



# Muslim-friendly tourism experience and value creation: A study of service innovation in Lombok

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to analyze how integrating Muslim-friendly tourism experiences contributes to value creation for tourists through service innovation in halal tourism destinations in Lombok. The primary focus of this research is to understand the mechanisms underlying the creation of functional, emotional, and spiritual value through halal-service innovation practices.

**Methodology** – This study employed a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with halal tourism industry actors, destination managers, policymakers, and Muslim tourists, supported by field observations and document analysis. Data were analyzed thematically through coding to identify patterns, meanings, and relationships among concepts relevant to Muslim-friendly tourism experiences and value creation.

**Findings** – The findings reveal that the availability of halal facilities does not solely determine the integration of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences but is also influenced by service innovations that emphasize interaction quality, service ethics, and the consistency of Sharia values. Service innovation creates functional value in the form of convenience, emotional value in the form of safety and satisfaction, and spiritual value in the form of inner peace and religious closeness for Muslim tourists.

**Implications** – These findings have practical implications for destination managers and halal tourism industry stakeholders in designing service innovation strategies that prioritize holistic-value creation. Theoretically, this study enriches the halal tourism literature by strengthening the link between Muslim-friendly tourism experiences and service-based value creation theory.

**Originality** – This research offers an integrative perspective, positioning service innovation as the primary mechanism for co-creating functional, emotional, and spiritual value in halal tourism.

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## Introduction

The development of Muslim-friendly tourism over the last decade has shown significant dynamics, driven by the increasing mobility of global Muslim tourists and growing awareness of the importance of tourism services aligned with Sharia principles. Muslim-friendly tourism is no longer narrowly understood as merely providing halal food or prayer facilities; instead, it has evolved into a holistic

system of travel experiences encompassing the spiritual, emotional, social, and functional dimensions of tourists' experiences. This transformation places the travel experience at the center of halal destination development while opening a strategic space for service innovation as a primary instrument for creating sustainable value for tourists and tourism stakeholders (Abdullah & Azam, 2020).

In the global context, the halal tourism industry has become one of the fastest-growing segments within the overall halal sector. Reports from the [Global Muslim Travel Index \(2024\)](#) indicate that Muslim tourists are not only increasing in number but also showing complex shifts in their preferences toward experience quality. Modern Muslim tourists demand the integration of Sharia compliance, service convenience, local cultural authenticity, and ethical and sustainable guarantees. This condition requires halal tourism destinations to focus not only on normative compliance but also on value creation through service innovations that address tourists' comprehensive needs and expectations (Sulong et al. 2024).

As the country with the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia holds a strategic position in developing Muslim-friendly tourism (Surur et al., 2024). The government and national tourism industry players are actively promoting halal destinations as part of a tourism diversification strategy to enhance their global competitiveness. In recent years, Indonesia has consistently gained international recognition as a leading Muslim-friendly destination, as reflected in various global rankings. This achievement is the result of systematic efforts to build a halal tourism ecosystem that includes regulation, certification, infrastructure, and human resource development (Adinugraha et al., 2025).

One of the most prominent destinations in Indonesia's halal tourism development is Lombok, Indonesia. Lombok is often cited as a model for Muslim-friendly destination development because of its success in integrating Islamic values with natural potential and local culture. Lombok's identity as the "Island of a Thousand Mosques" reinforces its image as a destination that is not only physically beautiful but also spiritually conducive for Muslim travellers (Adinugraha et al., 2020). However, Lombok's success as a halal destination is not solely determined by religious symbols or the availability of basic facilities but by its ability to consistently and innovatively manage and integrate Muslim-friendly experiences (Senja et al., 2024).

As competition among halal tourism destinations intensifies, the primary challenge for Lombok and similar destinations is to maintain a competitive advantage through sustainable value creation (Satria et al., 2022). From a modern tourism management perspective, value is no longer produced unilaterally by service providers; it is created through dynamic interactions between tourists, service providers, local communities and the destination environment. Therefore, service innovation is the key factor that enables the integration of various elements of the Muslim-friendly experience from the pre-visit stage and the journey itself to the post-visit phase (Bazin et al., 2025).

Contemporary tourism literature suggests that the travel experience is a multidimensional construct that reflects the perceptions, emotions, and meanings that tourists build during their interactions with a destination. In the context of Muslim-friendly tourism, these experiences have unique characteristics because they involve religious and spiritual dimensions that are not always present in conventional tourism. Muslim tourists tend to assess experience quality based on how well a destination facilitates religious practices, maintains Islamic ethical values, and provides a sense of safety and comfort without sacrificing recreation or entertainment. Thus, integrating Muslim-friendly experiences is a prerequisite for creating authentic and meaningful values (Rachman et al., 2024). While studies on halal tourism have grown rapidly, most research continues to focus on conceptual aspects, policies, and quantitative measures of tourist satisfaction (Yasin et al., 2025). In-depth studies exploring the integration of Muslim-friendly experiences and value-creation mechanisms through service innovation, particularly qualitative approaches, remain limited (Prawiro, 2022). However, qualitative methods are superior at uncovering meanings, perceptions, and on-the-ground practices, enabling a more contextual understanding of the dynamics within halal tourism destinations (Angraini & Martini, 2024). Research shows that the literature on halal (particularly in tourism and hospitality) has grown rapidly since 2016, driven

primarily by contributions from countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia, and has emerged as an important field of study with rising publication and citation trends (Battour et al. 2024).

