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## THE INFLUENCE OF INSTAGRAMABLE AESTHETICS AND HALAL TRAVEL ETHICS ON GEN Z'S TOURISM PREFERENCES

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics on the travel preferences of Muslim Generation Z (Gen Z), specifically among students of Sharia Economics and Islamic Communication Studies at Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram. The phenomena of Instagrammable tourism, which emphasizes visual appeal, along with the growing awareness of halal travel principles in destination selection, are key factors shaping Gen Z's travel preferences, who are highly active on social media. This research employs a quantitative descriptive-explanatory approach using a Likert scale questionnaire validated for reliability and validity. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 150 respondents. The results of multiple linear regression analysis indicate that although Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics have a positive influence on Gen Z's travel preferences, the effects are minimal and statistically insignificant. This study fills a gap in the literature regarding the interaction between visual aesthetics and halal principles in the context of halal tourism in the social media era. It also offers practical implications for developing destination marketing strategies that incorporate both aesthetic values and Sharia ethics for young Muslim travelers. The study recommends sustainable and inclusive tourism development by integrating aesthetic appeal and halal ethics.

**Keywords:** Instagrammable Aesthetics, Halal Travel Ethics, Travel Preferences, Generation Z, Halal Tourism, Social Media

## INTRODUCTION

The global tourism industry has undergone significant transformation driven by advances in digital technology and social media platforms, particularly Instagram, which has popularized the trend of visually appealing destinations known as Instagrammable aesthetics (Ahadiyah, 2024). This phenomenon aligns closely with the characteristics of Generation Z (Gen Z), who have grown up in the digital era and tend to prioritize visually engaging and shareable experiences when choosing travel destinations. Instagrammable aesthetics have become a primary factor shaping Gen Z's travel preferences, as they not only seek memorable experiences but also aim to express their identity and lifestyle through captivating digital content (Kim & Kim, 2022). At the same time, increasing religious awareness among Muslim travelers has elevated the importance of halal travel ethics. Halal tourism encompasses not only the provision of halal food and appropriate prayer facilities but also adherence to Islamic principles throughout the travel experience (El-Gohary, 2021).

Previous studies have explored the influence of Instagrammable aesthetics on travel decisions among young travelers, highlighting how visual appeal significantly affects Gen Z's destination choices (Suhartanto et al., 2023). Meanwhile, research on halal travel ethics emphasizes their critical role in shaping Muslim travelers' preferences (Han et al., 2022). However, these studies generally examine these factors separately, with limited integration of Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics in understanding Muslim Gen Z travel preferences. This research addresses this gap by investigating how both factors jointly influence the travel preferences of young Muslim travelers in the contemporary social media era.

This study aims to analyze the impact of Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics on the travel preferences of Muslim Gen Z, intending to contribute academically to the development of digital tourism and halal tourism theories, as well as to provide practical recommendations for tourism managers and policymakers in designing effective and sustainable marketing strategies. Therefore, this research not only addresses the aesthetic needs of the younger generation but also respects the religious values that are integral to their identity as Muslim travelers.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The rapid advancement of digital technology and social media has significantly transformed tourist behavior, particularly among Generation Z (Gen Z), who are deeply immersed in the online world. The concept of Instagrammable aesthetics, which emphasizes the visual appeal and aesthetic value of tourism destinations, has become a major attraction for young travelers. Kim and Kim (2022) assert that the visual aesthetics of a destination significantly influence Gen Z's travel decisions. Destinations offering unique and photogenic spots not only enhance the travel experience but also encourage social media sharing, creating a viral effect that boosts tourist visits (Suhartanto et al., 2023).

In addition to aesthetics, religious values and ethics in tourism have gained increasing attention among Muslim travelers, especially young Muslims who seek to uphold halal principles in all their activities, including tourism. The concept of halal travel encompasses various aspects such as the availability of halal food, adequate prayer facilities, and adherence to Islamic dress codes and behavioral norms (El-Gohary, 2021). Supporting this, Han et al. (2022) demonstrate that halal tourism plays a critical role in fostering satisfaction and loyalty

among Muslim tourists. Halal ethics not only fulfill religious obligations but also add value to tourism destinations by attracting a growing market segment.

However, research that integrates both factors, Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics, in the context of Gen Z's travel preferences remains scarce. Nugroho and Maulana (2023) emphasize that while visual aesthetics can enhance tourists' emotional experiences, its impact on travel decisions should be examined alongside the cultural and ethical values upheld by tourists. Oliveira and Panyik (2022) further highlight the role of social media as a powerful promotional tool that shapes perceptions and preferences, especially among Gen Z, who are highly responsive to visual content.

The integration of Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Muslim Gen Z tourists' preferences, who not only seek visually attractive experiences but also ensure adherence to Sharia principles. Therefore, this study aims to fill the existing research gap and contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of modern and sustainable halal tourism.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research approach with a descriptive-explanatory design. This approach is chosen to objectively measure and analyze the influence of independent variables, Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics on the dependent variable, namely the travel preferences of Muslim Generation Z. The quantitative method allows for systematic collection and statistical analysis of numerical data to test hypotheses regarding the relationships among variables.

The population consists of students from the Sharia Economics and Islamic Communication Studies programs at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram, totaling 332 individuals, all belonging to Generation Z. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 150 respondents who are active Instagram users and have an interest or experience in halal tourism.

