HALALPRENEURSHIP IN MUSLIM MINORITY DESTINATIONS AND DILEMMA AMONG INDIAN MUSLIMS

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Abstract
Halalpreneurs is a term that emerges from entrepreneurs who provide Halal tourism-related services while grasping for new opportunities in emerging tourism. While recovering from great loss in the tourism sector due to pandemic Covid-19, new potential markets are emerging and needed to be targeted to offer custom touristic experience. The study is going to analyse three top non-OIC Countries (Muslim Minority countries) as Halalpreneurs. These Halalpreneurs are going to be compared on various attributes derived from the extensive literature review. The objective of the study is to find different attributes of 3 non-OIC Countries and examine the inclination and dilemma of Indian Muslims towards the attribute of these Halalpreneurs. The Research paper is exploratory in nature. The research method will be qualitative and quantitative in nature. We are taking 150 respondents as Indian Muslim tourists for data collection. The study depict how Halalpreneurs from non-Islamic countries are coming forward to accept Halal tourism as an important customer segment and working to grasp the tourism opportunity. The study shows how much inclined Indian Muslims are towards halal tourism in non-Islamic countries through determined attributes. The study concludes with the existence dilemmas and confusion while making a selection of a destination based on Halal related attributes.
Keywords: Halalpreneurs, Halal Tourism, Entrepreneurship, Sharia, Muslim Travelers, Muslim Minority Destination

Introduction
Halal tourism is gaining popularity and accounting for significant growth in the world tourism market. This tourism segment is in demand due to its popularity in the Muslim world. Halal tourism refers to products, recreation, leisure and social purposes that comply with the Islamic teaching or Muslim-friendly principles and abide by sharia law (Oktadiana et al., 2016). However, this segment is still a niche market required to cater for various stakeholders. Muslim-friendly marketing is an extension of modern marketing that is based on Muslim customs and values; the term Halal is defined as "That which is permitted, for no restriction exists, and the doing of which the law-giver, Allah, is allowed" (Al-Qaradawi, 2013; p. XXV). Many scholars who have written about this segment from the views of practitioners and scholars, the tourism sector recognises the growing interest in Halal tourism. Those engaged emphasise that any plan for developing or marketing Halal tourism products and services must follow Islamic law (Sharia).

Islamic teaching advocates business and entrepreneurship to earn Halal rozi (Halal income) as it was also the profession of the Prophet (PBUH) (Abdullah & Azam, 2020). International Muslim travel arrivals had grown from an estimated 108 million in 2013 to 160 million in 2019. This is a CAGR of 7.5% during that period. As the pandemic had a colossal impact on the travel sector, the Muslim arrivals dropped to 42 million in 2020. According to a New York-based marketing research and advisory firm Dinar Standard, it has estimated that the global outbound tourism expenditure for the Halal tourism market is worth $126.1 billion. This is around 12.3% of the total worldwide tourism expenditure in 2011. The report also forecasted that the Muslim tourist spending would grow further by 13.4% to $192 billion by 2020. However, as the pandemic hits the world to the global lockdowns, tourism activity drops to the lowest ever. MasterCard and Crescent Rating (2020) studied the market and revealed that the Muslim travel market was valued at $145 billion in 2014, with 108 million Muslims accounting for 10% of the total travel economy.

In 2020, the Halal Tourism market was expected an increment in the number of tourists up to 150 million (or 11% of the market), with an estimated $145 billion in revenue. Many factors could boost the halal tourism market post covid -19. The income of the young educated generation is increasing, and they are eager to travel to even non-OIC countries with halal-friendly services. As a result, travel Spending is expected to reach $200 billion in the next several years. The following factors aid this positive tendency. The Muslim youth who are more educated and have more discretionary income continues to be one of the world's most rapidly increasing travel segments.