This research gap is particularly relevant given the practical need for halal destinations to design experience- and value-based development strategies. Without a comprehensive understanding of how Muslim tourists experience services, interact with the destination environment, and interpret the value they receive, service innovation efforts risk being ineffective. Consequently, research analyzing the integration of Muslim-friendly travel experiences and value creation through service innovation is vital for addressing this knowledge gap and making practical contributions to destination management.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze in depth how Muslim-friendly tourism experiences are integrated into service practices in Lombok's halal destinations and how service innovation contributes to creating value for tourists. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the dominant dimensions of the Muslim-friendly experience, the service innovations implemented by tourism actors, and the value-creation mechanisms that emerge from the interaction between tourists and the destination ecosystem. Thus, this research focuses not only on what the destination offers but also on how tourists experience and interpret those services.

## Literature Review

Research on Muslim-friendly tourism has expanded alongside the global focus on the halal industry as an ecosystem encompassing food, finance, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and tourism (Wahab & Mahdiya, 2026). In international literature, the terms "halal tourism," "Islamic tourism," and "Muslim-friendly tourism" are often used interchangeably, although each has a different conceptual emphasis. Halal tourism refers to tourism activities that provide products and services in accordance with Islamic Sharia principles, including halal food, prayer facilities, and an environment that supports the needs of Muslim travelers (Hariani et al., 2026). Islamic tourism refers to travel activities supported by facilities and services that comply with Sharia principles, integrating Islamic values, ethics, and culture into the travel experience without contradicting Islamic teachings (Rijal et al., 2026). Muslim-friendly tourism is a form of tourism that provides services and facilities tailored to the needs of Muslim travelers, enabling them to travel comfortably without violating Islamic principles and values, including aspects of worship, halal food, and travel etiquette (Han et al., 2026). Many researchers assert that halal tourism refers not only to Sharia compliance but also to providing services that allow Muslim travellers to fulfil their religious obligations comfortably during their journeys. This perspective shifts the focus from simple product attributes to an integrated experiential system (Hapsin, 2023).

Hanafiah et al. (2022) indicated that Muslim tourists have distinct preferences compared to conventional tourists. Studies in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe have revealed that the availability of halal food, prayer facilities, an environment free from non-Sharia activities, and privacy are the primary determinants of destination selection. However, recent research highlights that younger generations of Muslim tourists increasingly demand authentic, creative, and technology-based experiences without compromising religious values. Consequently, the current literature is shifting its focus from "halal attributes" to "holistic and valuable travel experiences" (Nurjaya et al., 2021).

In the framework of tourism experience theory, Soni et al. (2024) explain that experiences are formed through interactions between individuals and the destination's physical, social, and symbolic environments. Tourism experiences encompass cognitive, affective, sensory, and relational dimensions that shape perceptions of quality and satisfaction. In the context of Muslim-friendly tourism, these experiences gain an additional dimension of spiritual and religious significance. Studies in Malaysia, Turkey, and the UAE show that positive spiritual experiences increase emotional attachment to a destination and strengthen intentions to revisit (Biancone et al., 2019).

The concept of value creation in the marketing and service management literature also provides a theoretical foundation for this study. The service-dominant logic approach explains that value is not created unilaterally by providers but is co-created through interactions between them

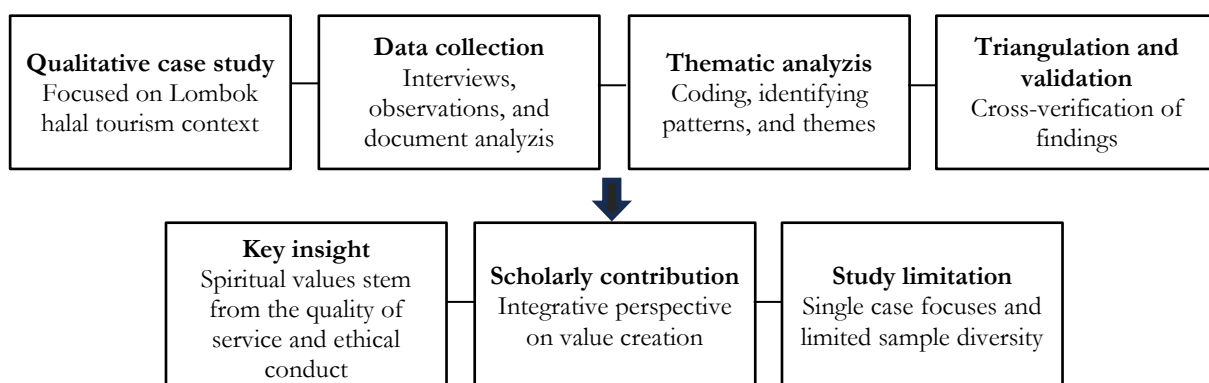
and consumers. In halal tourism, value arises when a destination offers experiences that resonate with a tourist's religious identity while meeting their recreational and social needs. Empirical studies in South Korea and Japan show that non-Muslim destinations that innovatively adapt services to the needs of Muslim tourists significantly improve their perceived value and destination reputation (Adinugraha et al., 2021).

