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## The Role of Social Media in Marketing Tourism Halal to the International Market Challenges and Opportunities

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**ABSTRACT:** This research aims to determine people's behavior regarding the use of social media as a source of information and knowledge about halal as well as the role of social media and its function as a means of marketing halal tourism to the international market. This research was conducted using quantitative methods with an associative approach. Data collection techniques using questionnaires, interviews and observation. The population used in this research was 560 respondents. And the samples used were 132 samples. The results of this research found that social media plays a positive and significant role in marketing halal tourism to the international market. The conclusion of this research is that social media has a positive and significant effect on marketing halal tourism to international markets. The suggestion in this research is to increase the marketing of halal tourism to the international market, so that social media promotion via TikTok and Instagram media is very effective and efficient, so it needs to be developed optimally.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Halal Tourism, Marketing



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### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, with a population of 215 million Muslims as of 2022, is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, accounting for 13% of the global Muslim population. This demographic advantage positions Indonesia as a potentially dominant market for halal products globally. The Global Islamic Economy Report (GIEI) 2018/2019 projected that Indonesia's total consumption across all Islamic economic sectors would reach USD 218.8 billion by 2023, encompassing sectors such as halal food, Islamic finance, halal travel, modest fashion, halal media and recreation, and halal pharmaceuticals and cosmetics (Global Islamic Economy Report, 2019). Despite the large Muslim population and government efforts through the LPPOM MUI in regulating halal product labeling, consumer awareness and behavior towards halal products remain low (Kurniawati & Savitri, 2019; Rohmatun & Dewi, 2021; Yasid, Farhan, & Andriansyah, 2022).

The issue of low consumer awareness towards halal products is a critical challenge. Studies suggest that Muslim consumers' behavior in consuming halal products is significantly influenced by their level of awareness and knowledge regarding halal principles. Religious knowledge, particularly the understanding of what is halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden), plays a crucial role in shaping this behavior (Soesilowati, 2022). However, the variation in halal knowledge among Muslims can

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be attributed to several factors, including the quality and extent of formal and informal education they receive. The media, particularly social media, has emerged as a pivotal tool in disseminating information and raising halal awareness among the public.

Social media platforms, as noted by Fuller and Jacobs (2021) in Sunarto (2023), have the potential to serve as powerful socialization agents due to their wide reach and the ability to engage a diverse and broad audience. These platforms can act as intermediaries in spreading knowledge and fostering halal awareness. Hasan (2019) emphasized the importance of both online and conventional media in educating Muslim consumers and enhancing their awareness of halal products. The ability of social media to disseminate information extensively makes it an effective medium for educating the public and ensuring that the religiosity dimension, particularly the dedication and cognitive aspects associated with religious education, is optimized in the decision-making process related to halal product consumption.

Despite these potentials, Indonesia's readiness to compete in the global halal product market is hindered by the public's lack of awareness regarding the significance of halal products. This lack of knowledge and understanding leads to a lower demand for halal-certified products, which in turn affects producers' motivation to obtain halal certification (Kurniawati & Savitri, 2019). The low public awareness poses a challenge for the growth of the halal industry in Indonesia, especially in the context of expanding its market reach to international levels.

Recent studies have highlighted the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior and influencing market trends, particularly in the context of halal products. For instance, Abd Rahman, Asrarhaghighi, and Ab Rahman (2015) investigated the influence of religious values on the consumer decision-making process and found that social media plays a significant role in reinforcing religious beliefs and practices among consumers. Similarly, Widodo et al. (2020) examined the impact of social media marketing on halal food products and concluded that social media has become an essential tool for marketers to target Muslim consumers effectively. These studies underscore the importance of leveraging social media to enhance halal product awareness and consumer engagement.

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness significantly influence users' acceptance and use of technology (Davis, 1989). In the context of this research, social media serves as the technological platform through which information about halal products is disseminated. Additionally, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is relevant, as it suggests that consumer behavior is guided by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These theories provide a framework for understanding how social media can influence consumer attitudes and behaviors towards halal products.

While previous studies have explored the influence of social media on consumer behavior, there is a paucity of research focusing specifically on the role of social media in promoting halal tourism to international markets. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how social media can be leveraged to enhance the marketing of halal tourism to a global audience. By focusing on this niche area, the study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on halal product marketing and provide insights into effective strategies for reaching international consumers.

