

## Perceptions of Muslim Travellers Toward *Halal* Lifestyle in South Korea

SITI SYAZA NABILAH BINTI FAUZHANA\* & NORAZIRAH AYOB

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

\*Corresponding author: syazafauzi@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the perception of Muslim travellers toward *Halal* lifestyle in South Korea. This study is significant due to a huge growth of Muslim tourists in South Korea over recent years. Statistics has shown an influx of Muslim tourists from Malaysia travelling to South Korea from year-to-year. Interviews were conducted to gain in-depth and comprehensive insights of Malaysian Muslims' perception on the *Halal* culture in South Korea. The questions were designed in the interview covers three issues, which include the pre-travel behaviour, extensivity of information search, and travel decision. According to the interviews, most of the travellers spent their time conducting research, explicitly on *Halal* dietary matters before heading to South Korea. They also stated that it was quite hard finding places that serve *Halal* food. Therefore, we concluded that the *Halal* principle adoption in Korea influences the travel decision by most Muslim travellers.

Keywords: Exploratory, *halal*, Muslim, South Korea, tourist perception

Copyright: This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the CC-BY-NC-SA (Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, for non-commercial purposes, provided the original work of the author(s) is properly cited.

---

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been identified as one of the factors of economic growth in recent years. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), it is forecasted that Asia and Pacific would become the second most important tourist destination in the world by 2020. South Korea being one of Asia's largest economy and strategically located between China, Russia and Japan, is deemed to be an attractive tourist destination.

South Korea has competitiveness advantages in a few important areas such as arts, historic places and heritage. Credit to its growth in a large part of the export-focused strategy, South Korea has enjoyed rapid growth. From the year 2012, the visitor arrivals keep increasing from 11,140,028 (end of 2012) up to 17,241,823 visitors by the end of 2016 (South Korea Tourism Organization, 2017). South Korea is a tourist-friendly country since it is easy for the local and international tourists to get information from the information centres that are strategically located in airports, hotels and subway stations. This country is a well-developed country since they are advanced in several industries compared to other developing countries, for example, their sophisticated public transports, several world-renowned universities, entertainment and medical industry especially in the plastic surgical field. South Korea is not new to most people in the world. The Hallyu phenomenon has effectively made travellers especially K-pop fans to go to South Korea. In other words, the popularity of K-pop and K-drama have made the capital of South Korea a desirable holiday destination (Chin, 2017).

*Halal* is defined as lawful and permitted. It is an Arabic word which comes from the Holy Quran. These laws are practiced by Muslims all around the world. *Halal* from dietary standpoint, is any food and beverages free from components that prohibited for Muslims to consume, otherwise, commonly adopted as "pork-free" and "alcohol-free". Whilst the contrary to this principle is known as Haram.

*Halal* can also mean meat that came from allowed animals are to be slaughtered before consuming them. The slaughtering procedure must fulfil a few requirements to make it valid. Growing demand for *Halal* phenomenon has dramatically increased in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries as the number of Muslims all around the world keep

increasing year by year. In simple words, all food consumed by Muslims should be prepared, processed, packaged, transported and stored in such a manner that it complies with according to Sharia principles.

*Halal* as a principle isn't only restricted with food and how they were processed but in a holistic perspective, cosmetics, logistics, finance, medicine, textile, marketing, travel and tourism are also categorized under *Halal* (Zulkifli, Rahman, Awang & Man, 2011). Hashim and Mat Hashim (2013) stated that *Halal* cosmetics not only includes the ingredients, production process and safety issue but must also include the manufacturing process, storage, packaging and delivery. Besides *Halal* cosmetics, *Halal* logistics can be defined as: "The Command & Control of goods flows in a value system in such a way that the *Halal* integrity is secured throughout the supply chain (Abd Rahim, Mohd Sirajuddin, Mohd Mansor & Zainal, 2018) Malaysia Institute of Transport (MITRANS) on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at the *Halal* Logistics Conference 2012. According to Duman (2011), Islamic tourism can be defined as "the Muslims activities of travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year".