Service innovation is the key variable that bridges experience and value creation. The innovation literature emphasizes that innovation is not always high-tech; it can involve changes in processes, interactions, governance, and business models (Blommerde, 2023). In halal tourism, service innovation can include digitizing halal information, Sharia-based human resource training, integrating halal certification into supply chains, and collaboration among the government, businesses, and local communities. Research in Malaysia and Indonesia shows that ecosystem-based innovation enhances the consistency of halal services and strengthens their global competitiveness (Sirisombat et al., 2022). However, several studies have identified a gap between formal policy and field implementation. Some destinations have adopted halal labels but have not fully integrated the tourist experience into their service design. Critics argue that an administrative, certification-oriented approach risks ignoring the experiences that drive tourist satisfaction. Therefore, researchers advocate more participatory, experience-based approaches to ensure that service innovation creates real value perceived by tourists (Battour et al., 2021).

In the Indonesian context, halal tourism studies have primarily focused on regulations, marketing strategies, and satisfaction measurement. While some studies highlight the role of local governments in encouraging halal certification and branding, research explicitly examining the integration of Muslim-friendly experiences and value-creation mechanisms through service innovation remains limited, especially when using in-depth qualitative methods. This approach allows for the exploration of subjective meanings and interaction dynamics that quantitative methods might miss (Al Arif et al., 2026). As a premier halal destination in Indonesia, Lombok has been the subject of research on halal branding and Sharia infrastructure (Permadi et al., 2026). However, most of these studies emphasize destination image and public policy rather than the integration of experience and service innovation as a value creation process (Yagmur & Aksu, 2020). Consequently, there is a need to examine how industry players in Lombok integrate Muslim-friendly elements into their daily service practices and how tourists interpret the value they receive. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing service innovation practices and the integration of experience in halal tourism destinations in Lombok.

## Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative case study design to understand the integration of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences and the value-creation process through service innovation in Lombok. A qualitative approach was chosen because the goal was not to measure causal relationships quantitatively (Yin, 2013) but to explore the meanings, perceptions, and subjective experiences of actors and Muslim tourists regarding halal service innovation in a real-world destination context.



**Figure 1.** Research stages

Source: Adinugraha and Rismawati (2025)

This research was conducted at major halal destinations in Lombok, such as the Mandalika area, Setanggor Tourism Village, and several halal-certified hotels and restaurants that represent the Muslim-friendly tourism ecosystem in Lombok. The locations were selected based on their status as a center for national halal tourism development, high levels of Muslim tourist visits, and the availability of Sharia-based service innovations. Lombok was selected as the case study because it is Indonesia's leading halal destination with distinct social, cultural, and religious characteristics. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, limited participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews provided room for broad exploration while maintaining a focus on the research objectives. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the halal tourism ecosystem, including destination managers, business owners, local policymakers, and domestic and international Muslim tourists. Data collection continued until information saturation was achieved (Miles et al., 2021).

Sampling was conducted using purposive sampling, focusing on direct involvement in the halal tourism ecosystem, and was expanded through snowball sampling until data saturation was achieved. The informants were grouped into key informants (policy makers, destination managers, and industry players) and supporting informants (domestic/international Muslim tourists and local MSME players). The inclusion criteria were direct experience, understanding halal services, and active involvement in tourism activities.

Observations were conducted at various halal tourist sites, accommodations, restaurants, and prayer facilities to capture the context of service innovation practices (Singh, 2025). This allowed researchers to understand how Muslim-friendly experiences manifest in service interactions, facility management, and the destination's atmosphere. A document analysis of local halal tourism policies, promotional materials, and service standards was conducted to strengthen the understanding of the institutional frameworks influencing innovation.

Thematic analysis followed the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The interview data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed through open, axial, and selective coding to identify themes and relationships (Nieman, 2023). The analysis focused on how service innovation contributes to functional, emotional, and spiritual value for Muslim tourists. Data validity was maintained through source and method triangulation and reflective discussions among the researchers.