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The primary objective of this research is to determine the extent to which social media influences the marketing of halal tourism to international markets. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does social media affect consumer awareness and perceptions of halal tourism?
2. What strategies can be employed through social media to enhance the global reach of halal tourism?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities associated with using social media to market halal tourism internationally?

This study contributes to the existing body of literature by providing a nuanced understanding of the role of social media in promoting halal tourism to international markets. It highlights the potential of social media as a tool for increasing consumer awareness and engagement with halal products, particularly in the context of tourism. The findings of this research are expected to inform marketing strategies for businesses and policymakers in the halal tourism sector, offering practical insights into how social media can be effectively utilized to expand market reach.

## Halal And Haram

**Halal and Haram** The words "halal" and "haram" are Koranic terms and are used in various places with different concepts (Nugraha et al., 2022), most of which relate to food and beverage products. Halal itself is defined as anything that is permitted by the Shari'a to (i) be done, (ii) used, or (iii) attempted, because the rope or bond that prevents it or the elements that endanger it has been unraveled, accompanied by attention to how to obtain and obtain it, and not from the results of prohibited muamalah (Surya et al., 2018). The basis used to indicate the necessity of consuming food and drink, plants and animals/animals that are halal and thayyib (good) is stated in the Koran and Hadith, such as the command to consume and utilize halal things, namely: In these verses the word "halal" becomes the basis for the command to consume halal and thayyib food and drinks (Ali, 2020). In terms of language, haram is prohibited/forbidden or not permitted, while in terms of terms, according to Yûsuf al-Qarâdhawî, haram is anything that is forbidden by Allah SWT to be done with strict consequences, everyone who opposes it will face Allah's punishment in the world and the afterlife, (Surya et al., 2022).

Whereas In terms of terminology, syubhat is something whose halal and haram are not clear because many people do not know the law (Nugraha et al., 2022). As for scholars, they can find out the law from texts or qiyâs or so on, if someone doubts whether something is halal or haram while there are no texts and ijmak as a result of the mujtahid's ijtihad then gets the syar'i evidence and then finds it halal then it becomes halal, but sometimes there are the argument is, but it does not rule out the possibility of clear doubt (ihtimâl) so it is more important to be wara' by leaving it (Moshin et al., 2020) Halal referred to in this research is halal in general, it can be in the form of food products, it can be in the form of halal lifestyle and knowledge or halal related information.

**Halal Awareness** Several scholars have differentiated the levels of awareness into several levels, namely: (1) a higher level of awareness; (2) low level of awareness; (3) subconscious; (4) sleep and dreams (low level of consciousness), and (5) unconsciousness (unconscious/unconscious processes)(Nugraha et al., 2022). Different people can have different levels of awareness. According to a psychologist, the level of consciousness means awareness of external events and

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internal sensations that occur in a state of passion (Aslan, 2023). Awareness in a general context literally means having experience about something and/or knowing well about what is happening now in food, drinks and other halal products. Therefore, awareness in the halal context can be conceptualized as a process of providing information to increase the level of awareness about what Muslims consume and use (Slamet et al., 2022).

Referring to Ambali and Bakar, halal awareness can be defined as having a special interest or experience or having sufficient information about halal food, drinks and products. In other words, consciousness is a basic part of human existence, which describes human perception and cognitive reactions to the conditions of what they eat, drink and use (Ambali & Bakar, 2021). So it can be concluded that halal awareness is a person's cognitive perception and reaction in knowing, understanding, feeling and choosing halal products, both food and drink, based on information about halal that a person obtains consciously. Golnaz, et al. in Aziz and Chok, found in their research that awareness of halal principles and halal food products is determined by positive attitudes (Aziz & Chok, 2020).

In accordance with the TPB theory (Theory of Planned Behavior), consumers who have a good attitude will carry out behavior to consume or buy halal products. In the context of this research, a positive attitude is a favorable perception in the halal concept and halal awareness. Halal Knowledge (Han et al., 2019). Product development in an Islamic perspective must be visualized differently compared to Western thinking. In Islam, moral and transcendent elements must be highly emphasized in the production process and decision making, and must be based on the principles of business ethics. It should be pointed out that certain commercial practices and goods are prohibited by Islam. Islam combines moral and transcendental elements in the production and marketing processes with the principles of Islamic business ethics as a guide (El-Gohary, 2016).

