

The influence of social media content on attitude, destination image and intention of female Muslim travelers to visit halal destinations: comparison between UGC and FGC

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to investigate how user-generated content (UGC) and firm-generated content (FGC) in social media affect attitudes toward halal tourism destinations, destination image and visit intentions among female Muslim (Muslimah) travelers. It also examines the role of travel habits as the moderating variable.

Design/methodology/approach – This study adopts the Theory of Interpersonal Behavior (TIB) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explore the motivation of Muslimah travelers to visit halal destinations. The survey was completed by 284 Indonesian Muslimah respondents who had visited halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. The SEM-PLS statistical technique was used to verify the associations between variables.

Findings – This study's findings offer valuable insights for both theoretical understanding and practical applications. They suggest that both UGC and FGC significantly predict attitudes toward halal tourism and destination image, thereby influencing the visiting intentions of Muslimah travelers. Although UGC does not directly influence visiting intentions, it does play a significant role in shaping visiting intentions through its mediating effect on attitudes toward halal tourism destinations. In addition, the results indicate that habit positively moderates the relationship between attitudes toward halal tourism and visiting intentions.

Originality/value – This research contributes uniquely and significantly in two aspects. First, it merges the TIB with the TPB to elucidate the decision-making process of Muslimah travelers when selecting halal destinations. This integration illuminates new insights into the intentions of Muslimah tourists. Second, this study examines the respective influences of UGC and FGC on the visiting intentions of Muslimah travelers to halal tourism destinations. By comparing UGC and FGC, the research provides valuable insights into the decision-making processes of Muslimah tourists. Given Indonesia's status as home to the largest Muslim population globally, this study offers a novel perspective on the traveling behavior of Muslimahs and practical recommendations for the Indonesian tourism sector in the establishment and promotion of Muslim-friendly destinations within the country.

Keywords Muslimah travelers, User-generated content, Firm-generated content, Destination image, Visit intentions, Attitude toward halal destination, Habit

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Indonesia's tourism industry is the fourth-largest contributor to the country's gross domestic product. The primary factors drawing international tourists to Indonesia are its cultural diversity and abundant natural resources (Wijaya *et al.*, 2017). As the country with the



largest Muslim population, Indonesia has a comparative advantage in developing a range of Islamic tourist destinations. Halal tourism caters to Muslim travelers' specific requirements and preferences, adhering to the principles and guidelines outlined in *Shariah* law (Vargas-Sánchez and Moral-Moral, 2019). Over the past few decades, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia has prioritized developing and promoting the halal tourism sector (Wijaya *et al.*, 2018). The government program has achieved notable outcomes, such as Indonesia's first-place ranking as the leading halal tourism destination worldwide in 2023, according to the Mastercard CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) (Bahardeen, 2023).

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the growth rate of the Muslimah traveler segment, with a reported growth rate of 45% (CrescentRating, 2023). Muslimah travelers exhibit distinct needs and preferences compared to other travel segments. This segment wields significant influence in decision-making processes related to family and partner travel. While men in Muslim households typically assume decision-making roles concerning work-related matters, women, conversely, hold greater influence in decisions regarding family vacations or travel-related activities (Arshadullah, 2023).

Previous research has indicated that Muslim tourists prioritize the availability of halal food options and places of worship as the foremost factors when selecting a tourist destination (Cahyono *et al.*, 2021). In addition, it is crucial to provide adequate restroom amenities and foster an environment free from Islamophobic attitudes and behaviors (CrescentRating, 2023). Hence, stakeholders in the tourism industry must carefully select appropriate approaches and marketing platforms to communicate relevant information to prospective Muslim travelers effectively (Adel *et al.*, 2021).

Digital content, the primary sources of which can be divided into two categories:

- (1) content generated and uploaded by official national and or local destination marketing organizations (DMOs), referred to as firm-generated content (FGC); and
- (2) content generated and uploaded by tourists, known as user-generated content (UGC).

Social media has emerged as a widely used medium for marketers to advertise their products or services effectively. FGC has been observed to favorably influence various aspects, such as brand awareness, customer satisfaction and purchase intentions (Colicev *et al.*, 2019). According to Hernandez-Ortega *et al.* (2020), the popularity of a tourist place is directly influenced by the destination image portrayed in FGC uploaded on official tourism destination social media platforms. Similarly, Kim *et al.* (2023) noted that FGC enables companies to develop content consistent with their brand identity and offers practical benefits within the hotel industry.

Previous studies have indicated that in addition to the influence of official social media platforms, online reviews shared virtually and created by social media users (UGC) have a more significant effect on women's purchasing choices than men's (Bae and Lee, 2011). In the tourism context, UGC plays a crucial role as one of the primary sources of information for individuals in planning their trips (Kennell and Rushton, 2015). Businesses often use various social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, to engage and communicate with consumers. This approach is also used by tourism service providers who use social media to promote tourist destinations, culinary experiences and diverse attractions through UGC (Dewi and Yuliati, 2018). According to Nosto Solution Inc., 86% of people express interest in a tourist location after seeing authentic UGC, and 60% state that UGC is more important than content from celebrities, influencers or well-known brands (Godin, 2022).

The content shared with tourists plays an essential role in shaping their perception and impression of a destination they have yet to experience first-hand. This perception and impression, usually called the destination image, are influenced by the information provided to visitors (Ashfaq *et al.*, 2022). The concept of destination image encompasses a combination of ideas, beliefs, perceptions and impressions that individuals hold regarding a specific location (Agung *et al.*, 2020). The role of destination image is paramount in shaping the decision-making process of tourists when selecting a destination (Kim and Kwon, 2018).

Understanding tourists' behavior regarding destination selection, including their attitudes, is crucial for stakeholders in the tourism industry. Previous research has shown the influence of attitudes on tourist behavior, such as local food consumption (Hanafiah and Hamdan, 2021) and family purchases (Aziz *et al.*, 2019). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that behavioral intention is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Positive attitudes increase the tendency to participate actively in a given behavior, and individuals' attitudes influence the selection of halal tourism destinations (Atmaja *et al.*, 2020). An additional influential factor not addressed in the TPB is the concept of habit. In the Theory of Interpersonal Behavior (TIB), habit significantly predicts an individual's future behavior (Triandis, 1979). Indonesia's Muslim community is highly aware of Islamic *Sharia* principles and practices, leading to the emergence of halal products, banking, investments and hotels that influence their travel preferences (Wibawa *et al.*, 2021). This study uses the TIB framework to investigate halal tourist destinations as preferred travel destinations. It suggests that behavior is influenced by past experiences and habitual patterns (Robinson, 2010) and has been applied in various research projects, including exercise intentions (Godin *et al.*, 1991) and internet usage patterns (Moody and Siponen, 2013) as well as in the selection of *Sharia* loans within Islamic contexts (Amin *et al.*, 2016) and purchasing habits of Muslim millennials (Amalia *et al.*, 2020).

