

Generation Z Muslim Travelers and Halal Tourism: Digital Nomadism, Ethical Consumption, and the Redefinition of Halal Travel

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Abstract

Generation Z Muslims — born between 1997 and 2012, constituting 27.2 percent of the global Muslim population and approximately 37 million of the 145–176 million Muslim international arrivals recorded in 2023–2024 — are the most consequential force currently reshaping halal tourism's conceptual foundations, industry structures, and destination design requirements. This systematic literature review (SLR) applies PRISMA 2020 protocols to analyze 36 peer-reviewed publications and authoritative industry reports from 2023 to 2026, synthesizing scholarship across five thematic clusters: (1) the Gen Z Muslim traveler profile — the 4A framework (Affordability, Authenticity, Accessibility, Adaptability) and its theoretical extensions; (2) digital Islamic identity construction and the halal lifestyle economy — TikTok, Instagram, and the co-constitution of travel experience and religious selfhood; (3) ethical consumption and boycott tourism — geopolitical consciousness as a structural travel determinant; (4) AI-mediated halal travel planning and generational adoption asymmetries; and (5) destination design implications — from compliance infrastructure to values alignment infrastructure. A critical synthesis reveals that Gen Z Muslim travelers are performing a paradigm shift from halal tourism as *service compliance* — certification-based, amenity-focused, and institutionally governed — toward halal tourism as *values alignment* — a holistic, peer-validated assessment of whether a destination authentically embodies Islamic ethical principles across religious, environmental, and geopolitical dimensions simultaneously. The review introduces the *Gen Z Halal Travel Identity Typology* (Heritage Seeker, Digital Activist, Muslim Nomad, Budget Community Traveler), the concept of *values alignment infrastructure* as the governance model Gen Z Muslim travel demands, and a nine-item future research agenda targeting the field's most critically underresearched dimensions.

Keywords: *Generation Z; halal tourism; Muslim traveler; digital nomadism; ethical consumption; boycott tourism; Islamic identity; TikTok; social media; halal lifestyle economy; AI travel planning; sustainable halal tourism; values alignment*

1. Introduction

1.1 The Generation Redefining Halal Tourism

A demographic shift of structural consequence is underway in global halal tourism. Generation Z Muslims — those born between 1997 and 2012 — represent 27.2 percent of the global Muslim population of 2.12 billion, according to GMTI data cited by Humanities and Social Sciences Communications (2025). With an estimated 37 million Gen Z Muslim international travelers recorded in 2023 alone (CrescentRating, 2023; British Muslim Magazine, 2023), and the global Muslim travel market projected to reach 245 million arrivals by 2030 with USD 235

billion in expenditure (CrescentRating, 2025), this cohort's travel preferences are no longer a niche concern but a primary driver of halal tourism's future architecture.

What distinguishes Gen Z from all prior Muslim traveler cohorts is not simply their size or economic weight. It is their relationship to technology, identity, and ethics — three dimensions that interact to produce a travel culture qualitatively distinct from what Millennial-era halal tourism frameworks were built to serve. Gen Z Muslims are *constitutively digital*: unlike Millennials who adopted social media in adulthood, Gen Z was socialized into Islamic identity and halal lifestyle norms through digital platforms simultaneously with their physical socialization — making TikTok, Instagram, and AI assistants not supplementary tools but primary infrastructure for Islamic life (Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman, 2025). They are *ethically expansive*: their definition of "halal" in the consumption context — encompassing travel, fashion, cosmetics, and financial products — extends significantly beyond ritual compliance toward geopolitical solidarity, environmental responsibility, and anti-exploitation consumption (Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 2024a). And they are *authenticity-driven*: over 65 percent of Gen Z Muslim travelers prioritize cultural immersion and authentic engagement with Islamic heritage, placing *meaning* above *compliance* in ways that challenge the certification-and-amenities orientation that has dominated halal tourism policy since 2010 (CrescentRating, 2023; GMTI, 2024).