The inclination and dilemma of tourists varies according to their needs and wants. With the emergence of Halal tourism market, there has been lots of dilemmas and confusion among the Indian Muslims about visiting a non-OIC countries. According to Enemuo et.al. (2021), there can be three ways to judge tourists. First to find what they want, Second is the tourists not sure of what they want and third is the tourists who have no idea what they want. However, it is clear that the tourists do wants sustainable products that do not harm their beliefs as well as environment. While tackling with un-surety of Halal tourism products and services, the study attempts to find out major wants and needs that helps in clearing the confusion Indian Muslims May have while taking services from halapreneurs.

Research Objectives

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To assess different attributes for comparison among the top 3 Muslim Minority Halalpreneurs (destinations).
2. To analyse the inclination of Indian Muslims towards the attributes of the Halalpreneurs
3. To assess the dilemma Muslim travellers face while selecting a proper Halalpreneur.

Literature Review

Halalpreneurship

Entrepreneurship in Islam is as old as its origin. Prophet himself was a businessman before enlightenment. Halalpreneurship is a part of entrepreneurship that abides by the Shari'ah's law (Aqidah, Fiqh, Akhlaq, IQRA Foundation). According to Islam, an entrepreneur is a human being who runs his business with ethics and is always ready to contribute to society and the world as he will be the through his actions who is a king so that its activities are not alienated from obligations in Islam. Halalpreneurship provides human beings to acts the role of a Khalifah and execute business activities and contribute towards society. It includes most capacities, practices, and actions related to the view of chances and the formation of associations to seek after them. The innovative halal procedure is a complex phenomenon; be that as it may, this procedure is significant in the comprehension halalpreneurial development. Halalpreneurship is a source of livelihood to the community through producing goods, providing services, creating jobs, and eradicating poverty, social, criminal and all wrongdoings.

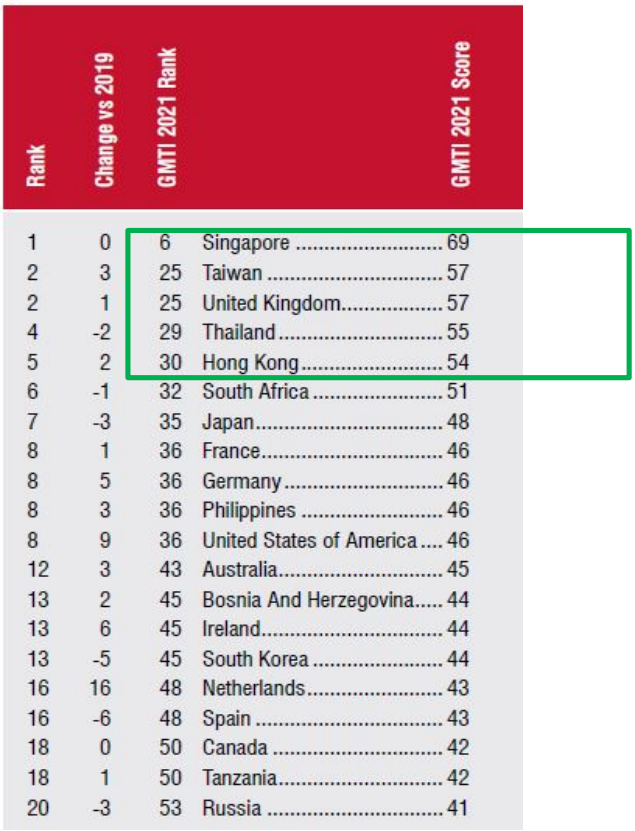
Imam Al-Ghazali wrote that it is compulsory for every Muslim involved with trading to study buying and selling laws because seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim (Ihya Ulum al-Din). The entrepreneurs involved in Halal business should be aware of their laws and be able to differentiate between Haram and Halal. However, when there are some rare or uncommon cases or instances in which one does not know the authenticity of any products to be Halal. In that case, one should not act upon it until he can inquire about the matter from the learned scholars (of Islam) (Battour and Ismail, 2016). The law of Halal is applicable for everyone who would like to be engaged in Halal related business and transactions. Additionally, anything related to Haram in halapreneurship needed to be avoided. This is because halalpreneurs perceive the haram (prohibited) earnings as irreligiousness, overwhelmed by one's own.