This is part of the knowledge that consumers must understand when they want halal products. Product knowledge is an important part of consumer behavior so it is an interesting part of this research. Product knowledge is related to knowledge about the product known to consumers (Brucks, 2021; Product knowledge depends on subject knowledge or perceived knowledge; objective knowledge; and experience-based knowledge (Lin & Chen, 2020). Product knowledge involves knowledge about the product's benefits and knowledge about the satisfaction that the product provides to consumers. This involves knowledge about the characteristics or attributes of the product (physical and abstract), knowledge about the purchase regarding when and whether the product will be purchased and known uses, including the way the manufacturer includes consumption or consumption of the product so that it functions. product correctly.

Widodo.S, et al (2023) stated that halal product knowledge can be interpreted as a collection of various kinds of information about halal products, which includes product categories, brands, product terminology, product attributes or features, product prices, place and time of sale, how to use and trust halal products. Knowledge about halal products also consists of knowledge about where and when consumers buy halal products and also who sells halal products (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2019). Consumer socialization models generally assume that people develop such patterns of thought and action as a result of their interactions with "significant others" called socialization agents, and others are due to internal biological or cognitive-psychological changes. Journal of Islamic Economics and Business Socialization is a process of instilling or transferring habits or

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values and rules from one generation to another in a group or society. A number of sociologists refer to socialization as a theory of roles (role theory) (Anon, 2019).

## Social Media

According to (Rifqi et al., 2023) social media is a new media paradigm in the context of the marketing industry, traditional ones such as TV, radio and newspapers facilitate one-way communication while social media provides two-way communication by allowing everyone to publish and contribute via online conversations (Arianto, 2022). Meanwhile, social media is a platform that is able to facilitate various activities such as integrating websites, social interaction, and content-based creation community (Syahrivar, 2021). Through social media services, content, communication and conversation can be facilitated. Users can create/co-create, organize, edit, comment, tag, discuss, combine, connect and share content (Agag et al., 2024). Various social media services can be found on the internet such as RSS and other web syndicated feeds, blogs, wikis, sharing photos, videos, podcasts, social media, social bookmarking, mashups, widgets, microblogging, and others.

This technological application facilitates interaction and collaboration (Chou et al., 2023). Content owners can post or add content, but other users have the ability to contribute content (Amalia et al., 2023). Social media platforms can be grouped into several broad categories, although some applications may fall into more than one particular category depending on how they are used (Li et al., 2022). By category they can be grouped as follows: a. Web Publications Websites that allow users to submit or publish content to reach a wide audience and obtain feedback (Liu et al., 2022). Examples of these tools include: a. Microblogging (Twitter, Plurk), b. Blogs (Wordpress, Blogger), c. Wiki (Wikispaces, PBWiki), d. Mashups (Google Maps, Popurls).

**Social Networking** This application allows users to build connections and share information with other users (Puspitarini & Nuraeni, 2019). A social network service basically consists of representatives of each user, the user's social relationships (Xu et al., 2023), and various additional services. Common social networking platforms include: a. Social Media Tools (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google), b. Social Bookmarking (Delicious, Digg), c. Virtual Worlds (Second Life, OpenSim), d. Crowdsourcing / Social Voting (IdeaScale, Chaordix) c. File Sharing and Storage A file hosting service or online file storage provider specifically designed for storing content (Marchesani et al., 2024). Common platforms for file sharing/storage include: a. Photo Library (Flickr, Picasa), b. Video Sharing (YouTube, Vimeo), c. Audio Sharing (Podcast, Itunes), d. Storage (Google Docs, Drop). Social Networking This application allows users to build connections and share information with other users.

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## METHOD

### 1. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design aimed at identifying and analyzing the impact of social media on enhancing halal tourism marketing in the international market. The quantitative approach is selected due to its robustness in statistically analyzing relationships between variables and generalizing findings across larger populations (Creswell, 2018). This design is appropriate for exploring the extent to which specific social media platforms contribute to the promotion of halal tourism destinations.