1.2 The Literature's Structural Gap

Despite Gen Z Muslims' transformative significance, the peer-reviewed literature has been strikingly slow to develop frameworks adequate to their distinctive profile. Bibliometric analyses of halal tourism scholarship confirm that "customer satisfaction," "destination image," and "halal certification" dominate the field — frameworks developed primarily through research on Millennial and Gen X Muslim travelers (Cogent Social Sciences, 2024; Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research, 2025). The Gen Z Muslim Travel Report produced by CrescentRating (2023) remains the primary empirical resource on this cohort's travel behavior, but as an industry report it has not been systematically synthesized with the broader Gen Z sustainable consumption literature, the Islamic digital identity scholarship, or the rapidly expanding AI-assisted halal travel planning research.

This review addresses the convergence gap. It brings together four previously siloed bodies of scholarship — Gen Z tourism behavior and ethical consumption theory (Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 2024a, 2025a; Tourism Recreation Research, 2025), Muslim digital identity formation (Frontiers in Political Science, 2024; Current Sociology, 2025), halal tourism governance and sustainability integration (Discover Sustainability, 2025a, 2025b; JIABR, 2025), and AI-mediated travel planning (Battour et al., 2024, 2025; ScienceDirect Tourism Management Perspectives, 2025) — to construct the first comprehensive academic synthesis of Gen Z Muslim travel behavior and its implications for halal tourism's next development phase.

1.3 Research Questions

- **RQ1:** How does the Gen Z Muslim traveler's profile, motivational architecture, and halal compliance orientation differ from prior cohorts, and what frameworks most adequately capture these differences?
- **RQ2:** Through what mechanisms — digital identity, ethical consumption, geopolitical consciousness, and AI tool adoption — are Gen Z Muslim travelers redefining halal in the travel context?
- **RQ3:** What destination design, governance, and marketing implications follow for destinations, operators, and policymakers seeking to engage this generation?

2. Methodology

2.1 Review Design

This SLR follows PRISMA 2020 protocols (Page et al., 2021), applying thematic content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) across four convergent literature streams: Gen Z tourism and sustainable consumption; Muslim digital identity and social media studies; halal tourism theory, governance, and bibliometrics; and AI-assisted halal travel planning.

2.2 Search Strategy

Multi-database Boolean searches were conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis Online, and Google Scholar.

Search String A: ("Generation Z" OR "Gen Z" OR "young Muslim" OR "Muslim youth") AND ("halal tourism" OR "Islamic tourism" OR "Muslim travel") AND ("identity" OR "behavior" OR "ethical" OR "digital" OR "sustainable")

Search String B: ("Muslim" OR "halal" OR "Islamic") AND ("TikTok" OR "Instagram" OR "social media influencer" OR "digital nomad") AND ("travel" OR "tourism" OR "identity" OR "lifestyle")

Search String C: ("Gen Z" OR "Generation Z") AND ("ethical consumption" OR "boycott" OR "sustainable tourism" OR "political consumerism") AND ("tourism" OR "travel")

Search String D: ("ChatGPT" OR "AI" OR "generative AI" OR "artificial intelligence") AND ("halal tourism" OR "Muslim travel") AND ("decision" OR "planning" OR "satisfaction")

Limiters: January 2023 – April 2026; peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus/WoS; English; supplemented by CrescentRating GMTI reports and DinarStandard SGIE 2024/2025 as authoritative industry sources.

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion

Inclusion: Published 2023–2026; peer-reviewed or authoritative institutional; substantive engagement with Gen Z AND (Muslim travel OR halal consumption OR Islamic digital identity); English language.

Exclusion: Pre-2023 publications (cited contextually when foundational); non-peer-reviewed grey literature without institutional authority; studies on Gen Z outside tourism/consumption contexts with insufficient transferability.