Non-OIC Countries as Halalpreneurs

Fazal Bahardeen, Founder & CEO of Crescent rating and HalalTrip, released the 6th edition of the Muslim Travel Index Ranking in 2021, also known as GMTI (Halaltrip.com, 2021). While accepting profoundly that Muslim travel is on the decline due to the global pandemic, the report shows high optimism toward growing interest among Muslim visitors as destinations recover from Covid-19. According to their acceptance and facilities, the report measures 140 countries from the five continents to attract the Muslim travel market. Muslim travellers follow Sharia law which earlier restricted them from travelling to unknown destinations. But with time, globalization, the internet, better communication and connectivity, and open mindfulness, this market is showing a tremendous increase in travelling to Countries that are not OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) Countries like Singapore, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

According to GMTI (2021), the number of International Muslim travellers increased from around 105 million in 2013 to 170 million in 2019. Even after the pandemic, which halted the travel market as a whole, as destinations are opening themselves by taking proper measures, this travel market has started gaining momentum. It is estimated to reach around 20 million in 2021 and would recover about 80% of the number in 2019 until 2023 (GMTI, 2021). The Non-OIC Countries are leading in this travel market and are learning from their mistakes and have started offering various travel packages and tour itineraries catering to Muslim travellers' needs and wants.

The Crescent report of GMTI had started evaluating the International Muslim Market in 2011 and has now identified five critical factors to rank destinations: Ease of Access to the countries, Communication, Services provided by the countries, and Environment of the nations (GMTI, 2019). With these factors, a country is analyzed if it is safe and hospitable for International Muslim travellers. The index presents a clear perspective of the International Muslim Travel Market and allows travel entrepreneurs to provide products and services per Muslim needs. Entrepreneurs offing Halal based tour products and services are referred to as Halalpreneurs. The Muslim Minority destinations freely embrace these opportunities and encourage their Travel Houses to include packages for Halal Friendly Travel. GMTI provide an index of top Non-OIC Countries offering Halal Based Tour Packages. Figure 1 shows that Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and the United Kingdom are the top four countries leading in providing Halal based tour products and services as well as preferred by Muslim travellers.



Rank	Change vs 2019	GMTI 2021 Rank		GMTI 2021 Score
1	0	6	Singapore	69
2	3	25	Taiwan	57
2	1	25	United Kingdom	57
4	-2	29	Thailand	55
5	2	30	Hong Kong	54
6	-1	32	South Africa	51
7	-3	35	Japan	48
8	1	36	France	46
8	5	36	Germany	46
8	3	36	Philippines	46
8	9	36	United States of America	46
12	3	43	Australia	45
13	2	45	Bosnia And Herzegovina	44
13	6	45	Ireland	44
13	-5	45	South Korea	44
16	16	48	Netherlands	43
16	-6	48	Spain	43
18	0	50	Canada	42
18	1	50	Tanzania	42
20	-3	53	Russia	41

Figure 1: Top Non-OIC Countries as per GMTI Ranking.
Source: GMTI Report (2021)

Singapore has been in the top ranking as a non-OIC destination since 2015 (GMTI, 2021). It is well known among International Muslim Travelers and has created a positive Halal based destination image among Muslim Travelers. The country encourages Halalpreneurship and has been among the top 5 destinations worldwide, including Muslim majority countries. Singapore is among the few destinations that hope to re-gain their travel market more quickly than others. It provides better connectivity and ease of access for travellers and better communication with its fast services. Also, with its diverse population, the country offers a better travel environment for Muslim travellers. Along with Malaysia and Indonesia, which are Muslim majority countries, Singapore offers open mindfulness and a safe environment for Muslim stakeholders and travellers. These destinations hold the top ranking in Stakeholder awareness (Samori et al., 2016).

