for the development of a robust, reliable and economically sustainable HTVC (Islam et al., 2023; Khan & Callanan, 2017; Nurdiansyah, 2018).

This paper also offers strategic recommendations for enhancing the HTVC. It emphasises (i) the importance of collaboration among stakeholders, (ii) the attention given to technological integration and (iii) the development of standard guidelines. It particularly aims to provide practical solutions to existing challenges. Ultimately, this study emphasises the potential of the Halal travel industry as an essential and sustainable facet within the international tourism sector,

offering valuable insights for industry practitioners seeking to capitalise on this expanding market.

## METHODS

The analytic literature review employs a systematic approach to investigate current descriptions of HTVC. Samples were collected from Google Scholar, which is a commonly used exploratory bibliographic database, using keywords such as "Halal tourism," "Halal certification," "Muslim travel market," and "Islamic hospitality." The Google Scholar database was selected because it provides an extensive and varied collection of articles and other publications, indexing a wide array of literature. Included in the review were peer-reviewed articles, industry reports and relevant books, all published within the last decade. This focus ensured a current and relevant dataset drawn from a broad range of sources carefully screened for relevance and quality.

Selected literature was critically evaluated and categorised into thematic areas reflecting the main components of the HTVC. These components were (i) Halal-certified food production, (ii) appropriate accommodation facilities, (iii) carefully monitored transportation links, (iv) specially developed leisure activities, and (v) sensitively presented marketing strategies. This categorisation facilitated a structured analysis highlighting key participants' roles and interactions, including certification bodies, travel agencies, hospitality and transport providers, and the interpreters of regulatory frameworks. The review synthesises findings across these categories to identify recurring themes, significant insights and gaps in the existing knowledge base.

Data extraction and synthesis were crafted to emphasise an understanding of the HTVC's dynamics and complexities. By integrating diverse perspectives and evidence, which was made possible by drawing from multiple sources, this review sought to understand the HTVC's existing status quo, the challenges it faces, and potential strategies for its enhancement. The analysis was developed to provide a basis for future research and practical suggestions for sector participants.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Halal Tourism Value Chain (HTVC) Components

Halal-certified food production is a cornerstone of the HTVC, since it is critical in provisioning and ensuring the specified dietary needs of Muslim travellers, guaranteeing compliance with Islamic principles (El-Gohary, 2016; Mannaa, 2020; Said et al., 2022). This process involves stringent guidelines and standards to ensure that accessed food products are permissible (Halal) and pure (Tayyib) according to Islamic law (Abdul-Razzaq, 2016; Abdul Mokti et al., 2024; Mannaa, 2020). In this regard, the production process starts with raw material choices, and only ingredients meeting specific criteria may be used, with food preparation procedures carefully eliminating any ingredients obtained from forbidden

sources, such as alcohol or pork (Ahmed & Akbaba, 2020; Azam & Abdullah, 2021; Vargas-Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2020). The sourcing of dietary ingredients must be from suppliers who transparently adhere to Halal standards, ensuring that the entire supply chain maintains the required integrity (Voak, 2021; Voak & Fairman, 2021). Additionally, Halal food production requires that animals which are used for foodstuff are slaughtered in a specific manner, known as *Zabiha* (Abdallah et al., 2021; Riaz & Chaudry, 2018). It is understood that processing and handling activities are critical stages in Halal-certified food production, and therefore, facilities must be designed to ensure that Halal items are not contaminated by contact with traces of non-Halal products. This requirement often necessitates the provision of separate production lines, specific production utensils and dedicated storage areas (Amir & Abdukic, 2021; Voak et al., 2023). Cleanliness and hygiene are paramount, aligning with the concept of *Tayyib*, which emphasises the essential nature of purity and wholesomeness (Ihwan, 2021; Tajudeen, 2020).

Certification bodies play a pivotal role in maintaining these standards (Khan & Haleem, 2016; Noor & Noordin, 2017) in that it is they who conduct regular audits and inspections to verify that food producers continually comply with Halal guidelines (Othman et al., 2016a, 2016b). These bodies issue Halal certificates, signalling to consumers that the food products from a named source meet the required Islamic dietary laws. Halal-certified food must always be available, which is a significant element in developing appropriate travel choices for this market. Indeed, ensuring that Muslim travellers have access to authentic Halal food enhances their travel experience and builds trust in the travel organisation (Battour, 2018; Han et al., 2021). This not only boosts customer satisfaction with the organisation but also fosters loyalty and repeat visits.