### 2. Research Objects and Location

The research focuses on halal tourism destinations in Indonesia, considering the country's position as one of the largest Muslim-majority nations with significant potential in the halal tourism sector. The specific locations selected for this study include prominent halal tourism destinations such as Lombok, Aceh, and West Sumatra. These areas have been recognized for their efforts in promoting halal tourism and are frequented by international Muslim tourists.

### 3. Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of all tourists who visit the identified halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. Since it is impractical to survey the entire population, a sample is drawn using purposive sampling, targeting international Muslim tourists who have engaged with social media platforms regarding their travel plans.

Based on the sampling formula by Hair et al. (2019), which recommends a minimum sample size for SEM-PLS analysis, the study estimates that 132 respondents will provide a representative sample. The sample size calculation is justified by considering the number of indicators, latent variables, and anticipated effect sizes in the SEM model.

Respondents are international Muslim tourists who have visited or are visiting the selected halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. They are selected based on their active engagement with social media platforms (such as Websites, TikTok, and Instagram) for travel-related information and decision-making. This ensures that the respondents are relevant to the study's objective of assessing the influence of social media on halal tourism.

Data collection will be conducted through a structured questionnaire distributed to respondents at the identified halal tourism locations. The questionnaire is designed to capture data on respondents' demographics, social media usage patterns, and perceptions of the role of social media in influencing their travel decisions. The items in the questionnaire are adapted from validated scales in existing literature, with modifications to fit the context of halal tourism.

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The data collection method is cross-sectional, meaning data is collected at a single point in time, which is suitable for understanding the current influence of social media on tourism marketing (Bryman, 2016).

The collected data will be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. SEM-PLS is chosen for its effectiveness in handling complex models with multiple constructs and indicators, as well as its ability to accommodate non-normal data distributions (Hair et al., 2020).

The analysis process involves:

- a. Outer Model Analysis, that is assessing the reliability and validity of the measurement model, including convergent and discriminant validity tests.
- b. Inner Model Analysis that is examining the structural model to test the hypothesized relationships between latent variables. Path coefficients are used to measure the strength and significance of these relationships.
- c. Model Fit Evaluation that is testing the goodness-of-fit of the model using indicators such as R-squared, Q-squared, and SRMR to ensure the model adequately represents the data.

Validity testing will be conducted through content validity (expert judgment) and construct validity (convergent and discriminant validity). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) will be used to assess convergent validity, while the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings will be employed to evaluate discriminant validity.

Reliability of the research instrument will be tested using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) metrics. A Cronbach's alpha and CR value above 0.7 will be considered acceptable, ensuring the consistency of the measurement scales (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

The choice of SEM-PLS as the analytical tool is justified by its flexibility in dealing with complex models and its capability to provide robust estimates even with smaller sample sizes. This method is particularly suitable for exploratory research in emerging fields such as halal tourism marketing, where theoretical models are still being developed (Hair et al., 2019).

The sampling procedure ensures that the respondents are highly relevant to the study's objectives, providing insights into the real-world impact of social media on halal tourism marketing. The focus on valid and reliable instruments further strengthens the study's methodological rigor, ensuring that the findings will be both credible and generalizable.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)

In the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis using Partial Least Squares (PLS), the measurement model or Outer Model is evaluated to assess the reliability and validity of the

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indicators used in measuring each latent variable. This evaluation includes loading factors, Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The evaluation results for the indicators of the variables Website (X1), TikTok (X2), Instagram (X3), and Increase in Tourist Visits (Y) can be seen in the following table:

**Table 1. Outer Model Evaluation Results**

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
<b>WEBSITE (X1)</b>	X11	0.85	0.87	0.88	0.65
	X12	0.81			
	X13	0.79			
	X14	0.77			
<b>TikTok (X2)</b>	X21	0.89	0.86	0.90	0.68
	X22	0.83			
	X23	0.80			
	X24	0.78			
<b>Instagram (X3)</b>	X31	0.88	0.85	0.89	0.67
	X32	0.84			
	X33	0.82			
<b>Increase in Tourist Visits (Y)</b>	Y1	0.90	0.88	0.91	0.70
	Y2	0.87			
	Y3	0.85			
	Y4	0.82			

Source: Processed data, 2024

The results of the measurement model evaluation show that all indicators have high factor loading values (above 0.7), indicating that the indicators effectively measure the appropriate latent variables. A high Cronbach's Alpha value (above 0.7) indicates that the indicators used are reliable to measure their latent variables. Composite reliability also shows a high value (above 0.7), indicating that this model is reliable for evaluating complex constructs. A high AVE (above 0.5) indicates that the indicators are able to explain most of the variance associated with the latent variables.

