

UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

DETERMINANTS OF INTERNATIONAL MUSLIM TOURISTS' EMPOWERMENT AND ATTITUDE, AND THEIR IMPACT ON LOYALTY

SITI HALIMAH BT AB HAMID

FEP 2018 32



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

DETERMINANTS OF INTERNATIONAL MUSLIM TOURISTS' EMPOWERMENT AND ATTITUDE, AND THEIR IMPACT ON LOYALTY

Ву

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July 2018

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Good continuation of tourist loyalty could ensure sustainability in tourism industry, thus the study of consumer behaviour including empowerment, attitude and loyalty is vital in order to understand their needs. One market segment that is on the rise and could provide economic opportunities is the Muslim tourists. The question is whether the tourism industry in Malaysia has provided sufficient tourism facilities to gain the loyalty of Muslim tourists. Malaysia possesses many attributes of Halal tourism but several issues could hinder the sector such as unclear standards and rules. Besides, there are other general issues, such as bad reviews on the tourism resources, slow communication and lack of innovation in tourism products that may affect tourists' behaviour. Therefore, with the support of Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Information Integration Theory (IIT), the research aims to examine the relationships between Halal tourism brand equity (HTBE), integrated marketing communication (IMC), destination competitiveness (DC) and destination innovation (DI) mediated by Muslim tourists' empowerment (EMP) and attitude (ATT) with the final impact on loyalty (LOY). 456 questionnaires were collected from the international Muslim tourists around Kuala Lumpur. The data was analysed using SPSS and Structural Equation Modelling in AMOS. The results suggested that there are significant relationships between HTBE and IMC on EMP, DC and DI on ATT, EMP on ATT and ATT on LOY. Besides, EMP mediates the relationship between HTBE and IMC with ATT. While ATT mediates the relationship between DI and EMP with LOY but not between DC with LOY. The research has extended the body of knowledge in TPB, IIT and consumer behaviour study. There are practical implications to the practitioners and the policy makers where they could focus and strategized on the determinants that would strengthen the competitiveness of Malaysia as a destination and ensure the continuity and sustainability of the tourism industry.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

PENENTU DALAM PEMPERKASAAN DAN SIKAP PELANCONG MUSLIM ANTARABANGSA, SERTA KESANNYA KEATAS KESETIAAN

Oleh

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Kesinambungan kesetiaan pelancong dapat memastikan kelestarian industri pelancongan, oleh itu kajian terhadap tingkah laku pengguna termasuk pemperkasaan, sikap dan kesetiaan adalah penting untuk memahami keperluan mereka. Satu segmen pasaran yang semakin meningkat dan menyediakan peluang ekonomi adalah pelancong Persoalannya adakah industri pelancongan di Malaysia telah menyediakan kemudahan pelancongan yang mencukupi kepada para pelancong Islam untuk memastikan kesetiaan mererka. Malaysia memiliki banyak ciri-ciri pelancongan Halal. Walau bagaimanapun, beberapa isu boleh menghalang sektor seperti standard dan peraturan yang tidak jelas. Selain dari itu, terdapat juga isu umum, seperti komen buruk mengenai sumber pelancongan, komunikasi yang perlahan dan kurang inovasi dalam produk pelancongan, yang boleh menjejaskan tingkah laku pelancong. Oleh itu, dengan sokongan Teori Tingkah laku yang Dirancang (TPB) dan Teori Integrasi Maklumat (IIT), tujuan penyelidikan dilakukan adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan antara ekuiti jenama pelancongan Halal (HTBE), komunikasi pemasaran bersepadu (IMC), daya saing destinasi (DC) dan inovasi destinasi (DI) yang dimediasi oleh pemperkasaan pelancong Muslim (EMP) dan sikap pelancong Muslim (ATT) dengan impak terakhir ke atas kesetiaan (LOY) mereka. Sebanyak 456 soal selidik telah dikumpulkan dari pelancong Muslim antarabangsa sekitar Kuala Lumpur. Data dianalisis menggunakan SPSS dan Model Persamaan Struktur melalui AMOS.

Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara HTBE dan IMC dengan EMP, DC dan DI dengan ATT, EMP dengan ATT dan ATT dengan LOY. Selain itu, EMP mengantara hubungan antara HTBE dan IMC dengan ATT. Selain itu, ATT mengantara hubungan antara DI dan EMP dengan LOY tetapi tidak antara DC dengan LOY.

Kajian ini telah memperluaskan badan pengetahuan dalam TPB, IIT dan kajian tingkah laku pengguna. Terdapat implikasi praktikal kepada para pengamal dan pembuat dasar di mana mereka boleh memberi tumpuan dan strategi kepada faktor tertentu yang akan menguatkan daya saing Malaysia sebagai destinasi dan memastikan kesinambungan dan kelestarian industri pelancongan.



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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 10 July 2018 to conduct the final examination of Siti Halimah binti Ab Hamid on her thesis entitled "Determinants Of International Muslim Tourists' Empowerment and Attitude, and their Impact On Loyalty" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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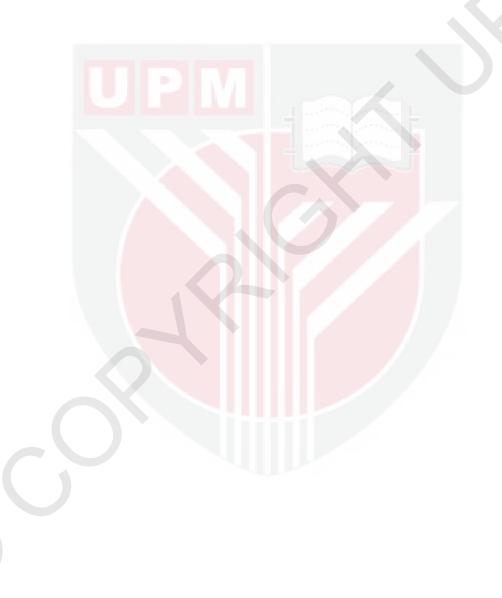
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index

AIC Akaike Information Correction

ANOVA Analysis of Variance

ATT Muslim tourist attitude

AVE Average Variance Extracted

BCG Boston Consulting Group

CB Consumer Behaviour

CBBE Customer-based Brand Equity

CFA Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI Comparative Fit Index

CMIN (Chi-Square) Discrepancy Chi-square

Chisq/df Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom

CR Composite Reliability

CR Construct reliability

DC Destination Competitiveness

DI Destination Innovation

EFA Exploratory Factor Analysis

EMP Muslim tourist empowerment

ETP Economic Transformation Program

e-WOM Electronic Word-of-Mouth

F&B Food and Beverages

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GD Global-Connected Distance

GFI Goodness of Fit

GNP Gross National Product

GVATI Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries

HTBE Halal Tourism Brand Equity

IIT Information Integration Theory

IFI Incremental Fit Index

IMC Integrated Marketing Communication

ITC Islamic Tourism Centre

JAKIM Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia

KMO Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)

LOY Muslim tourist loyalty

MOTAC The Ministry of Tourism and Culture

NFI Normative Fit Index

NKEA National Key Economic Area

NKRA National Key Result Area

NPP National Physical Plan

NTP Malaysian National Tourism Policy

OIC The Organisation of Islamic Corporation

PNFI Parsimony Normed fit Index

Performance and Management and Delivery Unit

PVA Principal Component Analysis

RBV Resource Based View

RMSEA Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

SEM Structural Equation Modelling

SCH Sharia' Compliant Hotel

SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Science

TLI Tucker-Lewis Index

T & T Travel and Tourism

TRA Theory of Reasoned Action

TPB Theory of Planned Behaviour

UAE United Arab Emirates

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organisation

US The United States

WOM Word-of-Mouth

WTM World Travel Market

WTTC World Travel and Tourism Council

WTO World Travel Organisation

TDGVA Tourism Direct Gross Domestic Products

VIF Variance Inflation Tolerance



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter explains the background of research by elaborating the phenomena of Islamic economics that influence the global economics, specifically in the tourism industry where Muslim global expenditure in travel is giving significant impact to the overall consumer expenditure. Then, the chapter explains briefly, global tourism industry and the contributions to the economy of a country and the latest trend. Next, the chapter proceeds with the scenario of Malaysia tourism industry, which contributes significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Malaysia. The discussions including on the overall scenarios of the supply chain and the statistics of Muslim tourists arrival to Malaysia. Then the chapter touches on overview of Muslim travellers that includes their obligations and expenditure to the global travelling expenditure.