Originally, 'tourist' and 'traveller' were interchangeable terms which describe a person who was touring. Recently, according to the Tourism, Tourists and Society book by Sharpley (2018), someone who is travelling/touring for an extended period is usually applied to the word 'Traveller'. The word tourist, on the other hand, is defined as a person who's travelling away from his or her habitual habitat or residence. While travelling, a tourist will consume the tourism product which benefits the economies of a country he or she is visiting (Wang & Pizam, 2011).

There were 1.6 billion Muslim in this world according to 'Muslim World and Its Tourism' in 2010 (Jafari & Scott, 2014). The numbers keep increasing and by the year 2070, a recent report from the Pew Research Centre predicted that there will be more Muslims than Christians around the globe.

The purpose of this research is to discover the perception of Muslim travellers towards *Halal* principle in South Korea. Since South Korea is not yet fully ready to endorse *Halal* in their market, it is important to know what travellers perceive of *Halal* in the context of South Korea. The community of Muslims in South Korea is slowly growing in numbers and there is a minor step up where there are several official websites that provide *Halal* information and even *Halal* food guides. These websites include the South Korea *Halal* website (<http://SouthKoreaHalal.org/>) and visitSeoul.net website (<http://english.visitseoul.net/map-guide-book>). However, the in-depth information on not just *Halal* food but *Halal* tourism, *Halal* financial and *Halal* cosmetics in Korea are still grey areas for Muslim travellers especially who visits from different countries.

Apart from that, South Korea is still lacking in *Halal* supplies especially restaurants that serve *Halal* food where food is essentials for Muslim travellers. Since South Korea is not a Muslim country, Muslim travellers often face this problem because *Halal* foods and restaurants are mostly situated in Itaewon and there is at least one *Halal* restaurant in other parts of South Korea which could be a problem for them.

The context of travel decision-making has been narrated differently by authors. One of it is doing information search for the particular region or destination, accommodation, length of stay, mode of transportation and to learn more about the particular destination in order to reduce the risk of uncertainties and enhance the quality of the trip (Murray, 1997). In this paper, we will identify if *Halal* really matters in the traveller's travel decision-making.

According to the official South Korea Tourism Organisation, there were about 750,000 Muslims travelled to South Korea in the year 2014. Certainly, the Muslim market is a good opportunity for South Korea to venture. Hence a study on the general perception of Muslims toward *Halal* industry in South Korea looking into their pre-behaviour, information on the availability of *Halal* supplies and its impact on travel decision to South Korea.

### **Research Questions**

There are few questions that need to be answered for this research which includes:

1. Do travellers make research on the *Halal* market before travelling to South Korea?
2. How is the availability level of finding places that serve *Halal* food and beverages in South Korea?
3. Does *Halal* aspects influence the travellers' decision to travel to South Korea?

### **Significance of Study**

In this era of industrialization and urbanization, local communities often faced the challenges of conserving their traditional cultural tourism resources. South Korea is one of the countries that are famous for its own culture and heritage. These days, Islamic tourism is becoming like mushrooms growing after the rain. Although the Muslim market

is not being catered effectively in South Korea, there are small associations taking baby steps to introduce Muslim and Islam to South Koreans. There is some research done previously by other researchers, but research specifically on perceptions of Muslim travellers towards *Halal* in South Korea is not yet to be found. This research can be the initial step towards future studies on the *Halal* industry in South Korea.

As the number of Muslims keep increasing globally, many countries are starting to market their Islamic tourism to fulfil the Muslim travellers' needs. Therefore, it is important to do this study to improve the level of awareness among the business owners and entrepreneurs in South Korea. They can take this as an advantage to venture into Muslim's market which is still a niche market in South Korea. Some research has emphasized on the importance for responsible development where the tourist engages with the local community and is respectful of the values of the host in their behaviour (Harrison & Husbands, 1996; Spenceley, 2008). This is mainly what Islamic tourism is trying to seek whereby the locals are aware of the Muslim behaviour and get to treat them according to their beliefs as long as they respect each other.

As there is a large population of Muslims across the globe, this leads to an increase in the number of Muslim tourists especially in South Korea. In this case, this study is important to know how the tourists evaluate *Halal* industry in South Korea. This is because Muslim tourists are quite demanding since they have to follow the *Sharia* rules.