Halal-certified accommodation is a second critical component of the HTVC, which must align closely with Islamic standards. Consequently, travel options must be designed to provide Muslim travellers with appropriate lodging options (Pamukcu & Sariisik, 2021; Razak et al., 2019a). In this regard, the travel sector must constantly focus on ensuring that all aspects of the accommodation experience, from room amenities to overall hotel services, are compliant with Halal standards, thereby enhancing the comfort and satisfaction of Muslim guests (Iskandar & Sulaiman, 2024; Yafi, 2024). Halal-certified accommodation must begin with physical aspects of the lodging, with rooms equipped with essential amenities such as Qibla direction indicators, the Quran, and prayer mats (Battour, 2018). Moreover, hotels frequently offer segregated pools, gym areas and spa facilities for women and men to maintain privacy and modesty (Rahman, 2020).

It is also essential that food and beverage services in Halal-certified accommodations strictly adhere to Halal dietary laws (Razalli et al., 2019; Sabidin, 2015), which involves providing Halal-certified meals and ensuring that there is no contamination from non-Halal substances in the kitchen and service facilities (Razak et al., 2019a; Razalli et al., 2019). Some hotels even implement a no-alcohol policy to align fully

with Islamic principles, creating an atmosphere that honours the values and lifestyle of Muslim customers. Service provision is another crucial aspect of Halal-certified accommodation, with service staff needing to be adequately trained. This training should include awareness of Islamic practices and etiquette, ensuring guests receive respectful and appropriate service (Binprathan, 2019; Razak et al., 2019b).

Certification and compliance are vital for maintaining tangible standards in Halal-certified accommodation facilities. In this respect, certification organisations must perform regular inspections and audits to verify that hotels meet the stringent criteria for Halal compliance. Marketing and communication strategies for Halal-certified accommodations also play an essential role in this respect (Islam et al., 2023; Razak et al., 2019a), where hotels often highlight their Halal certification and the specific amenities they offer in order to attract Muslim travellers. Clear communication about these features reassures potential guests about compliance with Halal standards and encourages them to choose these accommodations (Karim et al., 2022; Pamukcu & Sariisik, 2021).

Halal-certified transportation is an essential element of the Halal Tourism Value Chain (HTVC), ensuring that Muslim travellers' transportation needs are met (Ekka, 2024). This aspect of Halal tourism encompasses all modes of transport, including airlines, buses, trains, and car rental services, all of which need to be specially modified to provide a comfortable and compliant travel experience. Airlines have an essential role in Halal-certified transportation (Marlinda et al., 2023), with several major airlines now offering Halal-certified meals as part of their in-flight catering services, ensuring that Muslim passengers can enjoy their meals without concern for compromising their dietary compliance (Idris & Abdul Wahab, 2018; Qaddahat et al., 2016). These meals are prepared and packaged following strict Halal guidelines, with certification from recognised Halal authorities. Additionally, some airlines provide prayer facilities or designate quiet areas where passengers can perform their prayers, enhancing the convenience and comfort of Muslim travellers. Ground transportation services, such as buses and trains, also integrate Halal standards into their operations by offering Halal food options at station eateries and on-board dining services. Furthermore, these services may provide prayer spaces or schedule stops that allow passengers to perform their prayers at appropriate times (Kadir et al., 2020). It is now widely recognised that ensuring that these services are respectful of prayer times and religious practices is essential for fulfilling the needs of Islamic tourists (Halim et al., 2020).

Car rental services contribute to Halal-certified transportation by offering vehicles equipped with features that cater to Muslim travellers (Pahlufi & Paturusi, 2021). This includes providing prayer mats and Qibla direction technologies. Some rental services also ensure that their vehicles have been cleaned and prepared according to Halal standards, avoiding contamination with non-Halal substances (Pahlufi & Paturusi, 2021). For cruise lines, Halal-certified transportation involves providing Halal meals, separate spa and pool facilities for women and men, and designated prayer areas. Cruise liners frequently partner with Halal certification

organisations to guarantee their services meet the required standards, offering a comprehensive Halal travel experience (Battour, 2018).

The importance of Halal-certified transportation extends beyond food and prayer facilities. It also involves training staff to understand and respect Islamic practices and cultural sensitivities. Staff members in transportation services are trained to facilitate the requirements of Islamic tourists, providing respectful and appropriate service throughout their journey. Clear communication about these features helps build trust and encourages Muslim travellers to choose these services. By integrating Halal standards into various modes of transport, providing appropriate amenities and ensuring respectful service, transportation providers contribute significantly to a seamless and compliant Halal travel experience.