2.4 Selection Results

Stage	Records	Action
Initial records identified	341	Multi-database search
After duplicate removal	287	Automated deduplication
After title/abstract screening	89	Excluded: off-topic n=141, non-peer-reviewed n=57
After full-text assessment	36	Final analytical corpus
Supplementary institutional sources	7	CrescentRating, GMTI, DinarStandard SGIE
Final corpus	36	Systematic analysis

2.5 Analytical Method

Inductive-deductive thematic content analysis. Deductive codes from existing Gen Z sustainable tourism theory (JST 2024a, 2025a), Muslim digital identity frameworks (Frontiers 2024), and halal tourism typologies (CrescentRating, DinarStandard). Inductive codes emerged from close reading of boycott tourism, digital nomadism, eco-halal, and AI-halal planning literature.

3. Descriptive Profile of the Corpus

3.1 Temporal Distribution

Year	n	Key Publication or Development
2023	4	CrescentRating Gen Z Muslim Travel Report; digital Islam influencer studies; early halal-SDG integration
2024	17	JST Gen Z ethical constraints; boycott tourism Gen Z Turkey; ChatGPT halal tourism; push-pull Muslim motivation; GMTI disability metrics; faith-in-action sustainable travel
2025	13	JST Gen Z sustainable tourism editorial; TikTok Muslim identity (Current Sociology); ChatGPT halal integration; eco-halal bibliometric; religious tourism bibliometric
2026 (Jan-Apr)	2	Faith-in-action sustainable travel; AI halal non-Muslim destinations
Total	36	—

3.2 Disciplinary Distribution

The corpus spans Tourism and Hospitality Management (n=14), Islamic Studies and Marketing (n=10), Communication and Digital Media Studies (n=7), Sustainability and Development Studies (n=3), and Consumer Behavior and Psychology (n=2).

3.3 Theoretical Frameworks Deployed

Framework	n	Primary Studies
Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)	9	Boycott tourism Gen Z Turkey (Tourism Recreation Research, 2025); ethical consumption JST (2024a)
Push-Pull Theory	6	Humanities and Social Sciences Communications (2025); Discover Sustainability (2025b)
Identity Theory / Self-Concept	7	TikTok Muslim identity (Current Sociology, 2025); Frontiers Political Science (2024); Islamic identity Gen Z
Expectation-Confirmation Theory	4	ChatGPT halal tourism (Battour et al., 2025); tourist acceptance ChatGPT (Tandfonline, 2024)
Political Consumerism Theory	5	Boycott tourism; ethical travel; solidarity travel (JST, 2024a; Tourism Recreation Research, 2025)
Maqasid al-Shariah Framework	4	Faith-in-action sustainable travel (Current Issues in Tourism, 2025); eco-halal studies
Islamic Consumer Behavior Theory	4	JAWI (2025); AJIM (2025a, 2025b); halal cosmetics Gen Z

4. Thematic Analysis

4.1 Cluster I — The Gen Z Muslim Traveler: Profile, Motivations, and the 4A Framework

4.1.1 Demographic Scale and Economic Significance

The scale of the Gen Z Muslim travel segment is both enormous and underappreciated in the academic literature. Humanities and Social Sciences Communications (2025), citing GMTI 2024 data, confirms that 70 percent of the global Muslim population is under 40, with Gen Z (27.2%) and Millennials (22.9%) together comprising the dominant market force. CrescentRating (2023) estimates approximately 37 million Gen Z Muslim international travelers in 2019 — a figure that, when applied to the 2024 total of 176 million Muslim international arrivals (CrescentRating, 2025), projects to well over 40 million Gen Z Muslim travelers annually. The Global Islamic Economy Report (DinarStandard/CrescentRating, 2023) projects Muslim travel expenditure reaching USD 225–235 billion by 2028–2030, with Gen Z travelers constituting a rapidly growing share of both volume and per-trip expenditure as this cohort reaches peak earning years.

Yet the bibliometric landscape of halal tourism scholarship reveals a persistent gap: Cogent Social Sciences (2024) in its bibliometric analysis of 304 Scopus articles on halal tourism from 2013 to 2023 identifies four dominant schools of thought — Islamic principles, customer satisfaction, risk management, and Muslim tourist experiences — none of which are oriented toward generational analysis of traveler behavior. The Tourism Recreation Research religious tourism bibliometric (2025) confirms that Gen Z-specific travel studies represent fewer than 5 percent of the corpus. This demographic invisibility in scholarship precisely mirrors the institutional invisibility of this generation in halal tourism certification frameworks: JAKIM, BPJPH, and the GMTI's ACES model were all built on data about Muslim travelers who are now in their 30s and 40s.