This study is also significant to know what travellers expect *Halal* South Korea to become in the future by investigating their personal perceptions on this topic. Although South Korea is not one of the Islamic countries, this initiative can be done to improve the awareness and introduce Islam in-depth to South Koreans so that they are not going through any culture shock when seeing or meeting Muslim tourists or even South Koreans whom convert to Islam. Moreover, this research can also help tourism marketers in South Korea to demonstrate Muslim friendly environment of the country for potential Muslim travellers from around the globe.

## **MATERIALS & METHODS**

For this study, unstructured qualitative responses were used since the interviews took quite some time to be done. The answers from the interview were coded and stored in an electronic data file. The process of coding involves the translation of data into symbolic form by using numbers as representation. As in the book of Research Method (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013), coding is defined as numbers assigned to transfer data from questionnaire or interviews. It is also defined as rules for interpreting, classifying and recording data. There are two types of coding which are unstructured qualitative responses (long interviews) and structured qualitative responses.

A total of nine respondents selected via judgmental sampling were interviewed in this study. The structure of the interview was designed based on the research questions (Table 1).

## **RESULTS**

They were 9 interviewees, 5 of them were males and the remaining were females. The age ranges from 19 up to 52 years old and all of them were Muslims since this thesis was specified on Muslim travellers. The age ranges were chosen to get various perspective from different generations. One of them was 19 and travelled to Korea with his parents, four of them were attending a student exchange program in Korea for a year. They were 2 parents who travelled to Korea together with their family and are very meticulous regarding *Halal* matter. The interviews were done in fair and ethical manner and no bias intended during the interviews.

This section was the second section during the interview. The heading was further divided into three sub-headings. These sub-headings were named as (1) preparing to travel, (2) information resources, and (3) importance of information research. Each sub-heading consists of several questions. The answers were coded according to the theme. This section of interview questions was asked to investigate how these travellers make preparation before they travel to South Korea.

According to the interview in the second section, interviewees were asked about pre-travel behaviour. Most of the interviewees made their own research before travelling to South Korea. Five of them said that they will do a little bit

**Table 1.** Interview Questions

<b>Pre-travel behavior (RQ1)</b>	<b>Extensivity of information search (RQ2)</b>	<b>Travel decision (RQ3)</b>
What are the things you do before travelling to South Korea?	Do you search for information regarding <i>Halal</i> when you travel to South Korea for business purposes?	Is it easy/hard for you to find restaurants that serve <i>Halal</i> meals?
How long do you take to prepare before travelling to South Korea?	How does your information search vary when you travel with different kind of people? (children, business partner, friends, family)	Do they provide proper <i>Halal</i> certification in their restaurants?
Do you make your own research/study before going to South Korea?	How long do you usually spend on information search before travelling?	How is the level of availability for <i>Halal</i> authentic South Korean meals in South Korea?
Do you make research when travelling in group(s) or solo travelling or both?	How can people's blog posts/reviews influence your perceptions toward <i>Halal</i> in South Korea?	How often do you travel?
How do you find your information? (Internet, flyers, WOM, etc)	Is it easy to identify whether the food is genuinely <i>Halal</i> or not?	How many times have you visited South Korea?
Are you usually the one who makes the research before travelling?	Do you think some of the street food sells in South Korea are safe to be consumed by Muslims?	How often do you travel to non-Muslim country?
Do you do a thorough research on <i>Halal</i> before travelling to South Korea?	How much money (in RM) do you spend (estimation) for <i>Halal</i> food while in South Korea for a day?	What is your common purpose in travelling?
Is the information on <i>Halal</i> (restaurants, mosques, cosmetics, etc) important to you? Why?	In your opinion, is there more local or foreign (Pakistan, Iran, Turkish, India, etc) <i>Halal</i> restaurant in South Korea?	Do you make your own travelling decision or other people will contribute as well? (when travelling in group)
Are there enough resources for you to do information search about <i>Halal</i> in South Korea?	In your opinion, is the amount of Muslim-friendly (restaurants, prayer hall, <i>Halal</i> meat, etc) in South Korea is sufficient for the local Muslims and tourists?	Is <i>Halal</i> matter concerns you the most when travelling to South Korea?
Which is the most source that influences your perceptions toward <i>Halal</i> in South Korea?	<i>Halal</i> cosmetics or skincare products are equally important to me.	Is there any other factor that influences your travel decision to South Korea?
How important is it to you to make such research before travelling to South Korea?	Checking often the ingredients first before buying the cosmetics or skincare and food products in South Korea.	Can you easily find places to pray in South Korea besides the central mosque in Itaewon?
Do you make any research for your revisit to South Korea?		Does your information search before travelling influences your decision-making process travel to South Korea?
Why do you think you sacrifice your time in making research before travelling? What motivates you?	Intention to buy/not buy products (i.e: makeup brush) if it is made (contaminated) with unlawful materials in Islam.	Does <i>Halal</i> situation in South Korea influence your decision to travel there?  Do you think it is worth to travel to South Korea? (based on <i>Halal</i> in South Korea)  I will be delighted to revisit South Korea again.