Halal-friendly leisure and recreational activities are vital components of the Halal Tourism Value Chain (HTVC), catering to the interests and values of Muslim travellers. These activities ensure that leisure options are not only enjoyable but also compliant with Islamic principles, enhancing the overall travel experience for this demographic (Lahny, 2019; Wingett & Turnbull, 2017). In many destinations, Halal-friendly recreational activities include visiting parks, cultural sites and museums that promote Islamic heritage and values (Nurozi, 2021; Sodawan & Hsu, 2022). These venues often provide family-friendly environments and facilitate educational experiences that align with the interests of Muslim travellers. Furthermore, outdoor activities, such as hiking and cycling, can be organised in a manner that respects privacy and modesty, making them suitable for all family members. Water sports and beach activities can also be adapted to be Halal-friendly by ensuring gender-segregated facilities and providing Halal food options at nearby vendors. Additionally, wellness and spa services that focus on relaxation without compromising Islamic values are increasingly popular, with establishments offering dedicated infrastructure for women and men (Faidah et al., 2021; Jeawkok et al., 2022; Noipom, 2019; Sobari et al., 2022).

Marketing strategies tailored to Halal tourism are crucial for attracting and retaining Muslim tourists. These strategies highlight the unique features and benefits of Halal-compliant services related to the particular tourist organisation. Effective marketing strategies focus on understanding and addressing this specific demographic's distinct requirements and values (Kasdi et al., 2019; Rahmaningsih et al., 2021). One key approach is leveraging digital platforms and social media to reach a broader audience (Berakon et al., 2023; Santoso et al., 2022). Engaging content emphasising Halal certifications, customer testimonials, and detailed descriptions of Halal-friendly amenities can build trust with and appeal to potential travellers. It has been commented that influencer partnerships with respected figures in the Muslim community can also enhance credibility and visibility of an organisation (Abdullah et al., 2022; Juliana et al., 2023; Setiawan & Purmono, 2023). Another strategy involves participating in international Halal tourism fairs and exhibitions to showcase offerings and allowing networking with other industry stakeholders (Widjaja

et al., 2019). These events provide opportunities to highlight the uniqueness of destinations and services while gaining insights into emerging trends and consumer preferences.

It is clear that cultural sensitivity and awareness in marketing materials are essential (Boğan & Sarıışık, 2019; Churiyah et al., 2021; Muhamad et al., 2017). In this regard, using appropriate imagery and language that respect Islamic values can create a positive and respectful connection with the target audience. Additionally, providing information in multiple languages, including Arabic, can enhance accessibility and appeal. Furthermore, collaborating with Halal certification bodies to obtain and prominently display certification logos in marketing materials also reassures travellers of the authenticity and reliability of the services. It has been found that highlighting community engagement and social responsibility initiatives can also resonate well with Muslim travellers who value ethical and community-oriented businesses (Ref?).

### 3.2 Value Chain Participant Analysis

Within the HTVC, certification authorities play a pivotal role by guaranteeing that offered services and products continually comply with Sharia law (Henderson, 2016; Katuk et al., 2021). Their responsibilities include inspecting and certifying Halal food production, accommodation, and other travel-related services (Khan & Callanan, 2017; Nurdiansyah, 2018). They also provide guidelines and standards for businesses to follow, ensuring consistency and reliability in Halal offerings in a transparent fashion (Ref).

Travel agencies catering to Muslim travellers must provide specialised services, such as arranging Halal-friendly accommodations, meals and leisure activities (Eşitti, 2023; Hsu et al., 2022). They also offer tailored travel packages, including visits to Islamic heritage sites, mosques, and other culturally significant locations, ensuring a fulfilling, compliant, and relevant travel experience. Travel agencies are instrumental in promoting Halal tourism by raising awareness and educating travellers about Halal-friendly destinations and services (Eşitti, 2023). They act as intermediaries, connecting travellers with certified service providers, thereby fostering trust and facilitating a seamless travel experience (Eşitti, 2023).

Hospitality providers offer various Halal-compliant services, including Halal food options, prayer facilities, and gender-segregated recreational areas. They ensure that their amenities comply with Islamic principles, and best practices in this hospitality sector involve continuous innovation to enhance the Halal travel experience. This includes adopting digital solutions for Halal certification verification, offering mobile apps for locating nearby Halal services and creating inclusive environments that respect Islamic values (Ref).

Government policies and regulations are crucial in supporting the Halal tourism industry's status and protecting consumer rights. Government bodies often collaborate with certification agencies to establish comprehensive guidelines for the industry. In this regard, effective regulatory frameworks positively impact the Halal tourism industry by fostering a reliable and standardised environment (Ref). This

enhances consumer confidence, attracts more Muslim travellers, and boosts the economic growth of Halal tourism destinations. Certification inconsistencies can arise from varying standards and interpretations of Halal principles across regions. The possible concern about such inconsistencies can lead to confusion and mistrust among travellers, affecting their travel choices and satisfaction. To minimise this issue, efforts towards standardisation have involved international collaboration among certification bodies to harmonise Halal standards. Initiatives like the International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) aim to create unified certification processes, ensuring consistency and reliability globally (Abdallah, 2021; Masood & Rahim).