In order to attract Muslim tourist, the chapter continues with a motion to study consumer behaviour (CB) namely empowerment, attitude and loyalty where the research identifies the determinants of these behaviour based on the industry issues that are gathered from many sources including news, reports, and websites. The chapter identifies solutions to the problem and proposed determinants to be studied in order to improve or solve the industry issues. The chapter then continues with the research problems, objective, research question and the study significance. Finally, the chapter explains the scope of the study, definitions of key terms, thesis organisation and closes with the chapter summary.

1.2 Research Background

Sustainability in the service industry is the most sought after outcome regardless at the micro level of the supply chain or at the macro level of a region as a whole. In service industry such as tourism and hospitality, good continuation of customer relationship or tourist loyalty could help to increase tourist patronage or wide spread the availability and reputation of the tourism products and services. Thus in marketing strategy, tourist loyalty could impact the financial standing of the tourism supply chain directly and the economy of the destination indirectly thus ensure sustainability of the industry (Rahman, 2014). In determining and studying tourist loyalty, Muslim consumers are one of the fastest rising market sections (Stephenson, 2014). It is described in Muslim Travel Index Europe Report 2014 that Muslim tourist is emerging and increasing market segment dominating the tourism industry (Kasak, 2014). To tap into the lucrative market of Muslim consumers, it is imperative to understand this market segment by studying the Muslim tourist

behaviour.

Analysis by the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report 2013 revealed that with 23% of Muslims from the total of world population, it has an impact on various market activities of Islamic economics such as finance and banking, food, fashion/clothing, cosmetics/personal care, pharmaceuticals and family-friendly travel (Thomson Reuters, 2013). The report related that, Islamic economics incorporated the same pattern of Islamic values in term of ethical, moral and spiritual values. Hence, the Islamic economics is not just about the Muslim preferences but it transcends the geographical, cultural and religious boundaries reaching out to the other consumers who seek ethical trade as well. Ethical concept that consists of good deed, righteousness and lawful (Halal) improves service quality and empowered workers that garnered loyalty and the profit (Suib & Said, 2017).

In the global competitive market, even non-Muslim countries such as Japan and Russia have started wooing the Muslim tourists as well as providing the Halal tourism services to Muslim customers (AFP, 2014; "Moscow Hotel Goes 'Halal' in bid to woo Muslim Tourists," 2014). Therefore, Malaysia needs to position herself as a destination with tip top Muslim-friendly facilities so that we are able to compete with other countries in the global arena. For better understanding of the research background, the next section will explain the overview of the tourism industry, globally and in Malaysia before touching on the Muslim travellers phenomenon including the religion obligations and the Muslim travelling expenditure.

1.2.1 Global Tourism Industry

Tourism is defined as travelling activities outside the normal environment for various purposes that contribute to the economy, population, natural and built environment of the destination (UNWTO, 2014). Tourism is based on the essence of travel delivery and visitation experiences that contributed to the transformation of the economy (Ritchie, Tung, & Ritchie, 2011). Annual Report produced by World Tourism Organisation (WTO) in 2016 had highlighted that globally, travel and tourism industry is expected to prosper with tourist who have travelled internationally reached 1.2 billion in 2016 (WTO, 2016). The top performance regions that contributed to this growth are the Europe (50%), Asia and the Pacific (25%) and Americas (16%). It was also reported that international tourism contributed 30% of the world's service export and 7% of the total exports. In addition, international tourism generated more employment and benefit larger number of exporters (WTO, 2016). Therefore, there is a merit when tourism is considered the single largest industry in the global economics that helps to expand economics development of a country by generating income, employment opportunity and foreign exchange earnings (Bhuiyan, Siwar, & Ismail, 2013).

World Travel Market (WTM) reported some trend in the tourism industry such as the Asian middle-class tourists contributing to the growth in inbound receipts (WTM, 2014). In addition, the low-cost carriers business is also booming and continues to be the choice with tourists. Another quite significant trend is the transformation of customer behaviour, services and tourism landscape due to mobile technology. With the mobile technology, customer service such as bookings can be done faster and with greater transparency. After the overview of the global tourism industry, the next section gives an overview of Malaysia tourism scenario.

1.2.2 Malaysia Tourism Scenario

Service sector is one of the main activities that contribute to the economic growth in Malaysia. In 2016, the service sector contributed 54.2% to the GDP growth with the change difference from 2015 is 5.6% (Ministry of Finance, 2016). The following Table 1.1 listed out the statistics of GDP by sector from 2015-2017.

Table 1.1: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Sector 2015-2017

	% GDP		% Change	_
	2016	2015	2016	2017
Agriculture	8.2	1.2	-3.3	1.5
Mining	8.7	4.7	1.1	1.4
Manufacturing	22.9	4.9	4.0	4.1
Construction	4.6	8.2	8.7	8.3
Services	54.2	5.1	5.6	5.7
Add: Import Duties	1.4			
GDP	100.0	5.0	4.0 - 4.5	4.0 - 5.0

Adapted from: Ministry of Finance (2016)

The sub-sectors that contributed growth to the GDP are divided into three main categories namely Final Services, Intermediate Services and Government Services. Under these services, sub-services comprise of transport and storage, wholesale and retail, F&B and accommodation are the main components that formed the tourism industry as shown in Table 1.2 (Department of Statistics, 2014).

Table 1.2: Services Sector Performance 2015-2017

	% Share to GDP % Change			!
	2016	2015	2016	2017
Final services				_
Wholesale and retail trade	14.9	6.9	6.2	6.7
F&B and Accommodation	2.8	6.4	6.1	6.5
Utilities	2.6	3.5	5.9	5.0
Other services	4.4	4.7	4.6	5.3
Intermediate services				
Finance and insurance	6.7	-0.7	0.3	0.9
Real estate & business services	4.4	6.6	6.6	6.5
Information and Communication	6.0	9.4	9.4	9.6
Transport and storage	3.6	5.7	5.7	5.8
Government services	8.9	4.0	6.5	4.5
Total	54.2	5.1	5.6	5.7

Adapted from: Ministry of Finance (2016)

Tourism is one of the most important industries in Malaysia's economy as it provides intensive employment opportunities and generates income in domestic and foreign exchange. Based on the data published in the Tourism Satellite Account, as shown in Table 1.3, annually there are encouraging growth pattern in tourism sector that contributed to the overall GDP (Department of Statistics, 2014, 2016; EPU, 2016).

Table 1.3: Growth Pattern in Tourism Industry on GDP

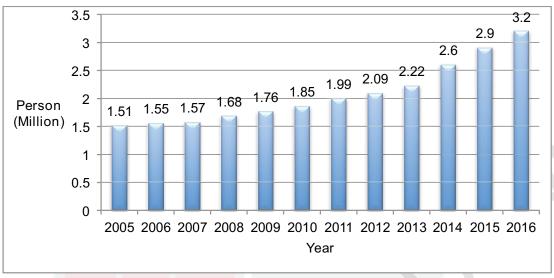
Year GVATI TDGDP GDP % Share of GVATI to GDP % Share of TDGDP to GDP (RM Billion) (RM Billion) (RM Billion) % % 2005 56.4 25.4 543.6 10.4 4.7 2006 62.9 28.1 596.8 10.6 4.7 2007 73.5 32.4 665.3 11.1 4.9 2008 86.5 37.4 769.9 11.2 4.9 2009 90.7 38.6 712.9 12.7 5.4 2010 100.1 42.4 797.3 12.6 5.3 2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2 2012 117.8 49.5 941.9 12.5 5.3		1 0.10 1 0 1101			The second of the	~ - ·
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2006 62.9 28.1 596.8 10.6 4.7 2007 73.5 32.4 665.3 11.1 4.9 2008 86.5 37.4 769.9 11.2 4.9 2009 90.7 38.6 712.9 12.7 5.4 2010 100.1 42.4 797.3 12.6 5.3 2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2		(RM Billion)	(RM Billion)	(RM Billion)	%	%
2007 73.5 32.4 665.3 11.1 4.9 2008 86.5 37.4 769.9 11.2 4.9 2009 90.7 38.6 712.9 12.7 5.4 2010 100.1 42.4 797.3 12.6 5.3 2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2	2005	56.4	25.4	543.6	10.4	4.7
2008 86.5 37.4 769.9 11.2 4.9 2009 90.7 38.6 712.9 12.7 5.4 2010 100.1 42.4 797.3 12.6 5.3 2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2	2006	62.9	28.1	596.8	10.6	4.7
2009 90.7 38.6 712.9 12.7 5.4 2010 100.1 42.4 797.3 12.6 5.3 2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2	2007	73.5	32.4	665.3	11.1	4.9
2010 100.1 42.4 797.3 12.6 5.3 2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2	2008	86.5	37.4	769.9	11.2	4.9
2011 109.4 46.2 885.3 12.4 5.2	2009	90.7	38.6	712.9	12.7	5.4
	2010	100.1	42.4	797.3	12.6	5.3
2012 117.8 49.5 941.9 12.5 5.3	2011	109.4	46.2	885.3	12.4	5.2
	2012	117.8	49.5	941.9	12.5	5.3
2013 128.7 53.5 1018.8 13.4 5.4	2013	128.7	53.5	1018.8	13.4	5.4
<u>2014</u> 151.7 68.3 1106.6 13.7 6.2	2014	151.7	68.3	1106.6	13.7	6.2