of shopping such as buying winter clothes and snacks from Malaysia (i.e. instant noodles). Other than that, two of them said that they will monitor currency from time to time before travelling to South Korea. Meanwhile, the other two interviewees will plan on what to bring and make some information search on the places they planned to visit. The travellers will do some research on the *Halal* information in South Korea in order to prepare themselves and so that they can plan their holiday smoothly. Therefore, it is not surprising that research on information has been one of the most examined subjects in consumer studies (Schmidt, 1996).

Besides that, most of them also mentioned that they will still do some research for their revisit to South Korea in the future. This is to make sure that they are up to date on the *Halal* situation in South Korea at that time. To answer the research question regarding the research made by travellers on the *Halal* market before traveling to South Korea, there are few use-cases in the previous study by Kotler in the year 1998. Kotler mentioned that information search was done by travellers before traveling and they might encourage to go for an active search in information including advertisement (Kotler, 1998).

Regarding information resources, the interviewees obtained their information through internet surfing. They said that the internet was the most reliable platform in finding sources since the information they get from the internet is limitless and easy to get. Besides the internet, the travellers often seek information and recommendation from friends and family that have experienced South Korea before them. They rely on this resource because they believe that the information gained from their close friends and relatives are trustable.

Addition to that, two interviewees mentioned that they obtained information on *Halal* in South Korea from reading other people's blog posts. They said that those bloggers often visit South Korea and they knew every nook and crook on finding the best places to dine in South Korea without having any doubt on *Halal* matters. According to them, there were enough resources for them to do the information search regarding *Halal* in South Korea. This is because of the initiatives done by the authorities like the South Korean Tourism Organisation (KTO). KTO provide *Halal* guidebooks on their website as well as at their building in South Korea.

Six of the nine interviewees claimed to have made a thorough research before going to South Korea so that they can save time once they were there. They also told that the information on *Halal* market is very important to them because they need to carefully monitor and be alert on what they consumed since South Korea is not a Muslim country. Thus, a non-Islamic country like South Korea might not know what it is like to be a Muslim and what can be eaten or not.

Most of them said that it is important for them to do the research to practice as a better Muslim and to ensure that they know *Halal* situation in South Korea enough so that they won't be lost in finding *Halal* places that serve *Halal* or even vegetarian or seafood meals. It is also important for them to do research beforehand due to the scarcity of *Halal* food in South Korea because there were not many places that really do serve *Halal* meals to Muslim travellers. According to the research done by Kim, Xu and Yoon (2017), there were only 14 certified *Halal* restaurants in South Korea.

In section 3, the questions asked were on (1) the travel information search purpose, (2) influence of information search as well as (3) *Halal* food in South Korea. Questions asked for this section was to find out how deep and how far do the travellers go to search for *Halal* information in South Korea.

Three interviewees will do information search on *Halal* aspects if they are to travel to South Korea for business purposes. This is because they still need to educate themselves with knowledge on *Halal* especially those who are traveling to South Korea for the first time. Also, four of them said that the information search varies in terms of accommodation, transportation and places to visit when they are travelling in different kind of people. For instance, they need to search for a bigger place to stay when they are travelling with family consist of parents and children. Besides that, they also need to consider larger transportation when travelling with family rather than a standard size when travelling with a partner.