As evident in the literature, previous research has primarily focused on investigating the impact of UGC or FGC on tourists' intentions related to visiting tourist destinations, making purchases or booking accommodations (Ballester *et al.*, 2021; He, 2023; Nguyen and Tong, 2023). There is a lack of empirical research that directly compares the effectiveness of FGC and UGC in influencing the intentions of Muslimah travelers to visit halal tourist destinations. Moreover, a considerable number of prior studies have used the TPB as a framework to examine the behavioral tendencies of consumers or tourists concerning their intentions to visit a particular destination (Kim and Kwon, 2018). This study combines the TPB with the TIB to measure and analyze the factors influencing halal tourism decision-making. By integrating these two theoretical frameworks, a more comprehensive understanding of decision-making determinants in this particular field can be achieved. Furthermore, the anticipated outcome from this research aims to explain the disparities between FGC and UGC and their impact on the inclination to visit halal destinations. This study is expected to make novel contributions to the existing body of literature on Muslim tourist behavior while offering valuable insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry interested in developing and promoting Muslim-friendly tourism in Indonesia.

Literature review

Stimulus-organism-response, theory of planned behavior and theory of interpersonal behavior are the underpinning theories

Tourists' intentions and behaviors significantly influence the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry. Understanding tourist behavior allows tourism service providers to develop effective marketing strategies. Therefore, understanding the factors impacting tourist intentions and behaviors, specifically in halal tourism, is crucial (Battour *et al.*, 2022).

The TPB, an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), predicts individual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This theory incorporates perceived behavioral control, a construct not initially included in the TRA. TPB is a conceptual framework that shares the main focus of TRA, which is an individual's intention to engage in a specific behavior.

TPB has been extensively used in diverse research domains, including healthy food consumption behavior (Conner *et al.*, 2002), online retail (Kureshi and Thomas, 2019) and halal tourism destinations (Ramadhanti and Marsasi, 2023) to predict individual intentions and behaviors. This study will focus on the influence of attitude toward behavior on the intentions of Muslimah tourists to visit halal tourism in Indonesia while acknowledging the significance of subjective norms and behavioral control. Attitude significantly influences an individual's behavior, such as visitation intentions (Aji *et al.*, 2021; Kim and Kwon, 2018; Quintal *et al.*, 2010). A study by Akter and Hasan (2023) found that a positive attitude toward halal tourism impacts Muslim tourists' intentions.

Previous studies have extensively used TPB to investigate consumer behavior and tourist intentions, specifically in the field of halal tourism (Adel *et al.*, 2021; Aji *et al.*, 2021; Akin and Okumuş, 2021; Battour *et al.*, 2022; Papatheodorou, 2001; Sumaryadi *et al.*, 2020). Some researchers, however, argue that the TPB is insufficient in fully explaining why consumers demonstrate a certain behavior. Ouellette and Wood (1998) argued that the constructs of factors in TPB are better suited for examining new behaviors rather than established behaviors. Muslim consumers in Indonesia commonly choose halal products and services due to their strong adherence to Islamic knowledge and practices. Various factors influencing the behavior of Muslimah tourists in selecting halal tourism destinations may include their social environment and daily practices, such as consuming halal food, performing prayers and practicing Islamic religions and teachings (Bahardeen, 2023). These habitual practices influence Muslimah tourists to choose halal tourist destinations for trips or vacations. Triandis (1979), who was the first academic scholar to introduce the TIB, urged that habits significantly influence the connection between intention and behavior. TIB has been used in studies, such as, on physical exercise intentions (Godin *et al.*, 1991), personal internet usage (Moody and Siponen, 2013) and halal product purchasing behavior among Muslim millennials (Amalia *et al.*, 2020).

The stimulus–organism–response (SOR) was selected as the grand theory in this study to accommodate both TPB and TIB measurements. The SOR framework, developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), suggests that environmental stimuli can affect an organism's emotional state, subsequently influencing their responses and behaviors, including performance and social interaction. In the SOR framework, stimuli are seen as external factors that influence an individual's internal state. The organism serves as an individual's cognitive and affective component, facilitating the connection between stimuli and the individual's responses. The response signifies the final result of consumer behavior approaches. Stimuli are external factors that impact an individual's internal state or serve as triggers (Eroglu *et al.*, 2001).

Tourists' attitudes toward a destination are associated with their emotions and sentiments toward it (Nunthiphatprueksa, 2017), categorized as the organism in this study. Prior studies have emphasized the significance of tourists' intention to visit a destination as a critical indicator for the industry sector. This research categorizes the intention to visit a tourist destination as the response based on Na *et al.* (2016). The SOR model in tourism suggests that environmental stimuli (UGC and FGC) influence the individual's state (attitude, destination image and habits), which then leads to behavioral responses (visit intention).

Relationships between concepts and hypothesis development

User-generated content, firm-generated content and attitude toward a halal destination

Previous research indicates that UGC impacts tourists' attitudes when selecting destinations. Tourists generally favor destinations with positive reviews over negative ones (Nguyen and Tong, 2023). UGC also impacts online trust (Burgess et al., 2009). Previous studies have found that UGC positively impacts Muslim tourists' attitudes toward tourist destinations (Liu et al., 2018; Söderlund and Rosengren, 2007). UGC influences female tourists' attitudes more than male tourists' (Kane et al., 2012). The impact of social media marketing on customer attitudes and purchase intentions has been widely researched. Santiago et al. (2022) found that FGC has a limited influence on attitudes. However, Veloso and Gomez-Suarez (2023) study on social media content generated by hotels presented a different point of view. Increasing social media interactions can impact customer attitudes toward the brand. Positive interactions on a company's social media platform have been found to influence positive brand perception (Kumar et al., 2016). Engaging and compelling content is vital to achieving effective interactions on social media. Following the above discussion, the hypotheses are formulated:

- H1. UGC significantly influences the attitude toward halal tourism destinations of Indonesian Muslim women travelers.
- H2. FGC significantly influences the attitude toward halal tourism destinations of Indonesian Muslim women travelers.