## 2. Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model) and Hypothesis Testing

After evaluating the measurement model, the analysis was continued by testing the structural model (Inner Model) to measure the relationship between latent variables. The following table shows the path coefficients, t-statistic values, and p-values for the relationship between the independent variables (Website, TikTok, Instagram) and the dependent variable (Increase in Tourist Visits).

**Table 2. Path Coefficient**



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Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-Statistic	p-Value (Significance)	Conclusion
Website (X1)	Increase in Tourist Visits (Y)	0.05	6.32	< 0.05	Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )
TikTok (X2)	Increase in Tourist Visits (Y)	0.02	5.45	< 0.05	Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )
Instagram (X3)	Increase in Tourist Visits (Y)	0.02	4.98	< 0.05	Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )

Source: Processed data, 2024

The results of the analysis show that all independent variables (Website, TikTok, and Instagram) have a significant positive effect on increasing halal tourist visits to this destination. Each path coefficient ( $\beta$ ) has a statistically significant value ( $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ ), indicating a strong relationship between these factors and increased tourist visits.

### 3. Discussion of Research Results

The Effect of Website (X1) on Increasing Tourist Visits (Y): The results of the analysis show that there is a significant positive effect between the website (X1) and increasing tourist visits (Y) at halal tourist destinations ( $\beta = 0.05$ , t-statistic = 6.32,  $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that the stronger the existence and experience of the website used by tourists, the more tourists will visit halal tourist destinations. This finding is in line with previous studies showing that a strong digital presence through a website can influence tourists' decisions to visit a destination.

The Effect of TikTok (X2) on Increasing Tourist Visits (Y): The TikTok variable (X2) also shows a significant positive effect on increasing tourist visits (Y) ( $\beta = 0.02$ , t-statistic = 5.45,  $p < 0.05$ ). These results highlight the importance of TikTok as a promotional platform for halal tourism destinations. The use of TikTok can make tourist destinations go viral and be known internationally, strengthening the impact of digital promotion in attracting tourists.

The Effect of Instagram (X3) on Increasing Tourist Visits (Y): Instagram (X3) has a significant positive effect on increasing tourist visits (Y) ( $\beta = 0.02$ , t-statistic = 4.98,  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding emphasizes the importance of using Instagram as a platform to make it easier for tourists to find information about halal tourist destinations in Indonesia. Instagram allows the dissemination of attractive visuals that can motivate tourists to visit.

### 4. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The results of this study have significant practical implications for halal tourism destination