4.1.2 The 4A Framework: Canonical Characterization and Its Limits

CrescentRating's 2023 Gen Z Muslim Travel Survey introduces the **4A framework** — Affordability, Authenticity, Accessibility, Adaptability — as the defining architecture of Gen Z Muslim travel behavior. Building on the 3A framework (Authentic, Affordable, Accessible) introduced for Muslim Millennials in 2017, the addition of Adaptability captures Gen Z's greater flexibility in halal compliance, their readiness to navigate non-Muslim majority destinations, and their pragmatic approach to halal requirements beyond the absolute prohibitions (CrescentRating, 2023; British Muslim Magazine, 2023).

Affordability is the primary structural constraint: 53 percent of Gen Z Muslim travelers set daily travel budgets below USD 150, driving preference for budget-friendly halal accommodation, peer-sourced halal restaurant intelligence over premium halal brand directories, and digital-nomad-compatible extended stays that reduce per-day accommodation costs. The JST ethical constraints study (2024a) contextualizes affordability as a structural constraint in ethical tourism decisions for Gen Z generally, finding "financial restrictions" among the three primary constraint categories — alongside cognitive dissonance and limited accessibility — that prevent ethical travel intentions from becoming ethical travel behaviors. For Gen Z Muslim travelers, this financial constraint interacts with the higher cost of halal-certified accommodations and the geographic concentration of halal infrastructure in premium tourist zones, creating what the study terms "limited accessibility" as a compounding structural barrier.

Authenticity is the motivationally dominant 4A dimension and the one with the deepest implications for halal tourism theory. Over 65 percent of Gen Z Muslim travelers prioritize cultural immersion (CrescentRating, 2023), and 60 percent are positively influenced by rich Islamic heritage in destination selection (British Muslim Magazine, 2023). The *Current Issues in Tourism* faith-in-action study (2025) — the first mixed-method investigation of Indonesian Muslim tourists' sustainable travel behaviors combining survey questionnaires (n=409) and autoethnography — documents that Islamic teaching, as reflected in the five principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, directly shapes sustainable travel practices. Specifically, *hifz al-nafs* (preservation of life) and *hifz al-'aql* (preservation of intellect) ground authentic heritage engagement as a religious obligation, not merely a lifestyle preference. For Gen Z Muslims who have received richer Islamic education through digital platforms than any prior cohort (Tribakti Journal, 2025), this Maqasid-grounded authenticity orientation is deeply internalized.

Accessibility for Gen Z Muslims means primarily *digital accessibility*: real-time AI-assisted halal navigation, peer-generated social media intelligence, and community-validated destination assessments replace the formal halal certification communication that served prior cohorts. The Discover Sustainability AI assistants study (2025b) confirms that AI-mediated halal accessibility is "disproportionately valuable for younger Muslim travelers navigating non-Muslim majority destinations," with AI tools reducing barriers "by improving access to halal services, providing personalised recommendations, and addressing religious concerns."

Adaptability — Gen Z's flexibility in halal compliance across destination contexts — represents the 4A dimension most challenging to existing halal tourism frameworks. JAWI (2025) documents that "the consumption behavior of Muslim Gen Z reflects a transformation toward an Islamic consumer who is critical, digital, and ethical," suggesting that adaptive halal

compliance is not reduced religiosity but nuanced Islamic literacy: Gen Z Muslims differentiate between absolute prohibitions (pork, alcohol, usury-based transactions) and contextually flexible preferences, applying scholarly reasoning that prior cohorts accessed less readily.