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale, designed to assess respondents' perceptions of Instagrammable aesthetics, halal travel ethics, and travel preferences of Gen Z. Prior to full deployment, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability using product-moment correlation and Cronbach's Alpha, with reliability coefficients exceeding 0.7, indicating good internal consistency.

The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms to facilitate efficient access and reach among respondents. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to summarize respondent characteristics and variable distributions. Classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests, were conducted to ensure the suitability of the data for multiple linear regression analysis.

Hypothesis testing was performed using multiple linear regression to examine the partial and simultaneous effects of Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics on Gen Z travel preferences. All statistical analyses were carried out using SPSS version 20 software.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved 150 respondents from the Sharia Economics and Islamic Communication Studies programs who are active Instagram users. Descriptive analysis shows that most respondents have a high interest in travel destinations featuring

Instagrammable aesthetics and halal-compliant facilities. However, the results of the multiple linear regression analysis indicate that the influence of Instagrammable aesthetics on Generation Z travel preferences is positive but statistically insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Similarly, the halal travel ethics variable also shows a positive but insignificant effect ( $p > 0.05$ ). The simultaneous influence of these two variables is also not significant, with a very low R Square value, suggesting that other factors may play a more dominant role in determining Gen Z travel preferences.

**Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Results**

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	p-value
Constant	41.218	9.010	4.575	0.000
Instagrammable Aesthetics (X1)	0.100	0.144	0.695	0.489
Halal Travel Ethics (X2)	0.055	0.117	0.473	0.637

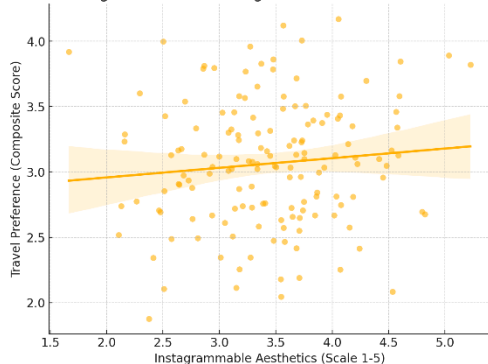
These findings suggest that although Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics are considerations for Muslim Gen Z travelers when selecting destinations, neither factor serves as the primary determinant of their travel preferences. This could be due to the more complex and multidimensional nature of Gen Z preferences, which may include price, ease of access, and safety factors not measured in this study. Additionally, the limited scope of respondents from only two study programs may affect the generalizability of the results.

The results align with the study by Nugroho and Maulana (2023), which asserts that the influence of visual aesthetics must be considered alongside sociocultural and personal values in travel decision-making. Meanwhile, the findings regarding halal travel ethics reinforce Han et al.'s (2022) conclusions that while halal aspects are important, they are insufficient alone to fully determine young travelers' preferences without the support of other variables.

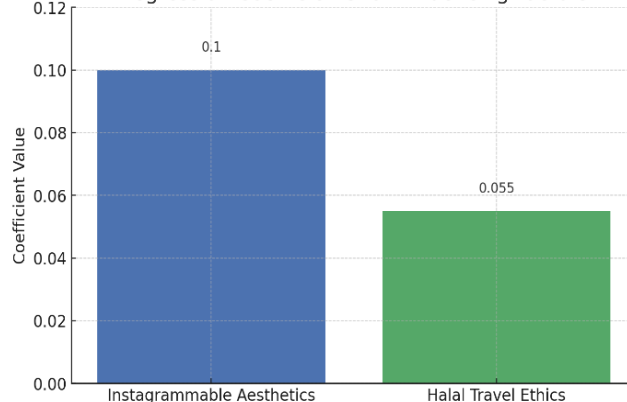
This research contributes to the understanding that integrating Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics should be examined together with other diverse variables in future studies. Practically, tourism industry stakeholders are recommended to develop destinations that are visually appealing and Sharia-compliant while also addressing other needs and preferences of Gen Z travelers.

The regression line indicates a positive trend, albeit with a weak correlation. This suggests that higher perceptions of

Scatter Plot with Regression Line: Instagrammable Aesthetics vs Travel Preference



Regression Coefficients for Influencing Factors



Instagrammable aesthetic value in tourist destinations tend to be associated with an increase in travel preference, although the influence is not particularly strong.

These visualizations reinforce the study's findings that Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics contribute to the travel preferences of Muslim Gen Z, but their effects remain limited and not dominant. Therefore, it is recommended that future research incorporate additional comprehensive variables to better capture the complexity of travel preferences.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the influence of Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics on the travel preferences of Muslim Generation Z. Based on quantitative analysis involving 150 respondents, the findings reveal that while both Instagrammable aesthetics and halal travel ethics have a positive relationship with travel preferences, their effects are statistically insignificant and relatively small. This suggests that these factors, although relevant, are not the primary determinants in shaping travel decisions among Muslim Gen Z travelers.

The results highlight the complexity of travel preferences within this demographic, indicating the need to consider a broader range of factors such as price sensitivity, accessibility, safety, and personal motivations in future research. Furthermore, the limited scope of respondents from only two study programs may limit the generalizability of these findings.

Practically, tourism stakeholders are encouraged to develop marketing strategies and destinations that integrate both visually appealing elements and halal compliance while also addressing other diverse needs of young Muslim travelers. Future studies should expand the variable scope and sample diversity to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of travel preferences in this segment.

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