With the availability of Halal based Tour packages, Halal based Travel Mobile Applications and a growing number of Halal based restaurants, Hotels, Muslim Friendly tour Operators in Singapore, the destination are getting positive response from the travel stakeholders who are adopting the

term Halalpreneurs and offering related tour services. Figure 2 shows a Halal-based Travel Itinerary being promoted on the official Singapore Tourism Board Website. Singapore has more than 50 mosques, with The Masjid Omar Kampong Melaka being the oldest masjid. The Muslim population is almost about 15 per cent. The country provides the best Halal services and facilities with certified tour operators and Halalpreneurs (Halaltrip.com, 2021). Travelling in Singapore is very convenient with having lots of tourist attractions, the presence of mosques, Muslim friendly people and historic sites like Historic District, Arab Street, Little India and many more.



Figure 2: Travel Itinerary form Muslim Travelers.
Source: Singapore Tourism Board

As Singapore continues to dominate the International Muslim Travel Market, Thailand and United Kingdom are catching up with the Halal-based Travel Market's potential. In Thailand, the Thai Tourism Board has released their Travel Guidelines for Muslim travellers and made aware its stakeholders follow the Halal concept while catering to Muslim travellers. Many Smartphone applications have been launched and successfully used in Thailand to locate halal-based products and services. Thailand is famous for its beaches and nightlife, but it also gains positive responses from Muslim visitors by offering Halal based tour packages and itineraries (HalalBooking.com, 2020).

In the United Kingdom, Abdul Malik Tailor was one of the first Muslim Tour Guide who offered complete Halal based Tour packages and tours to Muslim travellers (Halal Tourism Britain, 2015). Halal Tourism Britain has been the best travel review and award-winning company he led. With his initiative, several Halalpreneurs emerged in different parts of the UK to provide Muslim friendly tours and products. From famous landmarks of London to sailing on a river cruise, everything nowadays can be arranged while keeping it halal certified. Today in London, more than 13,400 Halalpreneurs owned by Muslims are functioning and giving services to its

visitors. According to Tasneem Mahmood, Halal tourism offers exciting business opportunities for entrepreneurs who run food, drink, tourism and finance business (Crescentrating.com, 2014). The UK has emerged as one of the top 5 destinations that excel in providing halal-based services to Muslim travellers, like providing prayer rooms in their airport, serving halal foods, having separate swimming pools for males and females, and announcing prayer schedules and many more. The UK has also launched cruises based on Halal themes like Ramadan Cruises.

Each country and their certified Halalpreneurs offer Halal based tour products and services according to their own belief and understanding of Muslim Travelers. However, some common attributes are preferred by all destinations: the costing of Halal Based tour packages, Halal based food and drinks, Halal products, Halal based services, Muslim Friendly Environment, Halal certification, and Muslim Visitor's records. In addition, these destinations and their Halalpreneurs have started providing Muslim Visitor Guides (MVG) to attract and guide International Muslim travellers (Khan and Callanan, 2017). These guides help Muslim travellers in tour planning and avail services like getting Halal food, Hotels, Muslim friendly restrooms, prayer directions, Halal certified tour operators quickly. While some destinations focus on adopting tours and packages wholly based on Sharia Law, some focus on providing Halal certified restaurants and prayer facilities. With extensive literature review, in Table 1, the three destinations, Singapore, Thailand and the United Kingdom, are ranked based on common attributes and ranked by using the 3-Likert scale method ranging from 1 = "Low/Unlikely," 2 = "Neutral," 3 = "High/Likely," along with calculated mean value:

Table 1: Singapore, Thailand and United Kingdom ranked as per common Halal Attributes

Non-OIC Country	Cost	Halal Food	Halal products	Halal facilities	Muslim Friendly Environment	Certification	Visitor's Record	Mean
Singapore	High (3)	High (3)	High (3)	High (3)	Neutral (2)	High (3)	High (3)	2.857
Thailand	Low (1)	High (3)	Neutral (2)	High (3)	High (3)	Neutral (2)	High (3)	2.428
UK	Neutral (2)	High (3)	Neutral (2)	Neutral (2)	Neutral (2)	High (3)	High (3)	2.428

Source: Samoti et.al (2016); HalalBooking.com (2020); HalalTourismBritain (2015); Crescentrating.com (2014); Henderson (2016); GMTI (2021); GMTI (2019)

Research Methods

Research Design

This research study design is descriptive of Halal tourism and its attributes through a quantitative method. The online questionnaire is designed using Google online form. The data is collected via an online questionnaire method being distributed through social media channels mostly through e-mail and WhatsApp. The number of questionnaires sent through email is 100 and through WhatsApp is 80. Out of which 150 responses have been collected. The data is collected from respondents who strictly are Indian Muslims belonging from the Northern region of India and are willing to travel to outbound destinations. All questions are analysed and assessed by using the 3-Likert scale method ranging from 1 = "Low/Unlikely," 2 = "Neutral," 3 = "High/Likely,".