Adapted from: Department of Statistics (2014, 2016); EPU (2016)

GVATI: Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries TDGDP: Tourism Direct Gross Domestic Products

GDP: Gross Domestic Products

Tourism also provides significant increase of employment in Malaysia. Over the years, the increasing pattern was observed as illustrated in Figure 1.1 where in 2005, there were 1.5 million workers in the industry and by 2016 they had increased to 3.2 million workers (Department of Statistics, 2014, 2015, 2017).



Adapted from: Department of Statistics (2014, 2015, 2017)

Figure 1.1: 2005-2016 Employment in the Tourism Industry

As listed in Table 1.4, from 2006 to 2014 the increase of visitor arrival is from 17.55 million to 27.44 million. While for the tourists receipt the increase from 2006 to 2014 is 36.27 billion to 72 billion (Tourism Malaysia, 2017).

Table 1.4: Tourism Related Indicators

Year	Visitors	Visitor	Inbound tourist	Hotel	Average
. 541	arrivals	receipts	average stay	International	occupancy
	(Million)	(RM Billion)	length (nights)	quests	rates of hotels
	(1411111011)	(ravi Billion)	rongth (mgnto)	(Million	(%)
				persons)	(70)
2006	17.55	36.27	6.2	22.46	65.5
2007	29.97	46.07	6.3	25.93	70.0
2008	22.05	49.56	6.4	28.28	66.3
2009	23.65	53.37	6.7	28.44	60.9
2010	24.58	56.49	6.8	25.60	59.3
2011	24.71	58.32	7.0	26.02	60.6
2012	25.03	60.56	7.0	26.17	62.4
2013	25.72	65.44	6.8	26.86	62.6
2014	27.44	72.00	6.6	26.29	63.6

Adapted from: (Tourism Malaysia, 2017)

Most of tourist came from the ASEAN countries such as Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei and Philippines as in Table 1.5 attached in Appendix C1. China, India, Japan and Saudi Arabia are accounted as the major contributors for Asia continent while the rest came from other continents including North America, Australia and Europe and other countries. Malaysia is ranked at 25th out of 141 countries of the world top destination (WEF, 2015) thus tourism is identified as one of the 12 National Key Economic Area (NKEAs) to be developed by 2020 by Malaysian government (Ministry of Finance, 2014). The next section explains on supply chain and stakeholders of the tourism industry in Malaysia.

1.2.2.1 Supply Chain and Stakeholders

To develop tourism industry in Malaysia, many efforts had been done through the government's five-year plan. In the Ninth Malaysia Plan during the period of 2006 to 2010, the effort was to increase the contribution of tourism to the Malaysian economy by promoting and developing resources and infrastructure. During the period of 2011-2015 under the Tenth Malaysia Plan, the focus was on proper management and promotional activities. Then, recently, during the adoption of Economic Transformation Program (ETP) (2015-2020), the focus is to develop Malaysia into a developed-country by 2020 through the 12 NKEAs, including the tourism industry. Based on Pemandu (2010) the target for tourist arrival by 2020 is 36 million while the tourist receipt is targeted at RM168 billion. The five themes identified to improve tourism sector are (1) affordable luxury, (2) nature adventure, (3) family fun, (4) events, entertainment, spa and sports and (5) business tourism (Pemandu, 2010).

In the tourism industry, the supply chain are consist of combination of many integrated independent businesses that deliver the products and services to the tourists (Zailani, Iranmanesh, Yusof, & Ansari, 2015). According to Yilmaz and Bititci (2006), traditionally, the supply chain in tourism are consist of intermediaries (tour operators, travel agent and the retailer) that connecting the supplier (transportation, accommodation, food and beverages (F&B) and attraction providers) to the tourists. However nowadays, the Internet changes the existing scenario where it allows the suppliers to control their communication with the intermediaries and the potential tourists as well. Regardless this current scenario which has promoted transparency and improve productivity through efficiency, the level of interdependence between the supply chain is still high, thus strong cooperation between each other is needed to deliver the final services to the tourists (Yilmaz & Bititci, 2006). Moreover, international tourism is more complex because of varies cultures and systems involved where slack in any party will easily influences other party's performance along the supply chain of the tourism industry (Gengeswari, Abu Bakar, & Siti Zaleha, 2013).

In Malaysia, according to Ali Khan (2014) the tourism planning is controlled by three tier of authorities namely federal government, state government and local authorities. In federal government, the overall policy in tourism is under responsibility of Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOTAC) while the promotion and marketing aspects is under Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (Tourism Malaysia). In addition, Department of Agriculture, Department of Museum and Antiquities, Department of Wildlife and National Parks and Department of Forestry are some other government agencies that related to the development of agro tourism, heritage/cultural tourism and ecotourism respectively.

Besides the federal government, there are state governments who are in control of tourism development policies in each state in term of providing related hard and soft infrastructure for the private investment. Hard infrastructure is physical facilities such as roads, airports, hotels, shopping mall and attractions while soft infrastructure is including organisation of events. Finally, there is a third tier namely local authority, which is under the Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government that provides and maintains public facilities. Related to tourism, some of the main responsibilities of local authorities including beautification program and street improvement such as Bintang Walk project by Kuala Lumpur City Hall.

Given the multiple tiers of the tourism planning and the existence of many private owned suppliers and intermediaries, some of the challenges in tourism including ownership of the tourism facilities where cooperation between the authorities and public-private partnership are part of strategies to guarantee the sustainability of the tourism (Bhuiyan & Siwar, 2011). Next section will discuss on the Muslim tourists expenditure and arrival in Malaysia.

1.2.2.2 Muslim Tourist Expenditure and Arrival

In the global tourism and hospitality industry, there are big opportunities to develop Islamic values due to the size of the Muslim market, increasing numbers of travelling Muslims and many sub-segments in the hospitality industry. It is reported that, in 2015, \$151 billion was spent by Muslim consumers on travel where it constituted 11.2% of the global expenditure and is expected to reach \$243 billion in 2021 (Thomson Reuters, 2016). Besides, many non-Muslim destinations such as Japan, Singapore and Thailand also foresee this opportunity and trying to cater for the Muslim needs especially in Halal food offering and praying facilities (Thomson Reuters, 2014).

The top five countries of tourist arrival to Malaysia consist of Singapore, Indonesia, China, Thailand and Brunei as shown in Table 1.6 in Appendix C2 The Muslim population of these countries relative to their population is considered significant with Singapore (16%), Indonesia (88%), China (10%), Thailand (10%) and Brunei (67%). Moreover, Malaysia also received considerable number of tourists from countries with Muslim-majority population such as Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, Bangladesh and Pakistan. To forecast the scenario of the tourist arrival for three consecutive years from 2013 to 2015 from countries with Muslim-majority population (more than 50%), the relevant countries are extracted and presented in Table 1.7.