## Results and Discussion

### Characteristics and dimensions of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences

Muslim tourists perceive the Muslim-friendly tourism experience as an inseparable unity between Sharia compliance, service comfort, and a destination atmosphere that supports spiritual tranquility. Tourists do not assess their experiences in a fragmented manner; they consider them holistically from the trip-planning stage through their stay at the destination and beyond. These findings confirm that Muslim-friendly tourism experiences are procedural and multi-layered, and are greatly influenced by the consistency of services and the destination environment (Ghimire, 2025). In terms of needs, the research reveals that Muslim tourists consider the availability of halal food a non-negotiable basic requirement. Tourists expect explicit guarantees of halal status, not only through labels or certification, but also through transparency of processes and trust in service providers. This need is reinforced by expectations of easy access to halal information, both through digital media and direct interaction with tourism businesses. These findings show that the needs of Muslim tourists have evolved from the mere availability of halal products to an integrated, easily accessible halal information system. The use of social media drives service innovation that positively impacts the sustainability of the tourism sector, with sustainable leadership serving as a key enabler. The integration of digitalization and innovation is essential for addressing challenges and enhancing sustainable tourism practices in the future (Zada et al., 2025).

Worship facilities are essential and significantly affect the quality of the tourist experience. Muslim tourists expect clean, comfortable, and easily accessible mosques or prayer rooms at tourist destinations, accommodations, and tourist activity centers. Research shows that tourists view

worship facilities not only as a means of fulfilling their religious obligations but also as a symbol of the destination's respect for their religious identity. The availability of adequate worship facilities creates a sense of security, calm, and appreciation, which ultimately increases tourist satisfaction and emotional attachment to the destination (Syah Putra & Tucunan, 2021). Muslim tourists' perceptions of Muslim-friendly tourism services in Lombok show a positive trend, particularly regarding the friendly attitude and religious awareness of tourism businesses. Tourists perceive that interactions with the local community and service providers have a natural and genuine religious nuance to them. This attitude is reflected in the way they are welcomed, the language used, and the understanding of tourism operators regarding Muslim tourists' needs. These positive perceptions reinforce authentic experiences and differentiate Lombok from other destinations that adopt a more formalistic concept of halal.

The destination environment is also an essential element in shaping perceptions of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences. Tourists consider a clean, orderly environment that is relatively free from activities that conflict with Islamic values to be a key factor in supporting a comfortable travel experience. The research results show that a social and cultural atmosphere in harmony with Islamic values creates a sense of value alignment between tourists and destinations. This alignment contributes to a deeper emotional and spiritual experience, which is not always found in conventional tourist destinations (Zulvianti et al., 2022). Muslim tourists' expectations of Lombok as a halal destination do not stop at basic needs, but extend to a higher-quality experience. Tourists expect halal services to be integrated with creative recreational, cultural, and educational elements. They want a tourist experience that remains enjoyable and interesting without sacrificing Sharia principles. These expectations reflect a shift in the profile of Muslim tourists, who are increasingly oriented towards valuable, meaningful experiences rather than mere normative compliance. The experiences of non-Muslim travelers in halal tourism are primarily influenced by cultural sensitivity and ethical standards, which enhance the quality of the experience and satisfaction. This satisfaction fosters attitude change, cross-cultural understanding, and more inclusive long-term travel behavior (Yasin et al., 2025).

The findings also reveal a strong spiritual dimension to Muslim-friendly tourism in Lombok. Tourists interpret their trips not only as recreational activities but also as opportunities for self-reflection, strengthening their faith, and connecting with Islamic values. This spiritual dimension emerges through the ease with which religious rituals can be performed, the destination's religious atmosphere, and social interactions that reflect Islamic values. These spiritual experiences enrich the journey's meaning and increase tourists' subjective value. The emotional dimension is another prominent aspect of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences. Tourists report feelings of comfort, calm, and peace at their destination. These feelings arise from a combination of friendly service, a supportive environment, and guaranteed Sharia compliance. In this context, emotional experience cannot be separated from the spiritual dimension, as the two reinforce each other in shaping value perceptions. These findings align with the literature, which suggests that meaningful travel experiences tend to involve high levels of emotional engagement (Alam et al., 2025).

From a functional perspective, Muslim tourists consider service efficiency, ease of access, and clarity of information to be essential factors in shaping a positive experience. The research results show that integrating transportation services, accommodation, tourist attractions, and halal support facilities enhances the smoothness of travellers' journeys. When the functional dimension is well fulfilled, travellers tend to focus more on enjoying the experience and internalizing the destination's values. These findings indicate that the characteristics of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences in Lombok are multidimensional and integrated. The needs, perceptions, and expectations of Muslim tourists do not stand alone but form a complex system of experiences. The integration of functional, emotional, and spiritual dimensions is key to creating a valuable tourism experience. These findings reinforce the view in the literature that halal tourism cannot be reduced to physical attributes or certification but must be understood as a holistic experience (Suhartanto et al., 2024).

The results of this study confirm global findings on the importance of experience in Muslim-friendly tourism while providing a more in-depth local context. Lombok's uniqueness as a halal destination lies in the harmony between the local community's religious values and tourism service practices. This harmony enables the creation of authentic and sustainable experiences and strengthens value creation for Muslim tourists. These findings suggest that halal tourism destination management must adopt an experience- and value-based approach. Tourism operators need to ensure not only administrative Sharia compliance but also understand how tourists perceive, experience, and interpret the services provided. A Muslim-friendly tourism experience results from integrating services, facilities, and destination environments in line with Islamic values and the needs of modern tourists. This integration creates an experience that is not only functionally satisfying but also emotionally and spiritually meaningful, thereby strengthening Lombok's position as a competitive and valuable halal tourism destination.