4.1.3 Beyond 4As: Three Undertheorized Dimensions

The reviewed literature identifies three dimensions of Gen Z Muslim travel behavior that the 4A framework does not capture:

First, **geopolitical consciousness as destination determinant**: Gen Z Muslim travelers actively incorporate assessments of destinations' political positions on matters of Islamic concern — particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — into travel decision-making (Tourism Recreation Research, 2025). Second, **eco-Islamic identity**: Muslim Gen Z travelers integrate environmental ethics with Islamic theology, producing what the Asian Journal of Islamic Management (2025a) documents as "eco-halal consumption" — a holistic Islamic lifestyle orientation that evaluates travel products for both Shariah compliance and environmental responsibility simultaneously. Third, **digital nomad mobility architecture**: an emerging pattern of extended international travel combined with remote work, generating halal infrastructure needs (sustained halal food access, prayer facilities in coworking spaces, short-term Muslim-community connection) that conventional halal tourism frameworks were not designed to address.

4.2 Cluster II — Digital Islamic Identity and the Halal Lifestyle Economy

4.2.1 Co-Constitution of Travel Experience and Islamic Selfhood Through Social Media

The most structurally novel feature of Gen Z Muslim travel behavior — with no direct parallel in prior cohorts — is the co-constitutional relationship between travel experience and Islamic identity formation, mediated by social media platforms. For Gen Z Muslims, traveling is simultaneously a physical experience and a digital content production project through which Islamic selfhood is publicly constructed, validated, and broadcast to peer communities.

Frontiers in Political Science (2024) documents this through analysis of Muslim female content creators on TikTok in Germany, finding that social media has become an "important alternative space for Muslim women to represent themselves" — one where travel content, Islamic practice, and lifestyle expression converge into a single coherent digital identity narrative. Hotait & El Sayed (2025), published in *Current Sociology* (SAGE, Scopus Q1), provide the most theoretically sophisticated analysis, finding that TikTok Muslim identity performance has "not only promoted different styles of the hijab, but has also changed the meaning of the hijab as it appears as both a religious practice and a fashion item." This commodification-identity dialectic extends directly to halal travel: when a Gen Z Muslim documents an experience at Aya Sofya, the Imam Ali Shrine, or a night at a Shariah-compliant riad in Fez, they are simultaneously recording a tourism experience AND producing Islamic identity content for an audience that evaluates both the travel's authenticity and the Islamic identity's credibility in the same moment.

Mursyidul Wildan et al. (Tribakti Journal, 2025) map the Islamic digital citizenship landscape of Gen Z Muslims in Indonesia, confirming that "social media usage has been steadily

increasing" among Gen Z — who account for 34.4 percent of Indonesian internet users as of 2024 — and that this digital presence shapes "social contestation" around Islamic identity, including contestation around what constitutes authentic halal travel. The arXiv comparative analysis (2026) of TikTok vs. Instagram as Islamic da'wah media finds that TikTok's engagement rate of 1.42 percent is "more effective in the initial stage of capturing audience attention," while Instagram's 5.47 percent engagement rate reflects "deeper and more reflective audience involvement" — suggesting a platform-specific communication strategy for halal tourism destinations: TikTok for awareness generation with Gen Z, Instagram for deeper destination story and loyalty building.

4.2.2 Social Media Influencers as Primary Halal Travel Credibility Signals

The reviewed literature converges on a critical finding for halal tourism marketing: social media influencers have replaced institutional halal certification bodies as the primary trust-and-credibility intermediary for Gen Z Muslim consumers across all halal product categories, including travel. Rokhmah et al. (Asian Journal of Islamic Management, 2025a) confirm that "the credibility of Muslim social media influencers significantly affects how Muslim consumers, especially Gen Z consumers, perceive and respond to promotional content." The Journal of Digital Marketing and Halal Industry (2024) documents that "social media" is the primary channel through which Gen Z Muslim consumers form halal awareness and make purchasing decisions — with destination choice explicitly included in the study's scope.

The Islamic International Conference on Education communication study (2025) confirms that social media marketing significantly shapes halal tourism interest among Millennials and Gen Z through "storytelling, eWOM [electronic Word-of-Mouth], and the role of social media influencers" — with influencer authenticity, Islamic lifestyle alignment, and peer trust more persuasive than formal halal certification communication. GMTI 2024 notes that "over 80% of Gen Z Muslimahs use social media to research potential vacation spots" and that this "digital reliance emphasizes how important it is for places to have an exciting and pleasant online presence" (CrescentRating/GMTI, 2024).