User-generated content, firm-generated content and destination image

Tourists' perception of a destination's image can be significantly influenced by information posted on social media about the travel stories of other travelers. Previous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of UGC on shaping destination image (Nguyen and Tong, 2023; Skinner, 2022). The reputation of a tourism destination profoundly affects its perception among tourists (Marchiori et al., 2011; Micera and Crispino, 2017), with such reputation being primarily shaped by online customer reviews on platforms such as TripAdvisor, travel blogs and various social media channels. Access to information concerning the destination attributes, feelings and real-life experiences shared by fellow travelers online can significantly influence individuals' perceptions of a destination and are viewed as genuine (Alcázar et al., 2014). Conversely, DMOs are increasingly leveraging FGC to promote and construct specific destination images. FGC is valued for its credible informational content; often, devoid of subjective opinions or reviews prevalent in UGC. Consequently, FGC is perceived as providing a more comprehensive and accurate portrayal of a tourism destination (Hernandez-Ortega et al., 2020). Based on the past studies above, the third and fourth hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- H3. UGC significantly influences the destination image of Indonesian Muslim women travelers toward halal tourism destinations.
- H4. FGC significantly influences the attitude toward halal tourism destinations of Indonesian Muslim women travelers.

User-generated content, firm-generated content and visit intention

Several studies have delved into the influence of both UGC and FGC on consumer purchase decisions and visitation patterns (Colicev et al., 2019; Poturak and Softic, 2019;

[Poulis et al., 2019](#)). UGC and FGC are distinguished by their varying levels of source credibility and expertise. UGC is commonly perceived as more trustworthy compared to FGC, owing to its foundation in direct experiences and the absence of profit-oriented motives ([Ho-Dac et al., 2013](#)). According to a 2013 survey conducted by Nielsen, consumer trust in UGC stood notably higher at 84% in contrast to the 69% trust level accorded to FGC. If consumers value the source's credibility, UGC is poised to exert a substantial influence on their consideration and purchase intention surpassing that of FGC. However, FGC exhibits more superior acquisition efficacy relative to UGC. Previous studies have shown that both FGC and UGC have positive impacts on purchase intention ([Ballester et al., 2021](#); [Colicev et al., 2019](#); [Hernandez-Ortega et al., 2020](#)). On this basis, the current study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H5. UGC significantly influences visit intention of Indonesian Muslim women travelers to visit halal tourism destinations.
- H6. FGC significantly influences visit intention of Indonesian Muslim women travelers to visit halal tourism destinations.

Attitude toward halal destination and visit intention

The growing demand for halal-friendly destinations among Muslim tourists has made the attitude toward such destinations a significant factor in influencing the selection and visit intention. Past studies have shown a positive influence of a tourist's attitude on an intention to engage in a specific behavior such as purchase intention ([Yoon and Chung, 2018](#)). Their study revealed that a positive attitude toward food trucks positively affects the consumers' intentions to try and purchase. Similarly, [Shin and Mattila \(2019\)](#) found a strong positive relationship between attitude and the intention to choose organic menus. [Vanany et al. \(2020\)](#) found that attitude toward halal food was the most influential factor in the intention to consume halal food. Positive consumer attitudes toward halal food correlate with increased intention to consume it. Those findings provide solid and consistent conceptual support for forming attitudes and their impact on consumer behavior. On this basis, the seventh hypothesis was formulated as follows:

- H7. Attitude toward halal tourism significantly influences visit intention of Indonesian Muslim women travelers to visit halal tourism destinations.

Destination image and visit intention

The relationship between destination image and visit intention constitutes a fundamental aspect of tourism research. Destination image is defined by an individual's perception and overall holistic combination of functional and psychological characteristics ([Echtner and Ritchie, 1991](#)). Destination images are formed from cognitive and affective perceptions that are positively related. Cognitive images are beliefs and knowledge about a destination, while affective include emotional responses ([Kim and Kwon, 2018](#)). It can be influenced by different sources such as marketing communication on various media platforms, as well as word-of-mouth (WOM) communication ([Andriani et al., 2019](#)). Tourists have a certain image of a destination from books, brochures and promotional media before visiting. Such images will be modified or changed into a more realistic and complex one after they have visited the destination. [Bigne et al. \(2008\)](#) found a positive correlation between the community's perception of a destination and its probability of recommending it to tourists.

Destination image strongly affects the intention to visit a particular destination (Khan *et al.*, 2017). On this basis, the eighth hypothesis is proposed below: Journal of Islamic Marketing

H8. Destination image significantly influences visit intention of Indonesian Muslim women travelers to visit halal tourism destinations.

The moderating role of habit

Habit refers to a behavioral pattern that develops over time, becoming an automatic response to specific situations to attain particular goals or states (Verplanken *et al.*, 1997). Khalifa and Liu (2007) defined a habit as a tendency shaped by past experiences. Previous research on purchase intention has categorized the relationship between habit and purchase intention into two. The first category suggests that habit directly influences the intention to make online purchases, whereas the second category suggests that habit moderates the relationship between purchase intention and other factors (Chiu *et al.*, 2012). This study examines the moderating role of habit, extensively studied in previous research for its direct impact on intention (Chiu *et al.*, 2012; Khalifa and Liu, 2007).

In tourism research, the association between attitude and intention to visit a destination has been extensively examined (Ramadhanti and Marsasi, 2023; Saifudin and Puspita, 2020). Attitude strongly predicts the intention to visit a destination (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). Khalifa and Liu (2007) posited that online shopping habits positively mediate the relationship between online shopping satisfaction and the intention to repurchase online. Behavioral intention, as articulated by Triandis (1979) in attitude theory and attitude change, is influenced by habit, social norms and attitudes. Individuals with behavioral habits are more likely to exhibit a stronger inclination to engage in the same behavior in the future compared to those without such habits, even when their attitudes toward the behavior are similar. Customers favoring halal tourism destinations are more inclined to visit these destinations. Based on the past studies discussed above, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H9. Habit positively moderates the relationship between attitude toward halal tourism destination and visit intention.

The mediating role of attitude toward halal tourism destination

This paper proposes that attitude toward halal tourism destinations acts as a mediator in the relationship between UGC and visit intention. Furthermore, we propose that the attitude toward halal tourism destinations also functions as a mediator between FGC and visit intention. Consistent with the definition of Ajzen and Fishbein (2005), attitude is conceptualized as an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a specific behavior. Research has demonstrated that attitude significantly influences how individuals perceive and evaluate advertising appeals, serving as a criterion for formulating intentions toward stimuli presented in advertisements (Nguyen *et al.*, 2023). Prior studies have shown that social media advertising can enhance consumers' brand attitude, with brand attitude formed through social media advertising serving as a predictor of purchase intention (Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Wang *et al.*, 2019). Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) observed that positive brand attitudes and higher purchase intention were associated with favorable evaluations of a brand's social media community postings.

Literature has shown that beyond advertising, customers' purchase intention for halal products is influenced by their attitudes toward these products as expressed through electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) (Ansari and Mohammed, 2015; Anubha, 2021; Aziz *et al.*, 2019).