### Halal tourism service innovations in supporting Muslim-friendly travel experiences

Halal tourism service innovation in Lombok is developing progressively and holistically across three main areas: product, process, and service interaction. These three forms of innovation complement each other to provide a holistic and valuable Muslim-friendly tourism experience (Pattaray & Sumaryadi, 2024). In terms of products, service innovation is reflected in the development of halal tour packages that integrate natural, cultural, and religious attractions with Sharia compliance. Tourism businesses no longer offer partial tourism products; instead, they design travel packages that include halal-certified accommodations, halal restaurants, travel schedules that account for prayer times, and visits to religious tourist destinations. Observations show that Halal tour packages in Lombok are designed with a high degree of flexibility to suit the needs of Muslim families, communities, and individual tourists (Pattaray & Sumaryadi, 2024). The following quotes from interviews with halal travel agency managers describe these findings:

*Tourists now don't just ask whether the food is halal; they want everything to be planned from the outset. We put together packages that are worship-friendly, family-friendly, and still attractive from a tourism perspective.*

In terms of process, service innovation can be seen in the simplification of service flows and the use of digital technology to support Muslim tourists' comfort. Tourism operators have adopted online reservation systems equipped with halal information, the use of digital applications to locate mosques and halal restaurants, and the integration of services between business operators in a single destination ecosystem (Sirisombat et al., 2022). Field observations show that the service process has become more efficient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of tourists. One Muslim tourist stated in an in-depth interview:

*We feel very helped because all the information is clear from the start. From hotels and food to prayer locations, everything is easily accessible.*

In terms of service interaction, innovation is evident in the development of tourism human resources through training based on Sharia values and hospitality. Tourism businesses in Lombok actively build a service culture that is friendly, polite, and sensitive to the needs of Muslim tourists without being exclusionary. The interaction between tourists and service providers is natural and humanistic, creating an authentic and memorable experience (Battour et al., 2021). Observations show that local businesses not only understand halal service standards on a technical level but also internalize Islamic values in their daily service ethics. This strengthens tourists' confidence and increases their comfort during travel. To clarify the findings, the following table summarizes the forms of halal tourism service innovation in Lombok based on the research results.

Table 1 shows that halal tourism service innovations in Lombok are not sporadic but are planned and oriented towards the tourist experience. Product innovations enable Muslim tourists to enjoy trips that align with their religious values without sacrificing recreation. This shows a paradigm shift from a normative compliance approach to a value-based experiential approach. Process innovation enhances the consistency of halal services by leveraging technology and integrating the business actors. Efficient and transparent service processes help reduce uncertainty,

which is a concern for Muslim tourists. Thus, process innovation plays an essential role in building tourist trust and satisfaction. Service interaction innovation is a significant differentiator in Muslim-friendly tourism experience. Humanistic and ethically valuable interactions strengthen tourists' emotional and spiritual dimensions (Xu et al., 2023). These findings show that service innovation does not always take the form of new technology or products but is also reflected in the quality of social relations and service ethics.

**Table 1.** Forms of halal tourism service innovation in Lombok

Innovation aspects	Forms of service innovation	Impact on the travel experience
Products	Integrated halal tour packages, halal-certified accommodation and culinary	Increase tourists' sense of security and trust.
Process	Digitization of halal information, integration of reservations and services	Improve efficiency and ease of travel.
Interaction	HR training based on Sharia values and hospitality	Create a friendly, comfortable, and authentic experience

Source: Qualitative data processing results, 2026.

The findings of this study can be elaborated through the service-dominant logic perspective, which emphasizes that value is created through interactions between service providers and consumers (Blazquez-Resino et al., 2015). In the context of halal tourism in Lombok, service innovation enables the co-creation of value among tourists, business actors, and the destination environment. Value does not come only from halal attributes but also from experiences felt, interpreted, and internalized by tourists. Tourism experience theory explains that experiences are formed through the integration of functional, emotional, and symbolic dimensions. Product and process innovations fulfil the functional dimension, whereas service interaction innovations strengthen the emotional and symbolic dimensions. The integration of these three dimensions results in a holistic and meaningful Muslim-friendly tourism experience (Amaro et al., 2026). From a service innovation perspective, these findings align with the view that innovation is multidimensional and context dependent (Zada et al., 2025). Halal tourism service innovation in Lombok has developed in accordance with local socio-cultural characteristics and the needs of modern Muslim tourists. This shows that the success of service innovation is primarily determined by the ability to adapt to the destination's context.