Table 1.7: Tourist Arrival from Muslim-Majority Countries (2013-2015)

Countries	Tourist	Tourist	Tourist	Total	Muslim
(In Million)	Arrival 2013	Arrival 2014	Arrival 2015	population	population
Indonesia	2,548,021	2,827,533	2,788,033	259.4	228.27
Brunei	1,238,871	1,213,110	1,133,555	0.4	0.4
Bangladesh	134,663	204,418	147,152	162.9	159.87
Iran	78,316	72,264	65,066	79.5	78.71
Saudi Arabia	94,986	113,921	99,754	31.7	31.7
Pakistan	81,397	97,144	96,112	203.4	195.87
Oman	26,601	34,534	31,934	4.4	4.36
Egypt	21,053	26,222	25,637	93.5	88.83
Iraq	27,869	27,124	20,098	38.1	37.72
Turkey	12,775	16,493	15,395	79.5	79.34
Kazakhstan	19,840	18,072	15,410	17.8	12.50
UAE	19,830	19,772	15,769	9.3	7.07
	4,304,222	4,670,607	4,453,915	980	925

Adapted from: Tourism Malaysia (2017), (Muslim Population, 2017)

Before the terrorist attack on the Unites States (US) on September 11, 2011, European countries and the United States (US) are the popular choice among the Muslim tourists. After the tragedy, the 'Islamophobia' phenomenon has caused decrease in Muslims travelling to the countries. A new trend emerged where the travelling was directed towards the "Islamicfriendly" countries such as Turkey, Thailand and Malaysia (Ariffin & Hasim, 2009). Therefore, Malaysia is capitalizing on the influx of the Middle East tourists travelling to this part of the world (Jusoff, Ibrahim, Zahari, Sulaiman, & Othman, 2009). While the MOTAC also informed that that Muslim tourists arrival for 2016 alone were 5.5 million out of 26.8 million of the tourist arrival (Hashem, 2017). Based on these statistics, there is the possibility of economy impact that can be gained from the influx of Muslims travelling. Thus, it is imperative to encourage the Muslim from the long, medium, and short haul countries to choose Malaysia as their main destination. Next, the section presents the overview of Muslim travellers and their obligations.

1.2.3 Overview of Muslim Travellers and their Obligations

Religion is an important motivation that lead people to travel and most well-known types of travelling that falls under this category are pilgrimage and missionary missions (Din, 1989). Many quotes from Al-Quran verses such as Al-Ankabut, 29:20, Surah Al-An'am, 6:11, Al-Imran, 3:137, Al-Hajj, 22:46 and Al-Mulk, 67:15 encourage Muslims to travel with the purpose of observing Allah's creation of the world and to learn lessons from the fate of disobedient people.

Long in the history of Islam, Muslims travel to Islam's holy city of Mecca for Hajj (pilgrimage), which is compulsory for Muslims who are financially and physically sound. In the Muslim's travelling world, besides Hajj there is also

Umrah, which also takes place in Mecca with a similar ritual to Hajj although it is not compulsory and can be performed at any time. There is also ziarah, practised by the tableegh groups who travel to visit Islamic destinations like mosques, sufi shrines or monasteries in order to deepen their devotion and develop spirituality (Haq, 2014). The pilgrimage travelling is a huge market and the total direct receipt from Hajj, Umrah and ziarah is \$10.7 billion in 2011 (Jafari & Scott, 2014). Haq (2014) iterated that another form of travelling for Muslims is called rihla. Rihla is divided into two aspects of travelling motivations. First, is to gain information and knowledge, for instances from religious schools. Second, rihla can also be motivated by health and business as well.

Having discussed the importance of travelling for Muslims, there is a need to understand that Islam as a religion and the Muslim as a person who embraced Islam are one integrated system. Muslims follow rules and laws called Sharia' which is based on the Quran and Hadith (recorded sayings of Prophet Muhammad PBUH). Sharia' provides the complete legal and ethical dogma that covers the entire human conducts including food, entertainment, dress code and individual behaviour. As God's (Allah) creation, Sharia' is absolute and should be adhered to, by the believers (Laldin, 2008, page 3). Therefore, in the travelling context, any activities that a Muslim is involved in should be within the Sharia' law as well.

The Sharia' rooted not only in the individual Muslim but also in society (Suib & Said, 2017). Obligations in following Sharia' fall into two categories namely Fard al-Ayn and Fard al-Kifayah. Fard al-Ayn is knowledge and obligations that must be followed by each individual Muslim that covers tawhid (faith and conviction), fiqh (ruling on deeds such as praying, fasting) and akhlaq (well manners) (Hanapi, 2013). The Quran has emphasized that Fard al-Ayn is an obligation that need to be followed by each individual Muslim as mentioned in Surah Al-Baqoroh, verse 2:21:

"O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous" (Surah Al-Bagoroh, 2:21)

While Fard al-Kifayah is an obligation fulfilled by Muslim community where if certain members in the community had performed the obligation, other community member is not compulsory to do it (Esposito, 2014). In the Quran, Surah Ali Imran, verse 3:104 stated that:

"And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful" (Surah Ali Imran, 3:104).

Nowadays at macro level, the interpretation, manner and usage of Sharia' differs, depending on the countries' legal system. Jafari and Scott (2014)

analysed that the use of Sharia' depends on each country's history including colonialism, the influence of modernism, economics, wealth and tradition. Countries such as Saudi Arabia uses the whole Sharia' law; Turkey uses Sharia' for personal and family matters while Pakistan, Morocco and Indonesia have mixed system. Malaysia and other countries such as Indonesia and Tunisia have been labelled as moderate Islamic countries that use the secular system in certain aspects of governance and use the Sharia' to govern some aspects of life of its Muslim citizens (Jafari & Scott, 2014).

At micro level, the level of religiousness or the depth of understanding of the Sharia' system plays an important role in determining the adherence level to the Sharia'. Nevertheless, generally some values are widely accepted such as mutual respect within the family and community, consumption of Halal foods only, morality and Muslim modesty (Jafari & Scott, 2014). Thus, these common Islamic values are the most practiced in the Muslim's life even when they travel to other parts of the world. The consumption of Halal foods is one of the most strictly followed Sharia's laws amongst the Muslims and repeatedly emphasized in the Quran.

Halal is an Arabic word meaning lawful or permissible and it is not limited to only food and drinks but covers daily life matters as well, as stated in Al-Qur'an Surah Al-A'raf, 7:157 (Appendix E). From the Surah, the meaning and context of Halal are broad and it denotes as a way of life. Thus, for Muslim consumers, being able to have access to Halal products or services provide a sense of security to Muslims since it means that they have followed what is asked by Sharia'. As of the community, to provide Halal facilities is an obligation thus fulfilled the Fard al-Kifayah as required by the Sharia'. Thus, the Halal concept has become a market force, quality manifestation and choices for Muslims (Aidi-Zulkarnain & Ooi, 2014). With the understanding of the needs of Muslim tourists and with the effort to attract them to choose Malaysia as a holiday destination, the question is whether Malaysia and the practitioners are ready and have provide sufficient tourism facilities to the Muslim tourists to garner their loyalty. To find the answer to this question, the next section identifies the industry issues and discusses the possible solutions.

1.2.4 Industry Issues and Possible Solutions

In line with the global Islamic economics development, the local newspaper The Star Online on 4 May 2017 had reported that Malaysia ranked first amongst the top ten of halal-friendly destinations within the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries in 2016 ("Malaysia at top spot in global Muslim travel market," 2017). However, MOTAC informed that although Muslim tourists arrival were 5.5 million out of 26.8 million of tourist arrival in 2016 but the Muslim tourists from the Middle East is still small (Hashem,

2017). To attract the Muslim tourists, one of the business strategies is to study and understand the consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour such as attitude and loyalty can be measured empirically and the result could help relevant parties such as the policy makers and the practitioners to plan and strategize accordingly. To understand consumer behaviour, industry issues in Malaysia need to be identified so that the determinants that influence tourist behaviour can be examined and solved. First, the tourism sub-sector of Halal tourism is discussed.

1.2.4.1 Halal Tourism

Halal tourism can be the motivating factors for the Muslim tourists to travel to Malaysia (Salman & Hasim, 2012). Therefore, the expectation of the Muslim tourist is higher on the environment and facilities that they can get in an Islamic country. WTM (2007) coined the term of Halal tourism to be defined as "permissible tourism activities that is based on Islamic law and cover behaviour, dress, conduct and diet". While Aziz, Rahman, Hassan and Hamid (2016) suggested that Halal tourism is the support activities provided by the supply chain based on the Sharia'. In the tourism industry, CrescentRating index and the Thomson Reuters (2013) listed out the main factors in Muslim Sharia' obligation as in the following Table 1.8. The list has been used as a benchmark to star-rate the Halal tourism features offered by the supply chain in the tourism industry worldwide.