In the TRA and the TPB, attitude plays a pivotal role in shaping behavioral intentions. The significance of e-WOM to a product lies in its capacity to instill consumer confidence. Consumers' positive attitudes toward a product are influenced by their perception of timely, relevant, comprehensive and accurate e-WOM information about the product (Qahri-Saremi and Montazemi, 2019). Consequently, this positive attitude leads to a favorable intention to purchase (Anubha and Shome, 2021). Previous studies revealed that attitude, either fully or partially, mediates purchase intentions among consumers purchase intention (Garg and Joshi, 2018; Widyanto and Sitohang, 2022). Based on the preceding review of literature, the following hypotheses are formulated below:

H10a. Attitude toward halal tourism destinations mediates the effect of UGC on visit intention.

H10b. Attitude toward halal tourism destinations mediates the effect of FGC on visit intention.

The mediating role of destination image

The destination image significantly influences the decision-making process of travelers when selecting a destination (Cai, 2002). Moreover, it serves as a critical factor in distinguishing one destination from its competitors. The perceived image holds particular importance for travelers with limited knowledge of a destination, as they are more inclined to choose destinations that project strong, positive, distinct and recognizable images. Consequently, destination marketing often emphasizes the promotion of a positive destination image, providing travelers with vivid experiences even before their physical visit (Hyun and O'Keefe, 2012).

Research on shaping destination images through different types of information is driven by the importance of cultivating a favorable destination image. Tasci and Gartner (2007) contended that the destination image acts a pivotal mediator between travel intentions and other information sources. In today's digital landscape, companies can establish websites containing comprehensive details about their products and services (Baber and Baber, 2023), offering valuable information to potential users. Customers now actively engage in a dynamic process by providing public feedback on social channels (Brennan and Merkl-Davies, 2018). The evaluation of a hotel, restaurant or travel agency by customers directly impacts the reputation or image of the company, thereby influencing the customer's behavioral intention.

Studies have shown that social media involvement positively influences visitors' intentions and perceptions of destination (Al-Gasawneh and Al-Adamat, 2020; Bernkopf and Nixon, 2019), often exerting a more pronounced impact compared to information sourced directly from the official destination website. Molinillo *et al.* (2017) argued that social media platforms used by tourists to gather information about a destination play a significant role in shaping their perception of that destination and subsequently, influencing their intentions to visit. In addition, Baber *et al.*'s (2022) study revealed that the relationship between e-reputation, social media marketing efforts and visit intention was fully mediated by destination image. Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H11a. Destination image mediates the effect of UGC on visiting intention.

H11b. Destination image mediates the effect of FGC on visiting intention.

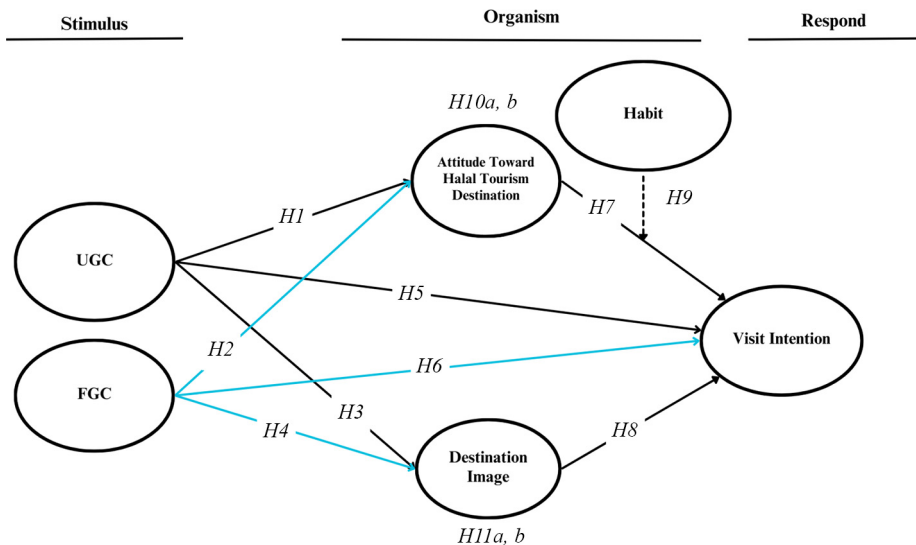
Research method

This study examines Muslimah travelers who have previously visited halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. The sampling process used was purposive sampling, meaning that respondents needed to meet specific criteria set for the study:

- Indonesian Muslim women aged a minimum of 18–65 years;
- actively using social media; and
- having experience visiting halal tourism destinations in Indonesia.

The questionnaire was structured into four sections. Section 1 consisted of three screening questions to ensure that respondents met the sampling criteria. Section 2 aimed to gather information about respondents’ demographic profiles, including age, average monthly income and occupation. Section 3 included questions to assess travel-related behavior such as travel frequency, destinations visited and length of travel. Finally, Section 4 sought respondents’ level of agreement regarding the main variables under examination, namely, UGC, FGC, attitudes, habits, destination image and visit intentions.

All items or empirical indicators for each variable under examination were developed based on a thorough literature review (refer to [Table 1](#)). Nine items measuring respective UGC and FGC were adapted from [Al-Abdallah and Jumaa \(2022\)](#). Four items assessing attitudes toward halal tourism destinations were derived from [Aji et al. \(2021\)](#). The destination image was gauged using seven items adapted from [Juliana et al. \(2023\)](#). Four habit measurement items were developed based on [Chiu et al. \(2012\)](#) and [Limayem et al. \(2007\)](#). In addition, four items measuring visit intentions were adapted from [Aji et al. \(2021\)](#),



Source: Authors’ own work

Figure 1. The conceptual model

Table 1. List of initial measurement indicators

Variable		Measurement indicator	Source
<i>User-generated content</i>	UGC1	I trust the content uploaded by other travelers about halal tourism destinations	Al-Abdallah and Jumaa (2022)
	UGC2	The content uploaded by other travelers is reliable	
	UGC3	The content uploaded by other travelers is credible	
	UGC4	The content uploaded by other travelers about halal tourist destination is fair	
	UGC5	The content uploaded by other travelers is unbiased	
	UGC6	The content uploaded by travelers helped in determining my travel destination	
	UGC7	The content uploaded by other travelers on social media changes my understanding about halal tourism destination	
	UGC8	The content uploaded by other travelers make me more aware of a halal tourism destination	
	UGC9	The information uploaded by other travelers regarding halal tourist destination is comprehensive	
<i>Firm-generated content</i>	FGC1	I trust the content about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites	Al-Abdallah and Jumaa (2022)
	FGC2	I think the content uploaded on social media Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites is reliable	
	FGC3	I think the content about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites is credible	
	FGC4	I do not think the content about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites delete negative comments on their posts	
	FGC5	I think the content uploaded about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites are unbiased	
	FGC6	The content about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites, helped in determining my travel destination	
	FGC7	The content about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites, changes my understanding of halal tourist destination	
	FGC8	The content uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites, made me more aware of a halal tourist destination	
	FGC9	I think the information about halal tourism destinations uploaded on the official social media account of Wonderful Indonesia, Pesona Indonesia or other official government websites, is comprehensive	