Item Measurement

The Questions have been coded with values which are enquired with 150 respondents and analysed their views on various attributes set by non-OIC countries promoting Halal tourism.

Q1: Do you prefer a Halal Destination irrespective of cost?
Q2: Do you always prefer to go to non-OIC countries with family /group tours?
Q3: Do you plan your trip to non-OIC countries on parameters of safety and security?
Q4: Do you always plan your tour by checking Muslim friendly services at your choice of non-OIC destination
Q5: Do you prefer Halal food as a necessity while visiting a non-OIC destination?
Q6: Do you like to be having halal-based products like Shampoo, soap etc.?
Q7: Do you feel a necessity to have Halal based facilities like a prayer room, mosque, water bidets etc.?
Q8: Do you prefer a non-OIC where there are Muslim residents or any Muslim community already residing?
Q9: Do you prefer Halal Certified service providers?
Q10: Do you prefer to go to a non-OIC destination, which is popular among Muslim travellers?

Research Results

Data collection and sampling technique

The data is collected one-time using the Random sampling method. The objectives of the study are followed throughout with respondents limited to Indian Muslims only from the Northern region of India. In total, 150 respondents from various backgrounds participated in this online study.

Respondents' demographic characteristics

In the total sample of 150 respondents as shown in figure 3, 67.2% of respondents are male and 32.6% are female. Respondents in this study are dominated by those aged less than 25 (74.1%). The 26-40 age group is next, depicting 19% respondents and respondents having age above 60 are very less interested with a percentage of 5%. The data shows that most respondents are from the post-millennial generation who are willing to explore their travel needs. The data also shows the companion with which respondents are willing to take Halal tours to outbound destinations. About 46% of respondents want to travel with their family on Halal tours while about 36% of respondents choose to travel with friends. Traveling alone/solo is also surfacing among young minds to explore new things without the need of any companionship with a percentage of 8%. Very less respondents are willing to travel with unknown companions or travel as a couple to outbound destinations.

Table 2: The Frequency Table- the primary data of demographic profiles of respondents from North India

Frequency Table

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	105	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Female	45	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 25	108	72.0	72.0	72.0
	26-45	33	22.0	22.0	94.0
	46-60	9	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Your preferred traveling companion during trips

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Family	68	45.3	45.3	45.3
	Friends	58	38.7	38.7	84.0
	Unknown travellers as a tour member	6	4.0	4.0	88.0
	Couple	6	4.0	4.0	92.0
	Alone	12	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Data Analysis

For each question, data has been collected and the mean of the data has been derived using SPSS software. Overall, the measurement has been significant and the data is valid. We have 10 questions as 10 variables and their mean responses as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Questions and Mean responses from 150 respondents

Questions	**Mean responses**
Q1: Do you prefer a Halal Destination irrespective of cost?	2.214
Q2: Do you always prefer to go to non-OIC countries with a family /group tour?	2.357
Q3: Do you plan your trip to non-OIC countries on parameters of safety and security?	2.571
Q4: Do you always plan your tour by checking Muslim friendly services at your choices non-OIC destination	2.714
Q5: Do you prefer Halal food as a necessity while visiting a non-OIC destination?	2.571
Q6: Do you like to be having halal-based products like Shampoo, soap etc.?	2.571
Q7: Do you feel a necessity to have Halal based facilities like prayer room, mosque, water bidets etc.?	2.5
Q8: Do you prefer a non-OIC where there are Muslim residents or Muslim community already residing?	2.5
Q9: Do you prefer Halal Certified service providers?	2.5
Q10: Do you prefer to go to a non-OIC destination, which is popular among Muslim travellers	2.571
Total Mean Response	2.506