Table 1.8: Criteria for Muslim Sharia' Obligation

	3
Travel Segment	Travel Impact
Core Supplies Service Providers	Use of Halal raw supplies
Airlines	Muslim meals, prayer space, appropriate audio
Destinations	Availability of Halal food, Halal certification system Family friendly environment Options for gender specific request Easy access to prayer facilities with proper ablution
Hotel	Halal food (Halal certified kitchen and restaurant) Prayer facilities (availability of prayer mat, prayer timetables, Kiblah directions, proximity to mosque) Ramadan services (basic necessities to breakfast i.e. water and dates, Ramadan buffet)

Adapted from: Mastercard (2015), Thomson Reuters (2013)

One of the earliest literature that discussed on Islam and tourism in Malaysia is by Din (1989). He suggested that tourism in Malaysia is more western-inspired and being an Islamic-practicing country did not significantly influence the tourist-related activities. Henderson (2003) similarly said that despite the local sensitivity on religious practices of Islam in Malaysia, the commercialisation of the tourism industry with the objective of fulfilling international visitors is dominating over the religious compliances, while

Islamic religion is described as periphery, just to show courtesies and customs of the people due to the religious adherences.

Nevertheless, as mentioned before on Fard al-Kifayah community obligation, the initiative to provide Halal tourism is fulfilled when some of the practitioners provided the facilities for the Muslim. Thus, to show the seriousness in promoting and providing Halal facilities in Malaysia, Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) has been established by the Malaysian government in 2009 to provide awareness and promotes extensive Halal tourism.

To understand the industry challenges and issues, preliminary talk were carried out in 2016 with some of the stakeholders including personnel from ITC, the agents and licensed tourist guides and few Muslim tourists. They provide feedbacks, that as most of the service providers in the industry are non-Muslim, the awareness on Muslim needs is very little. For instance, the packages prepared by the travel agent for the Muslim tourist does not provide Halal certified eateries and does not observed the praying timetable. This situations gave some dilemma to the Muslim' tourist guide who only can voice silently and indirectly, as they risk of being blacklisted by the travel agent if they voiced their concern loudly.

The challenge for the tourism industry includes the fact that alcohol is still served in hotels and restaurants, no separate recreational facilities for men and women, non-compliant entertainment and less Islamic marketing and advertising (Shafaei & Mohamed, 2015b). President of Malaysian Association of Hotels commented on the insufficiency of hotel operators in customizing products and services to cater for the Muslims especially in providing Halal food in hotels. The problem including the absence of regulatory rules, unclear standards and criteria for the Halal tourism services (KUNA, 2013).

Based on ITC, even though there are more than 300 hotels have obtained the Halal certification there are still many more who are not doing so (ITC, 2015). From the total of 219 of hotels in Kuala Lumpur listed in Tourism Malaysia website, only 115 hotels are Halal certified by JAKIM which constitutes only 52.5% of the total hotel in Kuala Lumpur (JAKIM, 2016; MOTAC, 2016). Malaysia government has ruled out on July 8 2009, that halal certification management will be managed by JAKIM (Halal Malaysia, 2017; Soraji, Awang, & Mohd Yusoff, 2016). Thus, based on the Trade Description Act 2011, only Halal logo conferred by Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) is allowed to be displayed at the eateries (Rahman et al., 2012).

However, lack of awareness about Halal concept has resulted in many fraudulent cases such as the use of fake logos or private halal logos

(Rahman et al., 2012). There are also situations where the signage of "pork free", "no pork" or "no alcohol" are posted at particular eateries without the Halal certification signage that contributed to the confusion not only to the Muslims from outside the countries but to the local Muslims as well. Recently, the local newspaper The Star Online dated 16 February 2016 reported that JAKIM has cautioned the consumers against eateries that posted signage other than JAKIM's Halal certificate signage (Divakaran, 2016). Therefore, the situation is a polemic ethical issue where eateries resort to alternative ways in attracting Muslim consumers instead of applying for the Halal certificate. This situation impacted the tour operators as well who face difficulties in finding eateries with the right Halal certificate for packages for their customers.

Even though Malaysia is voted as number one of the top 10 Muslim-friendly destinations in OIC countries, it is more meaningful if the Halal tourism is accepted and implemented widely by most of the tourism players in the country. Thus, definite policies on Halal tourism need to be included in the tourism's strategic plan so that the service providers can be guided, supervised, and not just on superficial awareness only.

Being said on the issues, Malaysia need to establish brand credibility for Halal tourism where good brand equity will establish trust, confidence and guided choices. As published in Financial Times website dated 10 February 2012, a strategist for consultancy in building brands commented that Muslim consumers look for brands in order to identify their needed products, as brands represent standard, integrity, credential and values of transparency (Shelina, 2012). Halal tourism preferred by the Muslim tourists as it provides Muslim-friendly facilities and environment that compliance to the Sharia' thus Halal tourism branding can be a powerful marketing strategy for a destination as a competitive advantage (Muhammad Nor & Daud, 2012). With this supports the research believed that Halal tourism brand could influence Muslim behaviour, hence proposed to study Halal tourism based on consumer-based brand equity (CBBE). The next section discusses other industry issue namely marketing communication.

1.2.4.2 Marketing Communication

Marketing communication should be disseminated diligently to attract Muslim tourists. Experts commented that issues on communication such as bad handling of information dissemination on the tragedy of the Malaysia Airlines MH 370 disappearance, will easily diverts potential tourists to other destination (Timms, 2015). In addition, the president of Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents commented in the local press in 2015, on the lack of prompt information given to stakeholders regarding policies such as visa requirements resulted miss opportunity to increase tourist arrival to Malaysia at the particular time (Oxford Business Group, 2015). Besides, Malaysia also noted on the marketing spending per tourist in Malaysia is the lowest compared to other neighbouring countries such as Thailand,

Singapore as stated in Economic Transformation Program (ETP) Handbook as shown in Table 1.9 (Pemandu, 2010).

Table 1.9: Marketing Spending per Tourist in 2008

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Country	Marketing Spend per tourist (RM Million)			
Malaysia	16			
Thailand	28			
Singapore	39			

Adapted from: Pemandu (2010)

From the table, Malaysia spent only RM16 million in marketing expenditure compared to neighbouring countries such as Singapore (RM39 million), and Thailand (28 million). Therefore, conveying consistent message of the destination image to the tourists through mix of communication tools and activities could resolve the issues. Hence, the research proposed to study integrated marketing communication and believe that providing evidence that this determinant has impact on Muslim tourist behaviour, certain actions could be taken to improve the issues. Other industry issue to be discussed in the next section is destination competitiveness.

1.2.4.3 Competitiveness

Malaysia needs to pay attention on some issues in the tourism assets and resources. The Borneo Post commented on 28 June 2013 that Malaysia's service quality and the aspect of cleanliness is still at sub-par level (Bong, 2013). In addition to this, The Business Insider also commented that Malaysia needs to focus on the preservation of the resources including culture and heritage, clean beaches, forests and the landscape ("Three Things That Malaysia Can Learn From Bali's Success in Tourism," 2014). There are also complaints on transport issues that make tourists stranded at particular places (Ng, Chia, Ho, & Ramachandran, 2017). In some website such as Country Reports, Malaysia's travel information in terms of traffic and road infrastructure, crime information, safety and security, etc. cannot be ignored. For instance, there are travel cautions against petty theft and burglaries. There are also reports on common bottleneck traffic in major cities due to slow pace of infrastructure development, bad street condition and refusal of taxis to use the meter but charge higher rate instead (Country Reports, 2016).

With the Internet, these kinds of comments and complaints are disseminated and can easily be found in famous travel websites such as Virtualtourist.com and Tripadvisor.com. All of these issues can give bad perceptions on image of the country, which may have an implication on the level of competitiveness of Malaysia in the tourism industry. Therefore, the research proposed to examine and proof the effect of destination competitiveness of Malaysia on the Muslim tourist behaviour so that improvement can be strategized on this

determinant. The next section discusses another industry issue that is innovation.

1.2.4.4 Innovation

To be able to compete and remain sustainable in the tourism industry, new inventions and changes or called innovation, are constantly required. In the local newspaper the Star Online 6 April 2016, the MOTAC minister commented that he is constantly asked by the foreign press on what is new in Malaysia, which signals that in order to entice tourists, tourism's new innovative products are needed (Muthiah, 2016). While The Star Online 13 May 2016 had reported during the Global Tourism Cities Conference (GTCC) 2016, it was noted that tourist would like to have 'authentic experience' that can be achieved through product innovations (Chan, 2016). On 31 July 2015, Bernama news also reported on the need to focus on innovative technology especially with enabling factors like social media to revolutionise the tourism experience (Bernama, 2015). It is also interesting to note that Professor Pervaiz K Ahmad of the Monash University in the article published by Halal Focus on 9 April 2013 commented on the need of the halal industry to be innovative and efficient in order to be competitive (Mahmood, 2013). Therefore, to confirm that this determinant is important in Malaysia tourism industry, the research suggested examining the destination innovation effect on Muslim tourist behaviour. The next section proceeds with another challenge and issue namely the imbalance of tourist arrival.