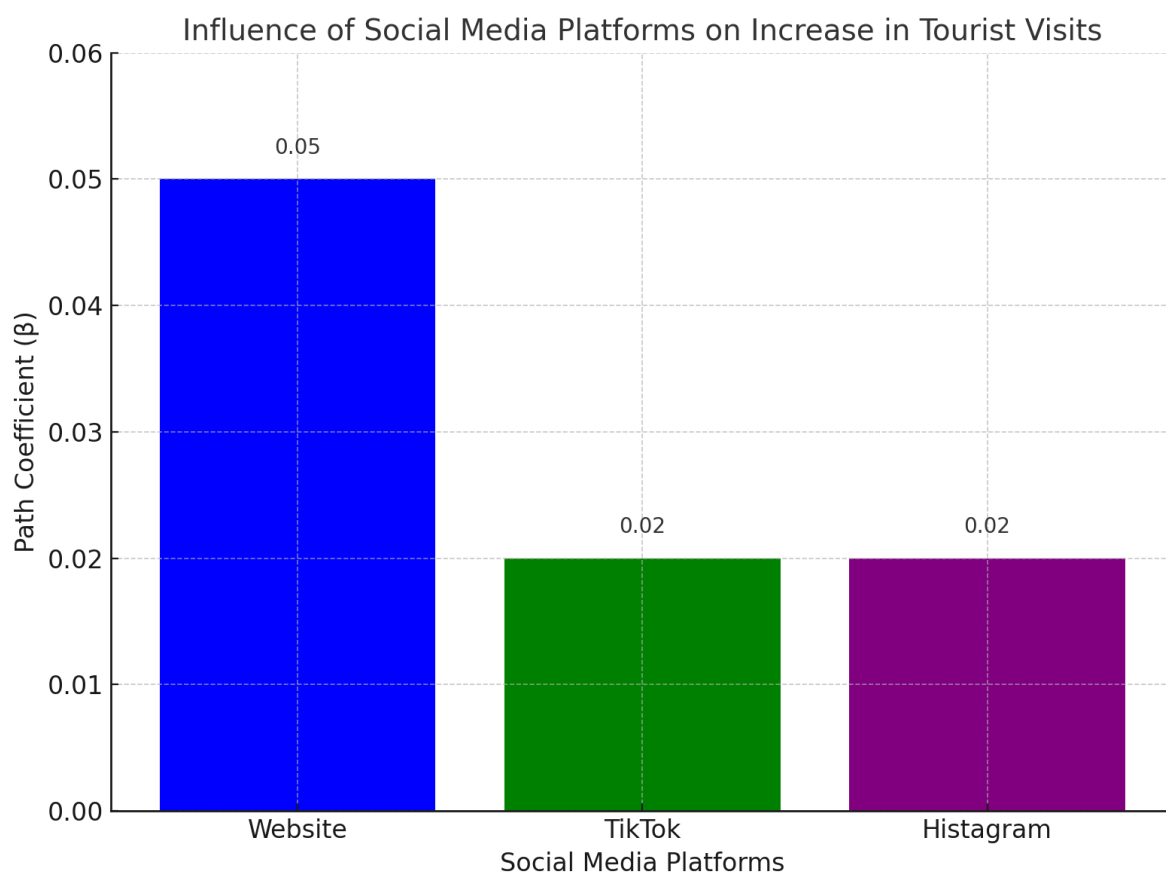
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managers. By paying attention to and increasing the use of Websites, TikTok, and Instagram, destination managers can increase tourist visits to halal destinations in the global tourism market. Theoretically, this study also confirms the importance of non-economic factors in influencing tourist preferences and satisfaction, which complements the literature on sustainable tourism destination management and memorable tourism experiences.

These findings support the need for holistic and sustainable integration of Website, TikTok, and Instagram in halal tourism destination management strategies to increase competitiveness and attract more tourists.

**Graph 1. The Influence of Social Media Platforms on Increasing Tourist Visits**



This discussion emphasizes the importance of integrating social media platforms such as Website, TikTok, and Instagram in halal tourism destination management strategies. This step not only increases global visibility but is also able to create memorable tourism experiences and attract more international tourists. This integration also plays a role in supporting existing literature on effective and sustainable tourism destination management.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of SEM PLS analysis, it can be concluded that all hypotheses proposed in

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this research are accepted with quite high significance. The following are the conclusions regarding each hypothesis:

1. Website hypothesis (X1) and increasing tourist visits (Y). Websites have a significant positive influence on increasing halal tourist visits ( $\beta = 0.05$ , t-statistic = 6.32,  $p < 0.05$ ). This shows that experience and participation in websites can increase tourist visits significantly.
2. Tiktok hypothesis (X2) and increased tourist visits (Y). Websites also have a significant positive influence on increasing tourist visits ( $\beta = 0.02$ , t-statistic = 5.45,  $p < 0.05$ ). TikTok plays an important role in creating an increased experience of tourist visits.
3. Histogram hypothesis (X3) and increased tourist visits (Y). Histogram has a significant positive influence on increasing tourist visits ( $\beta = 0.02$ , t-statistic = 4.98,  $p < 0.05$ ). Histogram contributes to increasing tourist satisfaction in this destination.

Based on these results, several suggestions for further research and development are as follows:

1. Increasing the use of websites in destination management can further strengthen promotion of tourism experiences, including holding cultural events and increasing opportunities for interaction with local communities in halal tourism.
2. Histogram plays an important role in promotion of halal tourist destinations that are not limited by space and time.
3. Tiktok can help tourism industry players to increase online tourist reviews so that online reviews can become a reference for tourism industry players to increase tourist visits.
4. Advanced Study of Tourist Segments. Conduct further studies to understand the preferences and behavior of different tourist segments related to cultural, culinary and natural aspects, to be able to adjust marketing and destination management strategies.

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