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Variable		Measurement indicator	Source
<i>Attitude toward halal tourism destination</i>	AT1	Traveling to a halal tourism destination is good	Aji et al. (2021)
	AT2	Traveling to halal tourism destination is delightful	
	AT3	I like traveling to halal tourism destination	
	AT4	It is wise to travel to a halal tourism destination	
<i>Destination image</i>	DI1	Halal tourism destinations in Indonesia have a wide range of attractive natural attractions	Juliana et al. (2023)
	DI2	Halal tourism destinations in Indonesia have good facilities (e.g. transportation, accommodation)	
	DI3	Halal tourism destinations in Indonesia are accessible	
	DI4	Halal tourism destinations in Indonesia have a rich and wide range of cultural attractions	
	DI5	Halal tourism destination in Indonesia is pleasant	
	DI6	Halal tourism destinations in Indonesia offer a relaxing impression	
	DI7	Halal tourism destinations in Indonesia are unique	
<i>Habit</i>	HAB1	Traveling to a halal tourism destination is something I do frequently	Chiu et al. (2012) and Limayem et al. (2007)
	HAB2	Traveling to a halal tourism destination is something I do automatically	
	HAB3	When planning to go on vacation, visiting to a halal tourism destination is something that comes to mind	
	HAB4	Traveling to halal tourism destination is a natural thing I used to do	
<i>Visit intention</i>	VI1	If there is a possible chance, I am intended to travel to a halal tourism destination	Aji et al. (2021) , Atzeni et al. (2022) and Lestari et al. (2022)
	VI2	In the near future, I will be visiting a halal tourism destination in Indonesia	
	VI3	I am most likely to visit halal tourism destination in Indonesia	
	VI4	Visiting halal tourism destinations in Indonesia is a priority	

Sources: Authors' own work, adapted from [Al-Abdallah and Jumaa \(2022\)](#), [Aji et al. \(2021\)](#), [Juliana et al. \(2023\)](#), [Chiu et al. \(2012\)](#), [Limayem et al. \(2007\)](#), [Atzeni et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Lestari et al. \(2022\)](#)

[Atzeni et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Lestari et al. \(2022\)](#). The questionnaire items were carefully tailored to the context of this study to ensure that the original meaning was retained in the translated version. To ensure the face validity of the measured items, four experts in the field of tourism marketing were consulted for their opinions and feedback on the wording of each item. All the items measuring UGC, FGC, destination image, habits, attitudes and visit intentions were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scale was selected following the recommendations of [Dawes \(2008\)](#) as it is less confusing and can enhance the response rate.

The online survey used a close-ended questionnaire used as the primary instrument. Following the screening process outlined in Section 1 of the questionnaire, respondents were presented with a 30-s video clip (in Indonesian) aimed at elucidating the disparities between UGC and FGC to enhance respondents' comprehension of these two content types (click here to watch the clip here: www.youtube.com/shorts/fLJPjL-xhxM).

The sample size was determined following the recommendations of [Hair et al. \(2016\)](#), which suggest the minimum sample size for a PLS-SEM analysis should be equivalent to the larger of one of the two criteria under the “ten times rule”:

- (1) ten times the largest number of formative indicators used to measure one construct; or
- (2) ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at particular construct in the model.

Given that the study investigated eight structural paths to measure the dependent variable, a minimum sample size of 80 respondents (10×8) was required. A total of 306 respondents participated in the online survey, of which 284 met the criteria for further analysis.

Partial least squares (PLS)-based SEM was selected for its efficacy in examining the relationship between two variables/constructs. PLS is a suitable statistical technique for addressing challenges posed by limited sample sizes and non-normal data ([Hair et al., 2016](#)). Moreover, it has demonstrated effectiveness in handling complex models. In this study, SmartPLS 4.0 software was used to assess the structural and measurement models for hypothesis testing.

Results

Demographics

Data was collected from Indonesian Muslimah travelers aged 18–65, representing various educational backgrounds and occupations (refer to [Table 2](#)).

Assessment of reflective construct

The initial stage in assessing the reflective measurement model involves a thorough examination of the indicator loadings. It is recommended to prioritize loadings exceeding 0.708, as they signify that the construct explains more than 50% of the variance in the indicator, ensuring the items effectively reflect the intended construct ([Hair et al., 2016](#)). In social science studies, weaker outer loadings (<0.70) are frequently found especially when newly developed scales are used, thus, such indicators could be retained to ensure the content validity of the construct ([Hulland, 1999](#)). However, indicators with very low outer loadings should always be eliminated from the construct ([Hair et al., 2016](#)). Four out of 37 items: UGC7 (0.490), UGC8 (0.258), FGC8 (0.547) and DI1 (0.330), were found to have very low outer loadings (below 0.60) and therefore, removed. Following the removal of these items, a total of 33 questions remained and were used for further data analysis. Subsequent retesting was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of all indicators postelimination. As shown in [Table 3](#), all remaining items exhibited acceptable reliability and validity, meeting the criteria of Cronbach's α (≥ 0.7), CR (≥ 0.7) and average variance extracted (AVE) (≥ 0.5) ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). Moreover, to establish discriminant validity, all heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) values should be lower than 0.945 ([Roemer et al., 2021](#)). [Table 3](#) shows that all items meet the cutoff criteria: outer loadings ranged from 0.675 to 0.883, Cronbach's alpha and CR values exceeded 0.70 and the AVE value surpassed the threshold of 0.50. In addition, all HTMT values are < 0.945 . [Table 4](#) illustrates that all HTMT values fall below the 0.945 threshold, indicating no discernible issues with discriminant validity. Therefore, all reflective constructs exhibit both reliability and validity.