1.2.4.5 Imbalance Tourist Arrival

One of the biggest challenges for Malaysia in the tourism industry is getting high yield per tourist. During the launching of the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) Handbook by Malaysian government in 2010, it was revealed that despite the high arrival of 25 million tourists in 2009, the yield per tourist for Malaysia is only of RM2, 260 (Pemandu, 2010). This yield is low compared to Singapore's arrival of 9.7 million and yield of RM3, 106 and Thailand arrival of 14.4 million with yield RM3, 785, as shown in Table 1.10.

Table 1.10: Comparison of Tourist Arrival and Tourist Receipt in 2009

Country	Tourist arrival (Million)	Receipts per arrival (RM)
Malaysia	25.0	2,260
Singapore	9.7	3,106
Thailand	14.4	3,785

Adapted from: Pemandu (2010)

One of the possible reasons of the low yield per tourist is, due to the imbalance of tourist arrival between long, medium and short haul distance. As shown in Table 1.11, Malaysia received most of her tourists from the short

haul market with the percentage of 78% and small portions came from the medium (15%) and long haul (7%) (Pemandu, 2010).

Table 1.11: Tourist Arrival by Segment in 2009

Country	Long Haul (%)	Short Haul (%)	
Malaysia	7	15	78
Singapore	19	43	38
Thailand	36	36	28

Adapted from: Pemandu (2010)

Therefore, the government use these statistics as a benchmark to strategize, improve the yield and target the specific market segments (Pemandu, 2010). MOTAC disclosed a few reasons why Malaysia needs to set her eyes on the Middle East market. Factors such as the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in March 2014, the series of kidnapping of Chinese nationals in Sabah and the territorial disputes at the South China Sea had caused a drop in the arrivals from the medium haul China of up to 40% (Kuncinas, 2014). It is also reported that tourists from the Middle East are the world's top spenders with Saudi Arabia (\$17.8 billion), Iran (\$14.3 billion), and United Arab Emirates (UAE) (\$11.2 billion), Qatar (\$7.8 billion) and Kuwait (\$7.7 billion) (Thomson Reuters, 2014).

By expanding the tourist market segment to the long haul countries in the Middle East of which the majority of the population are Muslims, there is a possibility that the tourists from the long haul countries might stay longer due to the long distance thus, yield per tourist is expected to increase. In addition there is also a need to equally focus on the Muslim tourists from the medium and short haul countries where these countries recorded the most tourist arrival to Malaysia as shown and discussed earlier. Hence, the research proposed to examine the difference effect of Muslim tourists from short, medium and long distances have on spending behaviour and loyalty. Based on the discussed industry issues in Malaysia and the proposed determinants to be studied, the next section proceeds with the problem statement.

1.3 Statement of Problem

The increasing trend of Muslim travelling is an opportunity to promote and maintain Malaysia as the first-choice destination among the Muslim tourists. For the supply chain in the tourism industry in Malaysia, this phenomenon provides economic opportunity and benefits in exploring the Muslim market segment in order to grow and maintain profit. However, the question is whether Malaysia and the practitioners are ready and have provided sufficient tourism facilities to influence Muslim tourist behaviour.

Therefore, for standard and credential that Muslim tourists are looking for, Halal tourism is proposed to be investigated from the perspective of CBBE. The CBBE has been studied in the context of destination (Barnes, Mattsson, & Sørensen, 2014; Bianchi et al., 2014; Kladou & Kehagias, 2014), hotel (Hsu, Oh, & Assaf, 2012; Huang & Cai, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2005) and culinary tourism (Anselmsson, Bondesson, & Johansson, 2014; Horng, Liu, Chiu, & Tsai, 2012). In addition, there were studies of Halal tourism in term of Islamic attributes (Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2010, 2011). However, the study of CBBE in the tourism sector particularly in Halal tourism is limited. Thus, Halal tourism brand equity (HTBE) from consumer' perspective is proposed to be examined as the determinant of the Muslim tourists behaviour.

Other industry issue that needs to be examined is the way information on Malaysia being disseminated thus, it warranted the study of integrated marketing communication (IMC). Few studies discussed the IMC in various contexts (Gurau, 2008; Luxton, Reid, & Mavondo, 2014; Navarro, Sicilia, & Delgado-Ballester, 2009). Some studies have discussed the IMC in the tourism context (Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2011; Šerić, Gil-Saura, & Ruiz-Molina, 2014; Wang, Wu, & Yuan, 2009). The past discussions of IMC is considered limited while in Malaysia the study by Aziz and Yasin (2004) is from management's perspective. Therefore, to add to the existing knowledge in the existing literature, IMC is proposed as one of the determinants that affect the Muslim tourists behaviour.

To gauge the competitiveness of Malaysia as the travel destination, the research proposed to examine the destination competitiveness (DC). Despite its importance, the study of DC on Muslim tourists' behaviour is considered rare. In Malaysia, no prior study of overall DC in Malaysia tourism context. Most of the studies are focussed on specific dimensions such as endowed tourism resources (Butler, Khoo-Lattimore, & Mura, 2012; Camillo & Ab. Karim, 2014; Hasbollah & Baldry, 2014; Jaafar, Kayat, Tangit, & Yacob, 2013; Omar, Karim, & Omar, 2015; Salleh, Zarul, Othman, & Idris, 2014; Worden, 2003) and created tourism resources (Musa, Mohammad, Thirumoorthi, Moghavvemi, & Kasim, 2015). Therefore, the research is trying to fill in these gaps by studying the overall DC to evaluate the influence on the Muslim tourists behaviour.

Malaysia is in the need to pursue and implement new tourism ideas, product and services through destination innovation (DI). In the existing literature, innovation has been discussed in the context such as healthcare (Fermont, Douw, Vondeling, & IJzerman, 2016; Oriana et al., 2015; Sukkird & Shirahada, 2015) and supply chain (Lii & Kuo, 2016; Roscoe, Cousins, & Lamming, 2016; Zhang, Zhao, Voss, & Zhu, 2016). In the tourism industry, the discussion on innovation is growing but most of them were from the management's point of view (Aarstad, Ness, & Haugland, 2015; Grissemann, Plank, & Brunner-Sperdin, 2013; Nieves & Segarra-Cipres, 2015). Little is known on the empirical study of assessing DI from the tourist's perspective

thus, this study would provide an enormous contribution to the existing literature. Next discussion provides problem statement for the consumer behaviour outcome.

While growing number of researches have been carried on the subject of CB particularly Muslim tourists, many of the them concentrated on conceptual study (Alafi, 2013; Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2010; Ghadami, 2012; Islam & Chandrasekaran, 2013; Salleh, Hamid, Hashim, & Omain, 2014). For instance Alafi (2013) reviewed on factors and marketing plans that attract Muslims to Australia. Battour, Ismail, and Battor (2010) explained the Halal tourism concept, future trends and challenges. There are few past literatures that provide empirical studies in Muslim tourist behaviour including Battour, Battor, and Ismail (2012), Eid and El-Gohary (2015) and Eid (2013). Thus, the empirical study of Muslim tourist behaviour in this research will contribute to this growing area and advance the knowledge in the empirical study.

The advancement of technology such as the Internet and mobile telephone provide empowerment, which it is an ability to assess and sharing information for greater choices and better decision-making. This makes the empowerment study become an important factor in order to understand the consumer behaviour (Shaw, Newholm, & Dickinson, 2006). Albeit consumer empowerment study is gradually rising, it was geared more towards management perspective (Kmieciak, Michna, & Meczynska, 2012; O'Cass & Liem Viet, 2011; Timmerman & Lytle, 2007). There are some studies on consumer empowerment in other contexts such as financial, legal, healthcare and ICT/social media (Newholm, Laing, & Hogg, 2006; Ouschan, Sweeney, & Johnson, 2006; Shalom, 2007); Harrison, Waite, & Hunter, 2006; McLean, Oliver, & Wainwright, 2010; Pires, Stanton, & Rita, 2006). Even though the conceptual study on the tourist empowerment was explored by Hjalager (2001), little is known on the empirical study of tourist empowerment. There are also implicitly little studies of empowerment as the mediator, therefore, this research intends to bridge the gap and at the same time advance the knowledge in consumer empowerment field.