The period for information done by the interviewees was between one to three months. However, there were four interviewees who did their information search for a few hours and a week respectively. Also, seven of them believe that blog posts are trustable since the bloggers have more experience travelling to South Korea compared to themselves. This also depends on how far the bloggers are sensitive to the *Halal* issue.

Apart from that, three of the interviewees answered that the restaurants that offer *Halal* meals are only concentrated in Seoul especially Itaewon. Meanwhile, it is hard for Muslim tourists or even local Muslims to find places that serve

*Halal* cuisine at any other place especially at the suburban. On the other hand, four of them said that yes, the amount of Muslim--friendly places in South Korea were enough for both local Muslims and tourists. The remaining two interviewees said that places that serve *Halal* food are not enough in South Korea. Based on research question 2, the availability places that serve *Halal* food and beverages are still lacking in numbers in South Korea.

Other than that, five interviewees will check the ingredients at the back of the packaging (for food and cosmetics) for assurance. They mentioned that when the labels are in Hangeul (South Korean language), they will seek advice and consult with the shopkeeper or the promoter. The remaining interviewees said that they still read the labels and packaging but for different purposes. They read the labels in order to make sure that the products sold would not harm them and they are keen to know about the benefits of the products.

According to six of the interviewees, it was hard for them to identify whether the food is genuinely *Halal* or not. This is because, in most products, there was no *Halal* logo on the packaging and labels. Besides that, since the labels are always in Hangeul instead of English, Muslim travellers from other countries often feel doubtful to buy such products because they cannot understand the labels. In terms of the cuisine, six of them said that there were more foreign *Halal* restaurants rather than authentic South Korean *Halal* restaurants. This is because according to their observation, they mentioned that there were a lot of *Halal* restaurants run by the Middle East migrants such as from Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, etc.

South Korea is famous for its street food. Thus, six of the interviewees couldn't miss out to try the street food in South Korea. They claimed that the street food in South Korea was safe to be consumed by Muslims. This is due to the variety of street food sold over there. Some of the street foods that they deem safe to be consumed including the fried seafood, rice snack, fish cake, and others that were not prepare or serve with unlawful ingredients in Islam.

Muslim tourists to enjoy most of the South Korean delicacy while travelling. At the same time, seven of them said that the price for *Halal* food over there in South Korea were pricy especially the local (authentic) *Halal* food. Referring to their background, the ones who said the price for *Halal* food was expensive are among the student exchange (four of them). The other two interviewees are parents who travelled with their children. So, they have their own income and didn't really mind the price for their daily food whilst travelling to South Korea.

The last section in the interview questions was to gain in-depth data on the travellers' travel decision. The sub-heading consists of two parts which are (1) availability of *Halal* related information, (2) certificates and food in South Korea as well as (3) travelling experiences.

Three of the interviewees answered that it depends on the location in finding restaurants that serve *Halal* meals in South Korea. This is because they mentioned that places that offer *Halal* food are limited and only available in tourist spots, especially in Seoul. Four of them said it was hard in finding restaurants that serve *Halal* meals and only two people answered it was easy for them to find *Halal* places to eat. According to all the interviewees, the premises in South Korea that serve *Halal* meals showcased their *Halal* certificates in their restaurants. This showed that the shop owner made some efforts in assuring their Muslim customers.

The next question asked was on the places to pray in South Korea besides the central mosque in Itaewon. Six of the interviewees said that there were no other places available for them to pray since the praying room was nowhere to be found in public places. However, three of them believe that although there was no other proper praying room in public places, they can always pray at the parks in South Korea. They also mentioned that most of the parks in South Korea were clean and suitable for them to just lay their praying mat or the picnic mat and pray peacefully.

Among the nine interviewees, six of them went to South Korea once and the other three went there twice or more. Besides that, eight of them travel to other non-Muslim countries every year. Therefore, they might have great experience in handling *Halal* issues whilst travelling. For travelling to South Korea, five of them went to South Korea for a family vacation and the other four went there to undergo student exchange.

Apart from that, *Halal* in South Korea has influenced the travellers' decision to travel to South Korea. This is because six of them rated 10 out of 10 that *Halal* situation in South Korea influenced them which means it was so important for them to keep updated with *Halal* environment and current *Halal* situation in South Korea. With no exception, three of them rated 8 out of 10 which can be considered quite important for them to be updated with *Halal* situation in South Korea. This may answer the research question 3 whereby *Halal* does influence the travellers' decision to travel to South Korea.