SmartPLS was used to evaluate the predictive power of the structural model, examining variables that contribute to and determine R^2 and Q^2 values. The R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50 and 0.25

Table 2. The demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Description	Frequency	%
<i>Age group</i>	18–24	123	43.31
	25–30	82	28.87
	31–35	29	10.21
	36–40	26	9.15
	41–45	10	3.52
	46–50	8	2.82
	51 and above	6	2.12
<i>Highest educational attained</i>	Senior high school	122	42.96
	Associate's degree	23	8.10
	Bachelor's degree	133	46.83
	Master/doctor	6	2.11
<i>Occupation</i>	Self-employed and entrepreneur	27	9.51
	Student	83	29.23
	Private employee	106	37.32
	Civil servant	12	4.23
	Housewives	39	13.73
	Other	3	1.05
	Unemployed	14	4.93
<i>Average income/month</i>	IDR 1m–IDR 2.999m	8	2.82
	IDR 3m–IDR 4.999m	25	8.80
	IDR 5m–IDR 6.999m	89	31.34
	IDR 7m–IDR 8.999m	48	16.90
	IDR 9m–IDR 10.999m	44	15.49
	≥IDR 11m	70	24.65
<i>Domicile</i>	Java	229	80.63
	Sumatera	37	13.03
	Sulawesi	7	2.46
	Kalimantan	6	2.11
	Bali, Lombok and others	5	1.76

Note: $n = 284$ **Source:** Results of the Authors' statistical analysis

are considered substantial, moderate and weak, respectively (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The attitude toward halal tourism destinations exhibits an R^2 value of 0.378; destination image has an R^2 value of 0.499; and visit intention shows an R^2 value of 0.655. In relation to the Q^2 value, Hair *et al.* (2019) stated that values larger than zero hold significance, that is, Q^2 values exceeding 0.00, 0.025 and 0.50 denote small, medium and large predictive accuracy, respectively, within the PLS path model. The Q^2 values indicate a strong predictive ability of the model. The endogenous constructs in this study along with their respective Q^2 values are attitude toward halal tourism destination (0.360), destination image (0.482) and visit intention (0.569), further affirm the model's robust predictive ability.

Structural model evaluation

Moreover, a bootstrapping technique was used to evaluate the hypotheses and determine the path coefficient, p -value and t -value for analyzing the relationship between the study constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2019). As depicted in Table 5, it shows that $H1 - UGC(\beta = 0.310,$

Table 3. Measurement model: construct (reliability and convergent validity after reduction)

Variables	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	Average variance extracted (AVE)
User-generated content	UGC1	0.744	0.885	0.886	0.592
	UGC2	0.786			
	UGC3	0.805			
	UGC4	0.785			
	UGC5	0.753			
	UGC6	0.789			
	UGC9	0.720			
Firm-generated content	FGC1	0.794	0.908	0.918	0.580
	FGC2	0.785			
	FGC3	0.799			
	FGC4	0.769			
	FGC5	0.819			
	FGC6	0.808			
	FGC7	0.698			
	FGC9	0.801			
	Attitude toward halal tourism destination	AT1			
AT2		0.858			
AT3		0.849			
AT4		0.828			
Destination image	DI2	0.731	0.789	0.790	0.546
	DI3	0.785			
	DI4	0.738			
	DI5	0.679			
	DI6	0.675			
	DI7	0.811			
	Habit	HAB1			
HAB2		0.848			
HAB3		0.865			
HAB4		0.855			
Visit intention	VI1	0.703	0.753	0.774	0.673
	VI2	0.862			
	VI3	0.883			
	VI4	0.844			

Source: Results of the authors' statistical analysis

$p < 0.001$) and $H2 - FGC(\beta = 0.348, p < 0.001)$ exert a significant positive influence on Muslimah travelers' attitudes toward halal tourism destinations. The results also support $H3 - UGC(\beta = 0.293, p < 0.001)$ and $H4 - FGC(\beta = 0.460, p < 0.001)$ as having a significant positive effect on the destination image. However, $H5 - UGC(\beta = -0.043, p > 0.001)$ is rejected as it does not directly affect visit intention. Conversely, $H6 - UGC(\beta = 0.074, p < 0.001)$, $H7 - FGC(\beta = 0.325, p < 0.001)$ attitude toward halal tourism destination and $H8 -$ destination image ($\beta = 0.135, p < 0.001$) show a significant positive influence on visit intention. Furthermore, $H9 -$ habit ($\beta = 0.104, p < 0.001$) illustrates the moderating effect of habit in the relationship between attitude toward halal tourism destinations and visit intention.

Table 4. Heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio

	Attitude toward halal tourism destination	Destination image	Firm-generated content	Habit	User-generated content	Visit intention
Attitude toward halal tourism destination	0.867					
Destination image	0.636	0.799				
FGC	0.643	0.722	0.671			
Habit	0.647	0.760	0.828	0.670		
UGC	0.810	0.837	0.711	0.897	0.666	
Visit intention	0.591	0.445	0.206	0.235	0.224	0.241

Source: Results of the authors' statistical analysis

Table 5. Hypotheses testing: direct effect

Hypotheses	β -value	Standard Deviation (SD)	t -Statistics ($jO/STDEVj$)	p -value	R^2	Q^2	Decision
UGC \rightarrow attitude toward halal tourism destination	0.310	0.070	4.429	0.000			Accepted
FGC \rightarrow attitude toward halal tourism destination	0.348	0.076	4.555	0.000	0.378	0.360	Accepted
UGC \rightarrow destination image	0.293	0.075	3.916	0.000			Accepted
FGC \rightarrow destination image	0.460	0.078	5.916	0.000	0.499	0.482	Accepted
UGC \rightarrow visit intention	-0.043	0.069	1.493	0.136			Rejected
FGC \rightarrow visit intention	0.074	0.076	3.371	0.000			Accepted
Attitude toward halal tourism destination \rightarrow visit intention	0.325	0.070	4.618	0.000			Accepted
Destination image \rightarrow visit intention	0.135	0.069	2.217	0.027	0.655	0.569	Accepted
Habit * attitude toward halal tourism destination \rightarrow visit intention	0.104	0.036	2.866	0.004			Accepted

Source: Results of the authors' statistical analysis

The mediating role of attitude toward halal tourism and destination image. There are two forms of mediation: full mediation and partial mediation. Full mediation occurs when the direct effect is deemed insignificant, whereas the indirect effect remains significant. [Cheung and Lau \(2008\)](#) contended that if both the direct and indirect effects are significant, the mediation is considered partial. The bootstrapping results for the mediating effects are presented in [Table 6](#). As shown in [Table 5](#), the direct effect of UGC on visit intention has been rejected ($H5$). This suggests that the attitude toward halal tourism destinations fully mediates the relationship between UGC and visit intention ($\beta = 0.101$, $t = 2.967$, $p < 0.01$), thereby confirming $H10a$, which posits that UGC alone cannot influence tourists' intentions to visit without the formation of their attitude toward the destination. On the contrary, the direct effect of FGC on visit intention ($H6$) is accepted. This indicates that the attitude toward a halal destination and destination image partially mediates the relationship between FGC and visit intention ($H10b$: $\beta = 0.113$, $t = 3.361$, $p < 0.01$) and ($H11b$: $\beta = 0.070$,

Table 6. Hypotheses testing: indirect effect

Hypotheses	β -value	Standard deviation (SD)	t-Statistics (jO/STDEVj)	p-value	Decision
UGC → attitude toward halal tourism destination → visit intention	0.101	0.034	2.967	0.003	Accepted
FGC → attitude toward halal tourism destination → visit intention	0.113	0.034	3.361	0.001	Accepted
UGC → destination image → visit intention	0.045	0.024	1.885	0.060	Rejected
FGC → destination image → visit intention	0.070	0.034	2.047	0.041	Accepted

Source: Results of the authors' statistical analysis

$t = 2.047$, $p < 0.01$). However, the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between UGC and visit intention is not supported, therefore, *H11a* is rejected ($\beta = 0.045$, $t = 1.885$, $p > 0.06$).