For attitude, while many researches had been carried out in this trait (Chung, Stoel, Xu, & Ren, 2012; Gucciardi & Jackson, 2013; Nasri & Charfeddine, 2012; Song, You, Reisinger, Lee, & Lee, 2014), there has been little study on Muslim tourists' attitude. Moreover, inconsistent results still exist in the relationship between some determinants with loyalty (Anselmsson et al., 2014; Bianchi et al., 2014; Lai, Griffin, & Babin, 2009; Ramaseshan, 2013). Thus, the research suggests tourists attitude as the mediating agent between the determinants and Muslim tourists loyalty.

To attract Muslim tourists to Malaysia, the study of tourist loyalty is crucial to provide insight into the behaviour of this market segment. In the past literatures, little attention has been paid to Muslim tourist loyalty. While there

are few empirical studies on Muslim consumer's satisfaction (Eid and El-Gohary, 2015); Eid, 2013), there are only one study on destination loyalty by Battour et al. (2012). Hence, this research set out to examine Muslim tourist loyalty empirically to enrich the body of knowledge in this context.

As noted earlier, there is imbalance between tourist arrival and low yields per tourist in Malaysia. Hence, the research intends to investigate the differences effect between the Muslim tourists from short, medium and long distance in relation to the spending behaviour and Muslim tourists loyalty.

Therefore, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen (1985) that explains factors of consumer behaviour is the best foundation of this research and had been tested widely in marketing study (Cheng & Cho, 2011; Jang, Chung, & Kim, 2014; Lam & Hsu, 2006). Another related theory is an Information Integration Theory (IIT) by Norman Anderson (1971) that explains consciousness in integrating information. Most of the application of IIT had been used in psychology field such as phenomenal causality (Schlottmann & Anderson, 1993), decision making process (Louviere & Timmermans, 1990), the context of the quality of life, and child development (Hofmans, Shanteau, & Masin, 2012), thus extending the theory in marketing field would enrich the existing literature. Therefore, this research is distinctive from the other existing literature as with TPB and IIT as the foundation, it examines the relationships between the determinants of HTBE, IMC, DC, and DI as a model to assess the mediation effect of Muslim tourists empowerment and attitude that can influence Muslim tourist loyalty. After acknowledging the statement of problems, the research objectives are stated in the next section.

1.4 Research Objective

The research objective consists of one general objective and six specific objectives as follows:

General Objective:

To assess the determinants of international Muslim tourists empowerment, attitude and the impact on their loyalty.

Specific Objectives:

Objective 1: a) To examine the effect of Halal tourism brand equity on Muslim tourist empowerment

- b) To examine the effect of integrated marketing communication on Muslim tourist empowerment
- Objective 2: a) To examine the effect of destination competitiveness on Muslim tourist attitude

b) To examine the effect of destination innovation on Muslim tourist attitude

Objective 3

- a) To examine the effect of Muslim tourist empowerment on Muslim tourist attitude
- b) To examine the effect of Muslim tourist attitude on Muslim tourist loyalty

Objective 4

- a) To examine the mediating effect of Muslim tourist empowerment on the relationship between Halal tourist brand equity and Muslim tourist attitude
- b) To examine the mediating effect of Muslim tourist empowerment on the relationship between integrated marketing communication and Muslim tourist attitude
- c) To examine the mediating effect of Muslim tourist attitude on the relationship between destination competitiveness and Muslim tourist loyalty
- d) To examine the mediating effect of Muslim tourist attitude on the relationship between destination innovation and Muslim tourist loyalty

Objective 5

To examine the mediating effect of Muslim tourist attitude on the relationship between Muslim tourist empowerment and Muslim tourist loyalty

Objective 6

- a) To examine the difference effect of Muslim tourists from short, medium and long distance countries and Malaysia on their spending behaviour
- b) To examine the difference effect of Muslim tourists from short, medium and long distance countries and Malaysia on their loyalty

After presenting the research objectives, research questions are acknowledged accordingly in the next section.

1.5 Research Question

Based on the research objectives, the research attempts to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Is there any effect of Muslim tourist empowerment on
 - a) Halal tourism brand equity?
 - b) integrated marketing communication?
- 2) Is there any effect of Muslim tourist attitude on
 - a) destination competitiveness?
 - b) destination innovation?
- 3) Is there any effect of Muslim tourist attitude on
 - a) Muslim tourist empowerment?

- b) Muslim tourist loyalty?
- 4) Is there any mediating effect of
 - a) Muslim tourist empowerment on the relationship between Halal tourism brand equity and Muslim tourist attitude?
 - b) Muslim tourist empowerment on the relationship between integrated marketing communication and Muslim tourist attitude?
 - c) Muslim tourist attitude on the relationship between destination competitiveness and Muslim tourist loyalty?
 - d) Muslim tourist attitude on the relationship between destination innovation and Muslim tourist loyalty?
- 5) Is there any mediating effect of Muslim tourist attitude on the relationship between Muslim tourist empowerment and Muslim tourist loyalty?
- 6) Is there any difference effect of Muslim tourists from short, medium and long distance countries and Malaysia on their
 - a) spending behaviour?
 - b) Muslim tourist loyalty?

Following the posited research questions, the research significance is explained afterwards.

1.6 Research Significance

The research provides some significance to the academics, practitioners and to the policy makers. The next section discusses details of the significance to the academics.

1.6.1 Academics

In academics perspectives, this research is significance and set to expand the theoretical study of consumer behaviour (CB) within the context of Muslim tourist, which is relatively scarce, thus the research will enrich the theoretical corpus. There is limited empirical research on tourist empowerment in the tourist perspective, thus contributing to the growing research in the empowerment literature. While the study of attitude as mediating construct and the study of Muslim tourist loyalty is relatively limited, thus add to the existing body of knowledge in the study of the consumer behaviour.

The research provides new light on Islamic economic phenomena particularly in Halal tourism, as this research in this field is still considered novel and not exhaustive. In addition, the proposed determinant of consumer-based brand

equity (CBBE) in the context of Halal tourism is relatively new thus contributing to the body of knowledge as well. Besides, the study of IMC and DC fill the limited literature gaps in Malaysian context. In addition, the study examines, for the first time, the association between DI with tourist attitude that has never been studied through the tourists' perspective before, thus providing a significant contribution to the existing literature.

The combination of HTBE, IMC, DC, and DI as proposed determinants of the consumer behaviour has also never been tested together in any existing literatures thus contributing to the understanding of the consumer behaviour study. The research uses TPB as underpinning theory would advance the knowledge in this field. The research also contributes to the body of knowledge by examining IIT in marketing study, which is quite rare. The study also provides significant contribution on the IIT theory as the mediating functions are examined using this theory. Next, the section will discuss the significance of the research to the practitioners.

1.6.2 Practitioners

Tourism is the catalyst in the Malaysia economics that contribute to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provide employment opportunities in many related sectors. The supply chain in the tourism industry including the supplier and the intermediaries are comprises of many independent and private owned businesses that dependent on each other. It is important to embed the awareness in these business entities on the strategies that can retain the tourist loyalty to ensure the sustainability of tourism industry in Malaysia.

Practically, the suggested determinants in this research namely HTBE, IMC, DC, and DI are crucial in the tourism industry as they provide the information that is needed by the tourism supply chain in planning their marketing strategies. For instance, the proposed determinant of HTBE is based on the consumer-based brand equity, with the dimensions including brand awareness, brand image and perceived quality. It is important to establish HTBE, as it provides trust, confidence and ultimately loyalty of the Muslim tourist. While the suggested DC are measured by endowed, created, and supporting resources. These dimensions provide comparative advantage to compete with other destinations. The IMC is becoming important due the advancement of the Internet, mobile technology and social media. The DI with the dimensions including product, managerial and environment provide the overall synergy in the tourism industry to move forward and achieve sustainability.

All of these determinants to the loyalty is not a stand-alone strategy but are constructed from the integration of many business entities along the supply chain, which finally impact the economy of the country. The tourism supply chain must be aware of how fast and furious the competitions are in the

market. If they are slow to keep up and the customer's demands are not fulfilled, the customer can easily change to other alternatives.

The research will contribute to the practitioners in terms of awareness of the existing strategies that could retain the consumers' empowerment, attitude and loyalty thus maintaining the tourism sustainability. The research can also help the tourism supply chain to see the economic benefits of Muslim tourist loyalty and thus encouraging more suppliers to provide Halal tourism to gain the economic impact of Muslim's travelling trend. Next, the research proceeds with the discussion on the significance of the research to the policy makers.