Navigating cultural differences requires a deep understanding and respect for culturally diverse practices within the Muslim community. Businesses must tailor their services to accommodate these differences, ensuring a respectful and inclusive environment. Ensuring respectful and inclusive practices involves training staff on cultural sensitivities, adopting inclusive marketing strategies, and creating environments honouring Islamic traditions. This fosters a welcoming atmosphere for all Muslim travellers. Identifying and targeting diverse Muslim traveller segments involves understanding needs, preferences and travel behaviours. This includes considering factors like age, nationality and travel purpose. Addressing varied needs and preferences requires offering personalised services and experiences, including multilingual support, flexible travel packages, and bespoke Halal amenities, ensuring that every traveller's needs are comprehensively met.

### 3.4 Strategic Recommendations for Enhancing the HTVC

Based on this analysis of the HTVC's nature, several strategic recommendations have emerged to enhance the industry and address its current challenges. First, collaboration among stakeholders is paramount. Certification bodies, travel agencies, hospitality providers, and regulatory frameworks must work together to harmonise certification processes and ensure consistency of practices. In this respect, a coordinated approach can address problems arising from certification inconsistencies, and regular dialogues and partnerships between involved entities can lead to universally understood and accepted standards and practices.

Second, technological integration should be prioritised. Leveraging technology can enhance customer experiences, streamline operations, and provide innovative solutions to current challenges. Blockchain technology, for example, could be deployed to improve transparency and traceability. Additionally, online platforms and mobile applications can offer real-time information on Halal-friendly accommodations, dining options and other services, making it easier for Muslim travellers to plan and enjoy their trips confidently.

Third, the development of standardised guidelines is essential. Clear and consistent guidelines can set industry benchmarks, ensuring all providers meet the same high standards. These guidelines should be transparent and cover all aspects of the HTVC, from food production to accommodation

and entertainment, ensuring that every part of the travel experience aligns with Islamic principles.

Finally, continuous education and training for industry practitioners are crucial. Ensuring that all stakeholders understand the importance of Halal compliance and are well-versed in best practices can help maintain high standards across the industry. By implementing these strategic recommendations, the Halal tourism industry can effectively meet the evolving needs of Muslim travellers, fostering growth and sustainability in this dynamic sector.

### 3.5 Limitations

This exploratory literature review attempts to provide a thorough understanding of HTVC by systematically identifying, analysing, and synthesising existing research in this area. The methodology outlined was instituted to ensure a rigorous and structured approach to uncovering insights and patterns in the literature, contributing a valuable current overview of the Halal tourism field. However, there are some limitations to this approach. Exploratory reviews may not explore specific areas adequately enough to uncover potential problems or may not extensively address a topic to provide a more complete analysis of individual studies. In addition, as literature is constantly evolving, an exploratory review may quickly become outdated, especially in rapidly advancing fields. Therefore, conclusions drawn from an exploratory review might be preliminary and require further validation through more focused, systematic reviews or empirical studies. Finally, the selection of literature might be influenced by the reviewers' particular preconceived perspectives, leading to potential bias in the scope and focus of the review.

## CONCLUSIONS

The exploration of the HTVC through this literature review has attempted to comprehensively understand this crucial and burgeoning segment in the global travel industry. The findings have highlighted the multifaceted nature of HTVC, encompassing an array of activities such as Halal-certified food production, accommodation, transportation, entertainment and marketing strategies that must be customised to meet all Islamic travellers' requirements. The integrated involvement of various participants, including certification bodies, travel agencies, hospitality providers, and regulatory frameworks, is essential in maintaining the integrity of the HTVC and promoting Islamic travel growth opportunities. The review underscores the significance of authentic and seamless Halal experiences, which are increasingly sought after by the Muslim demographic. Authenticity, cultural sensitivity, and the reliability of Halal certifications are paramount to ensuring confidence in the services and products offered. The identified challenges, such as certification inconsistencies and cross-cultural sensitivities, necessitate strategic interventions to overcome these barriers and enhance the HTVC.

Strategic recommendations from the study emphasise the importance of cooperation amongst participants,

technological integration, and the development of standardised guidelines. Collaborative efforts can harmonise certification processes, ensuring industry consistency, trust and understanding. Technological advancements can improve operations, enrich customer experiences, and offer creative solutions to current challenges, whilst standardised guidelines are crucial for setting clear expectations and maintaining high standards within the industry. Overall, this examination has highlighted valuable practical recommendations for industry practitioners, aiming to capitalise on this rapidly expanding market. It is anticipated that, by focusing on authentic experiences, participant collaboration, technological integration, and standardisation of guidelines, the sector can effectively meet the needs of Halal travellers, thereby fostering growth and sustainability in this dynamic industry.

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