## DISCUSSION

RQ1: Do travellers make research on the *Halal* market before travelling to South Korea?

Travellers have done plenty of research on *Halal* places to eat, where to buy *Halal* supplies and even prayer rooms or mosque in South Korea. Since South Korea now provides *Halal* guidebooks, travellers' research on *Halal* aspects becomes easier and they can gain a lot of information in that book. Apart from that, it is best and convenient to search for *Halal* information on the internet and these travellers always make sure they are up to date with the information online. The online resources on *Halal* information in South Korea are enough for them to get some good insights into what South Korea has to offer regarding *Halal* issues. Based on a research by Fodness and Murray (1997), the information available to and used by the tourist plays a critical role in determining consumers awareness, selection and choice of tourism and hospitality products.

Apart from the internet, travellers obtained information and recommendations from their friends. They believed their friends who had been to South Korea have a lot of experience in finding the Muslim-friendly activities or restaurants. Besides that, their friends mentioned to them on what to avoid. For instance, they told them not to restrict from trying street food and seafood in South Korea. This is because according to their experience, there are several street food stalls sell deep-fried seafood that does not use any unlawful ingredients in Islam.

RQ2: How is the availability level of finding places that serve *Halal* food and drinks in South Korea?

The results from the interview conducted found out that travellers find it hard to locate places that serve *Halal* food. According to them, restaurants that serve *Halal* food are only situated in big cities such as Seoul. With no exception, some of them mentioned that it was a struggle for them if they are not staying in Itaewon. This is because, in Itaewon, a minority of South Korean Muslim community lives there. Thus, a lot of *Halal* restaurants are located in Itaewon but not in any other places.

Besides that, in South Korea, there are a lot of seafood places that are Muslim-friendly. But, as mentioned earlier, the restaurants or places for seafood wholesaler usually located far from tourist-concentrated area. South Korea should consider providing *Halal* certification to more premises because when a Muslim travelled to a non-Muslim country, he/she might act differently, and *Halal* certification plays an important role when Muslim travellers are deciding to eat at certain places. Apart from that, based on the research done by Nadhifah, Eka and Tusita (2019) *Halal* Korean food is hard to find because most of the common ingredients used in Korean cooking is their paste. The paste sometimes may contain alcohol. Apart from that, rice wine or cooking wine is commonly used to marinate meat.

RQ3: Does *Halal* aspects influence the travellers' decision to travel to South Korea?

A research done by Alam and Sayuti (2011) said that according to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, there are 2 thoughts that influence the intention of *halal* food purchasing which include the attitude towards the target behaviour and subjective norms about engaging in the behaviour. In this case, travellers who involved in this research must have the same trait. Moreover, South Korea is not a Muslim country and South Koreans are not aware of the *Halal* issue which makes the travellers be cautious in what they consume while they are in South Korea.

Therefore, throughout the interview session conducted for this research, it can be concluded that yes, *Halal* aspects in South Korea does influence the travellers' decision to travel there. It can be supported by their answers which one of it was "If there's no *Halal* food in South Korea, I would consider a lot of times before travelling to there" and also "If there are no *Halal* supplies over there, it would be hard for me to enjoys the most out of my vacation". This shows that *Halal* aspects in South Korea influences a lot to Muslim travellers. In other words, the scarcity of *Halal* supplies in South Korea gave a huge impact on travellers' travel decision.

Luckily, South Korea is just like any other non-Muslim country which had been taking the initiative to cater to the demand for *Halal* supplies that keep on increasing. Due to this initiative, few of the travellers had commented on the effort done by the authorities over there in expanding the *Halal* market in South Korea. Because of these improvements also, Muslims are not afraid to travel to South Korea although it is not a Muslim country. However, despite their small changes, South Korea is still considered as a 'newborn' in the *Halal* market.