The results of this study are supported by various previous studies that emphasize the importance of service innovation in the development of halal tourism. Battour et al. (2018) indicate that Muslim-friendly travel experiences are significantly influenced by the quality of halal services and social interactions with religious values. Henderson (2016) also confirmed that service innovation is key to the competitiveness of halal destinations in the global market. Research in Malaysia and Turkey shows that digitizing halal services increases Muslim tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. These findings align with this study's results, which show that technology-based process innovation in Lombok increases the comfort and efficiency of tourist travel (Karmanto et al., 2025). In addition, studies in Japan and South Korea reveal that culturally and religiously sensitive human resource training strengthens the image of Muslim-friendly destinations, as was also found in the context of Lombok.

This study expands on previous research findings by providing empirical evidence from the context of Indonesia's halal destinations. This study shows that integrated service innovations across products, processes, and interactions can comprehensively support Muslim-friendly tourism experiences. Service innovations not only improve the quality of the tourist experience but also strengthen value creation and the sustainability of halal tourism destinations in Lombok.

### **Integration of Muslim-friendly travel experiences and value creation for tourists**

The integration of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences in Lombok's halal destinations occurs through the integration of service elements, facilities, and socio-cultural environments that

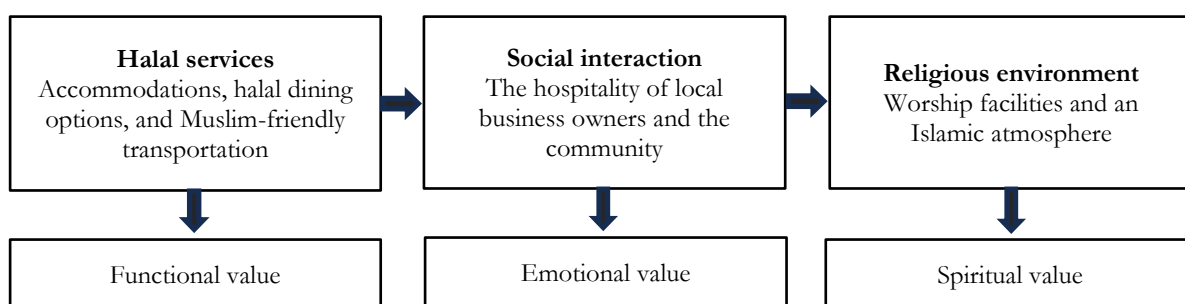
simultaneously form functional, emotional, and spiritual values for the tourists. Muslim tourists do not separate their experiences into distinct aspects but rather view their travel as a single, valuable experience that begins with planning and continues after their visit (Zainuddin & Ahid, 2025). Functional value is the primary foundation of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences. Field findings show that tourists perceive tangible benefits from the consistent integration of halal services, effortless access to halal food, worship facilities, Muslim-friendly accommodation, and clear information. Observations reveal that tourist destinations in Lombok are relatively capable of providing an efficient and easy-to-understand service flow for Muslim tourists, thereby reducing uncertainty and anxiety during their trips (Alam et al., 2025). A Muslim tourist from Malaysia stated in an in-depth interview:

*In Lombok, I don't have to ask repeatedly about halal food or prayer rooms. Everything is readily available and clear, so the trip feels more practical and comfortable.*

The integration of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences creates significant emotional value. Travellers report feelings of calmness, safety, and appreciation while at their destination. Friendly interactions form this emotional value, a conducive destination atmosphere, and alignment of values between travellers and the social environment. Observations indicate that tourism operators and local communities display open and friendly attitudes, thereby strengthening travellers' emotional closeness to the destination (Mukhlishin et al., 2025). Spiritual value emerges as the most distinctive dimension of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences. Tourists perceive their trip to Lombok as a recreational activity and a religious experience that strengthens their connection to Islamic values. The ease of performing religious rituals, the natural religious atmosphere, and the harmonious integration of Islamic symbols into the local community's daily life enrich the spiritual meaning of the trip (Ibrahim et al. 2025). An informant said:

*Travelling here feels like a soul-soothing vacation. We can enjoy nature, but still feel close to religious values.*

The research findings show that these three forms of value do not stand alone but interact with and reinforce each other. When functional values are fulfilled, tourists find it easier to experience emotional involvement and spiritual reflection. This integration makes the Muslim-friendly tourism experience in Lombok holistic and highly valuable. To clarify the findings, the following table summarizes the form of experience integration and the type of value generated based on the research results.



**Figure 2.** Forms of integration of experiences and value types  
Source: Qualitative research findings, 2026.

Figure 2 shows that the level of integration of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences largely determines the value creation for Muslim tourists. The consistent integration of halal services creates efficiency and comfort, which then develops into a sense of security and emotional satisfaction. When tourists feel safe and comfortable, they are more open to interpreting their journey more deeply, including the spiritual dimensions. Figure 2 indicates that halal destinations that focus solely on fulfilling physical halal attributes may miss broader value creation opportunities. Emotional and spiritual values do not arise automatically but require the integration of experiences that are consciously and contextually designed. In Lombok, this integration is reinforced by the harmony between the local community's religious values and tourism service

practices. Functional value serves as a prerequisite for the emergence of emotional and spiritual values. These findings indicate that inconsistencies in halal services can disrupt the overall travel experience of Muslim tourists. Conversely, when basic needs are well met, travellers tend to build positive emotional connections and experience a stronger spiritual meaning during their trip.