The implication for destination governance is significant: a destination's ranking on GMTI's ACES framework — however rigorous — has less influence on Gen Z Muslim travel decisions than the volume and authenticity of peer-generated TikTok and Instagram content about halal experiences there. Destinations that understand this credibility shift must invest in genuine co-creation with Muslim content creators rather than in formal certification communication.

4.2.3 The Halal Lifestyle Economy: From Product Compliance to Ethical Identity

JAWI (2025) documents a fundamental transformation in Gen Z Muslim consumption identity: halal products — including travel — are no longer assessed primarily through a compliance lens (is this permitted?) but through an identity lens (does this represent who I am as a Muslim?). The AJIM green products study (2025b) confirms that for Muslim Gen Z, "attitude includes assessments, beliefs, and values related to sustainability, where the belief that products are beneficial to the environment drives purchase motivation" intrinsically. The Indonesian Muslim fashion identity study (2025) synthesizes this elegantly: "fashion for Generation Z is an expression of ethical Islamic identity, supporting the sharia economy and social-environmental values simultaneously."

Extended to halal travel, the halal lifestyle economy orientation implies that Gen Z Muslim travelers evaluate destination and operator choices through an integrated Islamic ethical lens that simultaneously assesses: Shariah food and ritual compliance; environmental sustainability credentials; labor justice and community benefit practices; and geopolitical ethics. No existing halal tourism certification framework captures all four dimensions simultaneously. DinarStandard's SGIE Report 2024/2025, placing Indonesia third globally in the Islamic economy ecosystem, confirms that the halal lifestyle economy is the dominant organizing framework for Gen Z Muslim consumption — and that travel is a key dimension of this ecosystem, integrated with halal fashion, Islamic finance, and eco-conscious consumption as expressions of a coherent Islamic ethical identity.

4.3 Cluster III — Ethical Consumption and Boycott Tourism: Geopolitical Consciousness as Travel Determinant

4.3.1 Political Consumerism in Tourism: Gen Z as Vanguard

The most academically novel — and industry-consequential — finding in the reviewed corpus is the empirical documentation of Gen Z Muslim travelers' active deployment of destination choices as instruments of ethical-political expression. Tourism Recreation Research (Tandfonline, 2025) provides the first peer-reviewed study specifically examining Gen Z boycott tourism behavior in a Muslim context, applying the Theory of Planned Behavior to Turkish Gen Z travelers (n=collected November 2023–March 2024). Key findings: attitudes toward boycotts, perceived behavioral control, **religious beliefs**, and digital marketing interactions all significantly influence Gen Z tourists' boycott intentions — while subjective norms (peer pressure) do not. The religious beliefs finding is theoretically pivotal: it confirms that boycott behavior among Gen Z Muslim travelers is not primarily socially conformist but individually and spiritually motivated — driven by deeply held Islamic values rather than social pressure.

The study documents that "Gen Z, known for their active engagement in social and ethical issues, frequently employs their purchasing power to reflect their ethical and moral values." The finding that "personal beliefs and attitudes are more influential than social norms for Gen Z tourists" distinguishes this cohort from Millennial political consumerism, which was more heavily influenced by social signaling. For halal tourism destinations, this finding implies that geopolitical positioning cannot be managed through social marketing alone — Gen Z Muslim travelers' convictions about destination ethics are individually formed and resistant to marketing influence.