In conclusion, we can say that the *Halal* phenomenon in South Korea gives the perception to travellers to make their decision to travel to South Korea. Lacking in awareness on *Halal* issue among South Koreans can be overcome by doing more exhibition and give education on *Halal*-awareness in universities as well as public events in order to teach

the community as well as the business owners on the importance of *Halal* aspects in South Korea to the local Muslims and Muslim tourists specifically. Many exhibitions were held in Malaysia annually in order to educate people on the importance of *Halal* lifestyle not only amongst Muslims but in general perspective. Some of the exhibitions and conferences include Halal Fiesta Malaysia (HALFEST), Malaysia International Halal Showcase (MIHAS), Malaysia Halal Expo and Halal Food Festival. Other than that, YouTube has been an important platform for the travellers to make decision as it is very convenient and travel blog or travelogue have been a great help for these travellers.

## CONCLUSION

Travellers made some research to ensure that they are not consuming anything unlawful in Islam since South Korea is a non-Muslim country and to feel at ease whilst travelling instead of getting lost without preparing themselves with some knowledge on *Halal* aspects in South Korea. However, they find it quite hard to find places that serve *Halal* food especially authentic South Korean *Halal* food. The aspect of *Halal* influences their travel decision since the concept *Halal* is a sensitive matter in Islam and as a Muslim, they are most concern about maintaining the *Halal* lifestyle when travelling to South Korea.

## REFERENCES

- Alam, S. S., & Sayuti, N. M. (2011). Applying the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in halal food purchasing. *International Journal of Commerce and Management*.
- Chin, C. (2017). Is Kpop still attracting visitors to Seoul? Kuala Lumpur: The Star Online: <https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/travel/2017/05/28/kpop-seoul-tourism>
- Duman, T. (2011). *Value of Islamic Tourism Offering: Perspective from Turkish experience*. Paper presented at the World Islamic Tourism Forum (WITF 2011), 12-13 July, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Eid, R. (2015). Integrating Muslim customer perceived value, satisfaction, loyalty and retention in the tourism industry: an empirical study. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 250.
- Fodness, D. and Murray, B. (1997). Tourist Information Search. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24, 503-523.
- Harrison, L. and Husbands, W. (1996). *Practicing Responsible Tourism: International Case Studies in Tourism Planning, Policy and Development*. Wiley Publishers
- Hashim, P. & Mat Hashim, D. (2013). A review of cosmetic and personal care products: Halal perspective and detections. *Pertanika Journals of Science and Technology*, 21(2), 281-292.
- Jafari, J., & Scott, N. (2014). Muslim world and its tourisms. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 44, 1-19.
- Kim, Y. D., Xu, A. and Yoon, S (2017). Halal food on the rise in Korea. Retrieved from Korea.net: <http://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/Travel/view?articleId=148240>
- Kotler, P.H. (1998). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, and Control*. 8th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc).
- MITRANS (2012). The Value and Advantage of Halal Logistics. Halal Logistics Conference, Penang, Malaysia.
- Nadhifah, N. L., Eka, S. V., & Tusita, A. (2019). Halal Korean food and glocalization. In *First International Conference on Advances in Education, Humanities and Language*. Malang: EUDL
- Schmidt, S. (1996). A Proposed Model of External Consumer Information Search. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 24, 246-256.
- Sharpley, R. (2018). *Tourism, Tourists and Society*. Lancashire: Routledge. South Korea Tourism Organization. (n.d.). Statistics arrivals and departures by year. Visit South Korea. Retrieved from: <https://kto.visitSouthKorea.or.kr/eng/tourismStatics/keyFacts/SouthKoreaMonthlyStatistics/eng/inout/inout.kto>
- South Korea Tourism Organisation (KTO). (2014-2017). Muslim travel to South Korea. Imagine Your South Korea. Retrieved from: <http://www.visitSouthKorea.com.my/themed-tours/muslim-travel.html>
- Spenceley, A. (2008). *Responsible Tourism: Local impacts of community-based tourism in Southern Africa*. First Edition. London: Routledge.
- Wang, Y., & Pizam, A. (2011). *Destination Marketing and Management*. Oxfordshire: CAB International.
- Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr, J., & Griffin, M. (2013). *Business Research Methods*. Singapore: Cengage Learning, Asia Pte Ltd.
- Zulkifli, W. S. W., Rahman, S. A., Awang, K. W., & Man, Y. C. (2011). Developing the framework for halal friendly tourism in Malaysia. *International Business Management*, 5(6), 295-302.