The findings of this research can be elaborated using the service-dominant logic, which emphasizes that value is created through a co-creation process between service providers and consumers (Blazquez-Resino et al., 2015). In the study of halal tourism in Lombok, functional, emotional, and spiritual values are shaped through continuous interactions among tourists, tourism actors, and the destination environment. Tourists are not merely service recipients but also active participants in interpreting their experiences. Tourism experience theory explains that experiences are formed through the integration of cognitive, affective, and symbolic dimensions. Functional value relates to the rational cognitive dimension, emotional value to the affective dimension, and spiritual value to the symbolic dimension and meaning (Nautiyal et al., 2025). The integration of these three dimensions results in a holistic, high-value tourism experience, as observed in Lombok. From a Muslim-friendly tourism perspective, these findings reinforce the view that the spiritual dimension is a primary differentiator from conventional tourism. The integration of experiences that consider the religious dimension not only increases satisfaction but also deepens the journey's significance for Muslim tourists (Noviarita et al., 2024). Emotional value relates to feelings of comfort, safety, and satisfaction, whereas spiritual value refers more to transcendental meaning, self-reflection, and religious closeness that go beyond the affective aspect. It is important to incorporate an inclusive perspective by highlighting that innovations in halal services can also be enjoyed by non-Muslim travelers. A study by Yasin et al. (2025) confirms that the halal experience is not exclusive but rather adaptive and universal, fostering comfort and thereby enriching understanding of the destination ecosystem in a more holistic and inclusive manner.

The results of this study align with those of Ratiyah et al. (2025), who found that Muslim-friendly tourism experiences contribute significantly to travellers' emotional and spiritual values. Henderson also confirmed that halal destinations that integrate religious services and environments foster stronger tourist loyalty. The consistency of halal services enhances perceptions of functional value, which, in turn, influences satisfaction and revisit intentions. Furthermore, research in Japan and South Korea on Muslim-friendly tourism found that integrating halal services with social interactions that are sensitive to Islamic values strengthens both the destination image and tourists' emotional experiences (Hidayat & Machmud, 2024). These findings support the results of this study, which show that emotional value stems from the quality of social relationships and the attitudes of tourism industry actors. Consequently, this study not only confirms previous findings but also expands our understanding of the mechanisms of experience integration and value creation in the context of Indonesian halal destinations. This research affirms that the integration of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences is a key strategy for creating sustainable functional, emotional, and spiritual value for tourists.

### **Implications of service innovation on the sustainability of Lombok halal tourism destinations**

Service innovations implemented in Lombok's halal tourism destinations have significant implications for destination sustainability, particularly in terms of competitiveness, tourist loyalty, and economic, social, and Sharia sustainability. Field data from in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation show that halal tourism actors in Lombok are actively developing service innovations based on Muslim-friendly tourism experiences. These innovations include strengthening integrated halal tour packages, digitizing halal services and information, and improving the quality of service interactions in accordance with Sharia values. Muslim tourists consider this innovation an essential factor that distinguishes Lombok from other destinations and enhances its overall appeal (Primadona et al., 2025).

Field data show a consistent pattern: service innovation directly increases destination competitiveness perceptions. Tourists reported that ease of access to halal services, consistent service quality, and an integrated religious atmosphere create a superior and competitive tourist experience. The data also show that travellers who feel that their functional, emotional, and spiritual

values are balanced are more satisfied and have stronger intentions to revisit. The results of field observations show that halal tourist destinations in Lombok have increased the number of Muslim families and community visits, an early indicator of tourist loyalty formation (Sudirman et al., 2023; Syamsurrijal et al., 2023).

The implications of service innovation for destination sustainability can be mapped into several key dimensions. Service innovation impacts economic sustainability by increasing the income of local business actors and opening halal-based business opportunities (Pattaray & Sumaryadi, 2024). Social sustainability is reflected in the active involvement of local communities in the halal tourism ecosystem and the strengthening of pride in their local religious and cultural identity. Meanwhile, Sharia sustainability is realized through the consistent application of Islamic values in destination services and management (Romalee et al., 2025). The following table summarizes the implications of service innovation for destination sustainability based on the research results.

**Table 2.** Implications of service innovation on the sustainability of Lombok halal tourism destinations

Sustainability aspects	The implications of service innovation	Impact felt
Destination competitiveness	Integrated and innovative halal services	Superior and competitive destination image
Tourist loyalty	Valuable and consistent experience	Repeat visit intentions increase
Economic sustainability	Strengthening local halal businesses	Income and employment increase
Social sustainability	Community participation and ethical interaction	Social cohesion and local pride
Sharia sustainability	Consistency of Islamic values and ethics	Trust and legitimacy of the destination

Source: Qualitative data processing results, 2026.