Discussions

This study investigated the influence of social media content, specifically UGC and FGC on the attitudes, destination image and visit intentions of Muslimah travelers toward halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. This study delved into the perceptions of Muslimah visitors in viewing both UGC and FGC that promote halal tourism destinations of Indonesia and how the respective content could shape their attitudes, destination image and visit intention by incorporating the TIB and the TPB.

Our study's findings confirm *H1*, indicating that UGC significantly affects the attitudes of Indonesian Muslimah travelers toward halal tourism destinations. This finding aligns with prior studies emphasizing the influence of UGC on consumer attitudes (Kane *et al.*, 2012; Nguyen and Tong, 2023). The social aspect of UGC platforms enables Muslimah travelers to access genuine information, recommendations and personal experiences from other internet users. Positive UGC regarding halal facilities, services and experiences positively influences people's attitudes toward specific destinations. The presence of positive UGC may enhance perceptions of product quality. Rodríguez-Díaz *et al.* (2017) found that products backed by positive UGC, such as favorable reviews and ratings, are perceived as higher quality. Positive WOM in the form of authentic content has a significant influence on consumers' attitudes toward brands (Shuqair *et al.*, 2016). Positive UGC portraying a brand positively influences consumer attitude toward it. Positive UGC highlighting the benefits, quality and pleasant experiences while traveling to halal tourism destinations can create a favorable impression on potential travelers and positively influence their attitudes toward those destinations.

The findings of this study also reveal that FGC significantly affects attitudes toward halal tourism destinations (*H2*). This aligns with a study by Hudson *et al.* (2016), that found that consumers exposed to appealing FGC are more likely to perceive the destination positively, resulting in favorable attitudes and a higher intention to visit. FGC serves as a valuable tool in destination marketing, enabling tourism organizations to promote the attractions and offerings of tourist destinations (Stepchenkova and Morrison, 2008). Through visually appealing images, captivating videos and informative descriptions. FGC can influence attitudes toward tourist destinations.

As predicted, our study's findings support *H3*, indicating that UGC significantly affects the perception of Indonesian Muslimah travelers regarding halal tourism destinations. The destination image reflects individuals' perceptions and mental representations of a particular destination (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). UGC, such as real-life experiences, testimonials and visual content shared by fellow travelers, can influence the perception of potential visitors toward a destination (Alcázar *et al.*, 2014; Ashfaq *et al.*, 2022). In the halal tourism context, positive UGC can enhance the image of a destination for Muslimah travelers by emphasizing halal-certified services, prayer facilities, modest accommodation options and other relevant destination attributes. In addition, FGC positively affects the intention to visit. *H6* in this study supports the significant influence of FGC on visit intention. This confirms past studies which have found that FGC positively affects brand awareness, brand loyalty, e-WOM and purchase intention (Balakrishnan *et al.*, 2014; Hutter *et al.*, 2013; Poulis *et al.*, 2019). FGC serves as a reliable information source for consumer decision-making (Bronner and De Hoog, 2010).

Our research does not corroborate *H5*, which suggests that UGC significantly affects the intentions of Indonesian Muslimah travelers to visit halal tourism destinations. This finding is in contrast with previous studies that have underlined UGC's impact on tourist intention to visit destination (Colicev *et al.*, 2019; Poturak and Softic, 2019; Poulis *et al.*, 2019). The fact that UGC related to halal tourism destinations in Indonesia does not significantly motivate Muslimah travelers to visit these places indicates that this segment might depend on alternative sources of information or consider different criteria when choosing halal tourism destinations. For example, recommendations from well-regarded travelers or official halal certifications could be crucial in their decision-making process. In addition, cultural and religious factors could be more influential, as travelers look for destinations that cater to their religious needs and cultural preferences. Interestingly, several studies have found that UGC, produced by individuals not associated with official DMOs, is often seen as less reliable and credible. This is because UGC is viewed as subjective and potentially biased, reflecting the varied viewpoints and motives of the creators (Abror *et al.*, 2021; Burgess *et al.*, 2009).

Furthermore, the decision-making process in travel for female Muslim travelers, especially those journeying with their families and spouses, is significantly influenced by their preferences. Key factors such as the need for privacy, safety, specific amenities like women-only prayer spaces and the desire for information that helps connect with local communities of similar interests are vital in their selection of travel destinations (Bahardeen, 2023). These varied preferences necessitate reliance on more trustworthy media sources for information. Kim and Kwon (2018) noted that women use a broader range of information sources in the process of choosing travel destinations and engage in more thorough and detailed searches compared to men. Women also respond more favorably to the diversity of website features and content. They are more active in seeking online information, frequent more travel-related websites and do so more often than their male counterparts. Consequently, FGC is deemed a reliable source of information for Indonesian Muslim female travelers. This is consistent with our *H6*, which confirms the significant influence of FGC on travelers' intentions to visit a halal tourism destination. In Indonesia, the official websites of DMOs and the official Instagram account of *Wonderful Indonesia* are recognized as trustworthy platforms for advertising halal tourism spots. Furthermore, previous research has underscored the beneficial influence of FGC on a variety of tourist behavioral outcomes, including awareness of the destination, loyalty to the destination, e-WOM and the intention to visit (Balakrishnan *et al.*, 2014; Hutter *et al.*, 2013; Poulis *et al.*, 2019), establishing FGC as a reliable source for aiding tourists in making informed decisions (Bronner and De Hoog, 2010).

TPB (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005) suggests that attitudes mediate the influence of UGC on visit intentions, which supports *H10a*. Our study's findings support this notion, consistent

with past research by [Najar and Hamid \(2021\)](#), which emphasized the impact of UGC on guests' attitudes and restaurant's repurchase intention. Furthermore, our results corroborate *H7* and *H8*, emphasizing the significance of attitudes toward halal tourist destinations and the role of destination image in influencing visit intention. These results are in line with previous research demonstrating the substantial effect of tourist attitude and destination image on visit intention ([Liu et al., 2018](#)).