1.6.3 Policy Makers

The research is significant to the policy makers as it can provide evidence on the importance of the Muslim market to the tourism industry in Malaysia. The research offers some evidence that Halal tourism in Malaysia is important thus requiring urgent attention in the government's policy. Besides the current effort to bring Muslim tourists from the Middle East countries, the holistic implementation of Halal tourism is still immature where it is still on awareness and volunteer-basis.

Halal tourism need to be discussed or included in the government's tourism strategic planning such as in the Economic Transformation Program (ETP) together with other sub-sectors such as nature adventure, spa, sport and business tourism. In addition, contributing to the fact that the majority of Malaysians practices Islam, Halal tourism is not just catering to the international tourists but contributing to the domestic Muslim tourists as well.

The research also aimed to shed new light on other determinants namely IMC, DC and DI that are equally important in attracting Muslim tourists. These highlights required further attention and improvement in the policies such as focus on enhancing marketing communication with better budgeting and incentives in innovation contribution by the supply chain.

In addition, as noted in the report by Pemandu (2010), there is an imbalance of tourist arrival between short, medium and long haul distance and the impact on the yield per tourist. Thus, this research would be able to provide evidence on the significant difference of the haul distances on the loyalty and the spending behaviour. This evidence required similar attention so that better strategies can be developed through policy. The research problems, gaps, objectives and significances are summarised in Table 1.12 attached in Appendix C3.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The research aims to investigate consumer behaviour of empowerment, attitude, and the impact on the loyalty. Tourism sector has been chosen as the research context due to the contributing factor of the sector to the economy of Malaysia. Tourism sector provides many employment opportunities where there is an increasing pattern in tourism employment since 2005 (Department of Statistics, 2014). Tourism also produces national income in domestic and foreign where there is growth pattern since 2005 in Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries (GVATI) and Tourism Direct Gross Domestic Products (TDGDP) to the overall GDP (Department of Statistics, 2014). At micro level, the tourism industry helps many private owned businesses within the supply chain to prosper and benefits from the arrival of the tourists.

The scope of this research is to study Muslim tourist who choose Malaysia as their destination. As discussed earlier Muslim traveling expenditure has seen increasing pattern over the years and expected to reach \$243 billion in 2021 (Thomson Reuters, 2016). Thus, the research would like to examine the trend of Muslim tourist as the target population. In addition, as one of the objectives of the research is to test on the destination competitiveness and destination innovation of Malaysia, thus the international Muslim tourist is the most suitable due to their ability to compare their experiences without prejudice. Therefore, the sample representative is Muslim tourist with the expectation on their related knowledge and practice on Islam to answer the related question on Halal tourism.

The target sample is search around Kuala Lumpur area, the capital city of Malaysia. The area is deem sufficient to gather the sample as it is the main arrival city and in top 10 of favourite cities in Malaysia among the Muslim tourist (Tourism Malaysia, 2015). In addition, many facilities located in Kuala Lumpur area including shopping malls, hotels and eateries besides attractions including Ain Arabia of Kuala Lumpur, KLCC and Putra Mosque in Putrajaya that may attract Muslim tourist. As the scope of the study is mentioned, the next section provides definition of the key terms of the research.

1.8 Definition of the Key Terms

The following are the key terms and the operational definitions of the research, presented in alphabetical order:

Destination Competitiveness (DC)

The ability of the destination to provide competitive tourism products and service that is better compared to other places (Mechinda, Serirat, Popaijit,

Lertwannawit, & Anuwichanont, 2010).

Destination Innovation (DI)

The ability of the destination in seeking and implementing new ideas, product or process to improve the overall tourism industry (Fraj, Matute, & Melero, 2015).

Halal Tourism

Permitted tourism activities that is based on Sharia' and cover behaviour, dress, conduct and diet (WTM, 2007)

Halal Tourism Brand Equity (HTBE)

Value added brand equity of Halal tourism that differentiates, cater to and reflects the Muslim identity (Keller, 1993), Lassar et al., 1995).

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)

A mixture of marketing communication activities and strategies that would be able to convey the consistent message of the destination's image to the tourist (Luxton et al., 2014; Šerić et al., 2014).

Islamic Economics

Application of Sharia' in economics to promote justice and satisfaction to people and enable them to fulfil their religion obligations (Zaman, 1984)

Long Haul

Every airport-to-airport distance that is more than 4000km is a long-haul (Eurocontrol, 2005).

Medium Haul

Every airport-to-airport distances that is more than 1500 km and less than or equal to 4000km is medium-haul (Eurocontrol, 2005).

Muslim

Muslim is a follower of the religion of Islam (IRFI, 2015).

Short Haul

Every airport-to-airport distance that is less than or equal to 1500km is short-haul (Eurocontrol, 2005).

Tourist

A visitor who in his/her trip includes an overnight stay (overnight visitor) (UNWTO, 2014).

Tourist Attitude

Reaction of the tourist due to the belief in the value and benefit of the offering as experienced by the tourist (Ajzen, 2011).

Tourist Empowerment

The capability of the tourist in assessing and sharing information through particular channels for greater choices and better decision making (Pires et al., 2006; Yuksel, Milne, & Miller, 2016).

Tourist Loyalty

A variety of committed behaviour possessed by tourist towards a destination (Mechinda et al., 2010).

Next section presents the thesis organisation for the research.

1.9 Thesis Organisation

This section presents the brief summaries of the thesis that is organised from Chapter 1 to Chapter 7 as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the research by presenting the background of the study and the problem statement. Then based on that, the chapter presents the research objectives and research questions. The chapter then explains the research significance to the academics, practitioners and policy makers. This is followed by the scope of the study and definitions of key terms. The chapter ends with thesis organisation and chapter summary.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents the brief introduction of the relevant theories and concept of consumer behaviour. Then the chapter presents the literature review stars with general overview, follows by the definition, conceptual and the past research of each constructs. The constructs are consists of the determinants namely HTBE, IMC, DC and DI. While for the outcome behaviours consists of tourist empowerment, attitude and loyalty. The chapter ends with chapter summary.

Chapter 3: Development of a Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses This chapter explains the underpinning theories consist of Information Integration Theory (IIT) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). Then the chapter explains the related models namely Customer-Based Brand Equity Model (CBBE) and Destination Competitiveness (DC) Model. After that, the chapter presents the proposed research conceptual framework. Then the chapter develops the hypotheses supported by the discussion on the literature review. The chapter ends with the listing of research objectives and the hypotheses.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology of the research starts with the research paradigm. This is followed by research design, which discusses the justification to use the particular method namely the quantitative method in the research. Then, the chapter explains on the sampling design, which included the target population, unit of analysis, sample size, sampling technique and data collection procedure. In addition, the chapter discusses the measurement development with justification on choosing the particular

questions and scale to measure the constructs. After that, the chapter explains data analysis procedure, reliability, validity and structural equation modelling (SEM). The chapter ends with reports on pre-test and pilot test.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Result

This chapter presents data analysis, which starts with preliminary analysis that reports on the data preparation and data screening. Then the chapter presents the descriptive analysis, which describes the demographic analysis, descriptive statistics and assumptions of multivariate analysis. This is followed by the multivariate analysis that reports on ANOVA, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Measurement Model and Structural Model. The chapter ends with analysis on direct and mediating hypotheses testing and chapter summary.

Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the research findings and discussions. The discussions are divided into segments based on research objectives presented in Chapter 1. The discussions relate the findings to the result in the existing literature and then provide insights into the current scenarios in the tourism industry in Malaysia.

Chapter 7: Conclusions, Contributions, Limitations, Future Research This chapter describes conclusion of the thesis. Then the chapter proceeds with contributions of the research to the theoretical, practitioners and policy makers. Next, the chapter discusses the study limitations and ends with future research.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the research background where it outlined the influx of global Islamic economy including in the tourism industry. Then, the chapter discussed the tourism industry from global and Malaysia scenarios and later on the overview of Muslim travellers and their obligations. Then, the industry issues were identified and possible determinants were proposed that become the problem statement of the research. The chapter then provided the research objectives and questions before proceeding with the research significance to the academic, practitioners and the policy makers. Subsequently the scope of the study is presented followed by the definitions of key term. The chapter ended with the thesis organisation where brief overview of chapter one to chapter seven is presented.

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