For Q1, the collective mean response is 2.214 which is closer to being neutral. Q2 has a mean response of 2.357 and can be taken as being more than neutral, and Q3 has a mean response of 2.571 which lies between being neutral and most favored. Q4 has a response of 2.714 indicating towards most likely to be accepted. Q5 & Q6 have a mean response of 2.571 which lies between neutral and most likely. Q7, Q8 & Q9 have a mean response of 2.5 which is perfectly in between being neutral and most likely to be accepted, and finally, Q10 has a mean response of 2.571 which is more towards being most likely.

Discussions & Implications

The data and its analysis show that Indian Muslims are neutral about travel costs when choosing a Halal destination. The results show that respondents would prefer to go to non-OIC countries with their friends or families or in a group. They also make decisions based on the safety of their destination. Approximately most respondents opted for checking Muslim Friendly facilities and services available when making travel plans (Abdullah et al., 2020; Battour and Ismail, 2016; Huat, 2009; Henderson, 2010). Indian Muslims prefer to have ease in availability of Halal food at the destination and support this fact. They also supported having access to halal-based products like Washroom facilities, shampoo etc. They are opinionated about a destination that provides them with prayer rooms, water bidets, mosques etc. The Muslim respondents preferred to visit destinations where the Muslim

population resides, even in the minority. This creates a sense of familiarity with the destination.

There is a need among Muslim respondents to have Halal certified tours and services and would prefer to visit those destinations which are already much visited by other Muslim travellers (Jafari and Scott, 2014; Kedah, 2015; Khan and Callanan, 2017). The choice of non-OIC destinations preferred by the respondents' responses showed that their collective mean response is 2.506, close to the mean response of Thailand and the United Kingdom, which is 2.428 and Singapore, which is 2.857 (See Table 1). The study implies that creating a safe and healthy environment and keeping in mind Muslim travellers' wants and needs by not only providing Halal based food can make a destination grow in the Halal travel market, which ultimately would reward the halalpreneurship of the destination (Oktadiana et al., 2016; Olya and Al-Ansi, 2018).

The result also shows that Indian Muslims are somewhere clear on their wants and needs from their Halapreneurs and Halal tours. There seems to be less dilemaa and this attracts the Halal Tourism market to tap these potential customers. The non-OIC countries offering Halal tourism are also relating its demand to bring more sustainability to their destination. While Halal food, products and services are known to be environment friendly (Battour and Islamail, 2016), it is also paving the way for market longevity (Ukabuilu and Uzoho, 2014).

Research Limitations and Future Recommendations

The requirement of equal distribution of North Indian Muslims as respondents is the main challenge of the study. Since it is not in the hand of the researcher, there is an uneven distribution of respondents in terms of gender, age and to whom they are willing to travel. Also, the country and regional selection restricted the study to only Northern Indian Muslims as respondents. Therefore, the findings came according to their opinions only, which has become the limitation of this study. The study will guide Halalpreneurs to understand the requirements of Indian Muslims and how they can customize their service to cater for the promising market successfully. The study will provide a new base for finding out the steps needed for a destination to become Halal-friendly without compromising its services for the rest of the travellers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Indian Muslim respondents are influenced to travel to outbound destinations not only because of religious purposes. They tend to be inclined more towards travelling to Muslim minority countries famous for their attractions and most visited by other Muslim travellers showing their belief in word of mouth. The responses from respondents made the study conclude that with proper Halal certification, Halal based facilities, Halal based tours and services, Halalpreneurs can expand their travel market by

opting for more Halal based certified facilities and gain travel momentum in their destination. The study concludes that the respondents are sure of what they want and have shown minor dilemmas in choosing attributes affecting their decisions in Halal Tourism. The destination management body needs to work with the respective government to focus more on providing Halal based tours and products to attract more Muslims to their destinations with a strong collaboration with related stakeholders and gain the trust of Muslim communities.

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