Table 2 confirms that service innovation not only has a short-term impact but also contributes to the sustainability of destinations multidimensionally. The implications of service innovation for the sustainability of Lombok's halal tourism destinations stem from the causal relationship between the quality of Muslim-friendly tourism experiences and the value tourists derive from them. Service innovation increases functional value through efficiency and convenience, emotional value through a sense of security and comfort, and spiritual value through alignment with Sharia principles. When these three values are integrated, travellers tend to build a stronger attachment to the destination. This attachment is the basis for the formation of tourist loyalty, which contributes to the stability of demand and economic sustainability of the destination. Thus, service innovation plays a key role in connecting the travel experience with the sustainability of the destination.

The sustainability of halal tourism destinations cannot be achieved solely through formal promotion or certification; it requires sustainable and context-specific service innovation (Manggarani & Patiro, 2025). Service innovation in Lombok is successful because it aligns with the local community's religious values and is supported by the participation of the destination stakeholders. Innovation rooted in Sharia values and local culture creates social and religious legitimacy, which ultimately strengthens the social and Sharia sustainability of tourist destinations. Without value integration, service innovation risks losing its meaning and cannot create a long-term impact. One of the halal tourism business actors said in an interview:

*With halal service innovation, tourists do not only come once. Many come back and recommend Lombok to their communities.*

Value is created through a co-creation process between service providers and consumers (Fedrina and Darmawan, 2024). Service innovation in Lombok's halal tourism enables value co-creation among tourists, businesses, local communities, and the destination environment. The value created is not only economic but also social and spiritual, thereby supporting holistic sustainability of destinations. Balancing the economic, social, and environmental dimensions is important (Utama et al., 2024). The Sharia dimension in halal tourism is an additional element that

enriches the sustainability framework. Islamic value-based service innovation contributes to creating ethical, fair, and responsible tourism practices. This aligns with the concept of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, which emphasizes the benefits and sustainability of economic and social activities (Raimi 2025).

The results of this study are supported by prior research showing that service innovation increases tourists' competitiveness and loyalty in halal tourism. The quality of Muslim-friendly travel experiences significantly affects repeat visit intentions and destination recommendations. Henderson emphasized that service innovation is a key factor in maintaining the sustainability of halal destinations in the face of global competition (Arasli et al., 2023). Studies in Lombok also show that halal destinations that integrate service innovation with local and religious values achieve better economic and social sustainability (Pattaray & Sumaryadi, 2024). Previous research in Indonesia has highlighted Lombok's role as a pilot destination for halal tourism, but few studies have comprehensively examined the implications of service innovation for sustainability (Ramadhani et al., 2020; Haerisma et al., 2023; Hennida et al., 2024; Mukhlisin et al., 2025; Permadi et al., 2026). Therefore, this study expands the literature by demonstrating that service innovation not only enhances the tourist experience but also serves as a sustainability strategy for halal tourism destinations in Lombok. These findings confirm that the sustainability of halal destinations is highly dependent on the ability of service innovation to create consistent, meaningful, and aligned values with Sharia principles.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that integrating Muslim-friendly tourism experiences through service innovation in Lombok's halal tourism destinations results in multidimensional value creation, encompassing functional, emotional, and spiritual values for tourists. The most significant and relatively unexpected finding of this study is that spiritual value does not merely serve as a supplement to the travel experience; instead, it acts as a reinforcing factor that deepens emotional value and enhances tourist loyalty. Muslim tourists interpret their travel experiences in Lombok as psychologically and religiously soothing journeys rather than mere recreational activities, thereby fostering a stronger attachment to their destination. This research also provides a conceptual contribution by expanding the study of halal tourism from an attributes-and-sharia-compliance approach to an experience-based, value-creation approach. This research also enriches the literature on service innovation by demonstrating that innovation in halal tourism is not only manifested in products and technology but is also reflected in service processes and interaction quality based on Islamic values. Empirically, this study provides qualitative evidence regarding the mechanisms of integrating Muslim-friendly tourism experiences and their impact on the sustainability of halal destinations within the Indonesian context.

This study has several limitations. First, the research scope is limited to a single destination; therefore, generalizing the findings to other halal destinations should be done cautiously. Second, the number and characteristics of the informants remain limited to specific groups of tourists and tourism actors, leaving the perspectives of other stakeholders unaccounted. Third, the qualitative approach used does not allow for the quantitative measurement of causal relationships. Therefore, future research should combine qualitative and quantitative methods, expand the research locations, and explore the roles of digital technology and public policy in strengthening experience integration and value creation in halal tourism. The practical implications of this research are clarified through operational recommendations for the Lombok local government, including the development of an integrated digital platform for halal information, the integration of certification with online services, and human resource training based on inclusive values. These strategies enable the maintenance of halal integrity while accommodating non-Muslim tourists in an adaptive and sustainable manner.

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### Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

The author declares that ChatGPT was used to assist in the development of the research concept, while Grammarly was used solely to translate text from Indonesian to American English and to improve linguistic clarity. AI was not used to draft the scientific content or perform the analysis. The author bears full responsibility for the accuracy and final content of this manuscript.

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