The findings of our study support *H9*, which proposes that habit moderates the relationship between attitude toward halal tourism and visit intention. A stronger habit reinforces the association between attitude and visit intention, suggesting that frequent travelers to halal destinations are more inclined to have higher visiting intentions. This supports prior research suggesting that the interplay between habit and other factors, like social norms and attitude, shapes behavioral intention, as per the theory of attitude and attitude change ([Triandis, 1979](#)). Someone who has established a behavioral habit is more inclined to intend to repeat that behavior in the future especially when their attitude remains consistent. Put simply, a traveler with a stronger habit of visiting halal destinations is more likely to intend to visit such destinations again, provided their attitude toward halal tourism destinations remains unchanged. By contrast, a tourist who has a keen interest in traveling, may not prioritize visiting halal destinations if they rarely do so.

This study contributes valuable insights to the existing TPB and TIB by examining the impact of UGC and FGC on the attitudes, destination image and visiting intention of Indonesian Muslimah travelers toward halal tourism destinations. Moreover, it underscores the importance of cultivating a habit of visiting halal tourism destinations to enhance visit intentions among Muslimah travelers, thereby, advancing our understanding of consumer behavior in this domain.

Theoretical implication

This research presents significant theoretical contributions to the literature on halal tourism destinations, particularly through the lens of the SOR theory. It reveals that both UGC and FGC have positive effects on shaping travelers' positive attitudes, highlighting the crucial role of authentic information from fellow travelers and detailed information from the official government information platforms in shaping Muslim travelers' perceptions about halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. However, only FGC demonstrates a significant effect on travelers' visit intentions, emphasizing the pivotal role of credible and reliable sources in guiding travel decisions. The presence of positive views and appealing imagery emerges as factors that encourage visit intentions illustrating their essential role in the SOR framework, where they serve as stimuli that affect the organism (travelers' psychological state) and lead to a response (the intention to visit).

In addition, the moderating role of habitual behavior on the relationship between attitude and visit intention highlights that recurrent positive experiences can enhance the inclination to visit, aligning with the "Organism" component in SOR theory, which considers internal mediators of behavior. The mediating role of attitude in the relationship between UGC and FGC and visit intention, coupled with the moderating role of habit, underscores the complex interplay of stimuli and organism factors in decision-making processes among Indonesian Muslimah travelers in selecting halal destinations. Moreover, the finding that UGC indirectly affects visit intentions through attitudes implies that promoting genuine traveler experiences and using effective social media strategies can cultivate positive sentiments toward halal tourism destinations. These outcomes deepen our understanding of the determinants of travel behavior among Muslim women travelers, furnishing valuable insights for designing destination marketing strategies in halal tourism.

This study extends its theoretical implications to the TIB by incorporating habit as a reinforcing factor. The results illustrate that the habit of visiting halal destinations amplifies the association between attitude toward these destinations and visit intention, thereby reinforcing the SOR theory by showing how repeated positive stimuli (FGC and UGC) influence the organism's state (attitudes) to produce a consistent response (visit intention). This insight into the role of habit highlights its significance as a catalyst for travel decisions and preferences among Muslim women travelers, offering a richer comprehension of how consistent travel behavior is formed. By analyzing the effects of UGC and FGC within the framework of the SOR theory, this study not only provides a deeper understanding of the determinants of travel behavior among Muslim women but also offers valuable insights for crafting effective marketing strategies in the realm of halal tourism. It illustrates how genuine traveler experiences and strategic social media use can cultivate favorable attitudes toward halal tourism destinations, further influencing travel intentions. This comprehensive approach to understanding traveler behavior through the SOR model and the integration of habit as a behavioral catalyst offers a novel perspective on marketing strategies aimed at Muslimah travelers.

Managerial implication and future research

Practical managerial implications hold significant potential to enhance the success of halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. First, the adoption of a well-crafted, adaptable social media content strategy is paramount. Such a strategy should effectively harness both UGC and FGC. Encouraging visitors to share their enjoyable halal travel experiences (UGC) and creating compelling content highlighting the destination's halal-friendly facilities and amenities (FGC), have shown to influence the attitudes of Muslim women travelers toward halal tourism destinations. Government initiatives could incentivize travelers to generate engaging content during their visit to halal sites in Indonesia. This could involve launching social media campaigns using hashtags such as *#halatripchallenge*, urging travelers to share detailed content such as videos or photos, showcasing their explorations of both undiscovered and well-known "hidden gem" travel experiences, encompassing various aspects like local cuisine, accommodations, natural landmarks and leisure activities. Subsequently, the dissemination of pertinent and valuable content related to halal tourism through the official social media platforms of DMOs can enhance the allure of halal tourism destinations in Indonesia, fostering positive perceptions and interest. Collaborative promotional efforts with UGC users could enhance credibility. For instance, organizing events or competitions to encourage individuals to create content that official tourism accounts can endorse, hence, signaling official recognition and appreciation for UGC content.

The study highlights the importance of visitation frequency in elucidating habit formation. Regular visits to halal tourist destinations connect with the formation of a stronger habit of visiting these places. This insight holds implications for destination marketers and government officials aiming to cultivate repeat visits and foster loyalty among Muslim travelers. Travel incentive programs could be executed in collaboration with tourism service operators in destinations for loyal travelers like hotel or airfare discounts, cash back, local souvenirs and other sales promotional forms.

Finally, the establishment of a targeted digital marketing strategy tailored to Indonesian Muslim women travelers can influence the destination image, thus, affecting the intention to visit. Engaging specific target audiences can be achieved through popular social media platforms such as Instagram or TikTok, along with strategic partnerships with mega-, macro- or even microinfluencers. Leveraging celebrity influencers with the hijab community in Indonesia, such as Ria Ricis, Dian Pelangi, Aghnia Punjabi and others, can enhance the promotion of halal tourism in Indonesia. Influencer selection can be diverse, catering to Muslim families, hijab-wearing

individuals and halal cuisine enthusiasts, thus broadening the reach of tailored content. Indonesia's halal tourism destinations boast very rich cultural assets, including traditional festivals like *Grebek Syawal* in Yogyakarta and other cultural events across Indonesia. Furthermore, showcasing Indonesia's allure and diverse natural beauty can enhance the whole travel experience.

Despite its notable contributions, this study has certain limitations that require attention. The research exclusively focused on Indonesian Muslimah travelers, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to other demographic groups, such as Muslim men or Muslim families. The study overlooked potential generational cohort differences among Muslimah travelers, thus, neglecting insights into the preferences, attitudes and travel behaviors of different generations. Furthermore, the study's geographical scope was confined to Indonesian Muslimah travelers in a predominantly Muslim society, omitting the experiences and attitudes of Muslim travelers in non-Muslim countries. Inclusion of such context in future research would offer valuable insights into the challenges and preferences of Muslim travelers in different cultural settings, thereby enriching our understanding of consumer behaviors and experiential outcomes.

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