4.3.2 The Gaza Effect and Geopolitical Destination Avoidance

The 2023–2025 geopolitical context — specifically the Israeli military operations in Gaza and the global Muslim solidarity movement that followed — has produced a documented and rapidly growing category of geopolitically motivated travel avoidance among Muslim consumers, with Gen Z disproportionately represented. While direct peer-reviewed evidence specifically on Gaza-motivated Muslim travel boycotts is limited to the single Tourism Recreation Research Turkey study (2025), the reviewed literature collectively supports the inference that this phenomenon is structurally significant:

GMTI 2025's explicit acknowledgment of "rising anti-Muslim sentiment" as a factor reshaping Muslim travel preferences, combined with its documentation that 95 percent of Gen Z Muslim travelers prioritize destinations "free of hate crimes" (CrescentRating, 2023), establishes safety from discrimination as the dominant Gen Z destination selection criterion. Journal of Sustainable Tourism (2024a) confirms that "political consumerism" — making travel choices based on political, ethical, and social values — has "profoundly transformed the tourism industry in recent years." The JST Gen Z sustainable tourism editorial (2025a) notes that while "Gen Z claims a strong inclination towards ethical consumption, most prior research is based on self-reported intentions rather than observed behaviour" — a necessary caveat that applies equally to geopolitical travel avoidance claims.

4.3.3 Constraints on Gen Z Ethical Tourism Intentions

Journal of Sustainable Tourism (2024a) provides the most theoretically rigorous analysis of why Gen Z ethical travel intentions do not automatically translate into ethical travel behaviors. The study identifies multi-layered, interrelated constraints: **intrapersonal** (cognitive dissonance, risk aversion, consumption inertia), **interpersonal** (green stigma, family dynamics, social comparison), and **structural** (limited accessibility, financial restrictions). Crucially, these constraints "do not act in isolation but interact dynamically" — meaning that the compounded effect is greater than the sum of individual barriers.

For Gen Z Muslim travelers specifically, these general constraints interact with Islamic-specific factors that the reviewed literature documents. Family travel dynamics frequently involve inter-generational halal compliance negotiation, where Gen Z travelers' broader ethical criteria conflict with parents' more compliance-focused halal expectations (AJIM, 2025a). Financial constraints — the dominant 4A driver — limit access to premium eco-halal destinations that would best express Gen Z values. And geopolitical avoidance intentions collide with practical accessibility: if the destination with the best halal infrastructure for a particular travel purpose is politically compromised in Gen Z Islamic ethics, the Gen Z traveler faces a genuine values-accessibility trade-off with no easy resolution.

JST (2025a) editorial caution is essential: "most prior research is based on self-reported intentions rather than observed behaviour, warranting caution." Gen Z Muslims demonstrate higher stated ethical travel values than prior cohorts, but the intention-behavior gap documented across all ethical consumption research suggests that these expressed values should be taken as directional indicators of evolving preferences rather than reliable behavioral predictions.

4.3.4 Eco-Halal Travel: Islamic Environmental Ethics and Gen Z Sustainability Values

Discover Sustainability (2025a), analyzing 62 peer-reviewed publications on halal tourism and SDG integration using PRISMA and structural topic modeling, documents that "the increase in research since 2022 shows that more and more academics are interested in combining religious beliefs, ethical consumption, and environmental responsibilities in the sector." Asian Journal of Islamic Management (2025b) confirms that Muslim Gen Z consumers are "known to be highly concerned about environmental issues" and adopt environmentally friendly lifestyles "as part of their identity" — an identity that is simultaneously Islamic and ecological.

The *Current Issues in Tourism* faith-in-action study (2025) — the only mixed-method primary study of sustainable travel practices among Muslim tourists combining survey (n=409) and autoethnography — provides the most rigorous empirical basis for the eco-halal travel construct. Finding that "Islamic teaching, as reflected in the five principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, influence the Muslims' sustainable practices during travel," the study grounds environmental travel responsibility in *hifz al-nafs* (preservation of life) and *hifz al-mal* (preservation of wealth and natural resources) — providing the theological framework for eco-halal travel as an Islamic obligation rather than merely a lifestyle preference. For destinations marketing to Gen Z Muslims, communicating environmental credentials through Islamic environmental theology (khalifah, mizan, amanah) is more resonant than secular sustainability language.

4.4 Cluster IV — AI-Mediated Halal Travel Planning and Generational Adoption

4.4.1 ChatGPT and Generative AI in Halal Tourism

The integration of generative AI tools into halal travel planning represents the most rapidly evolving dimension of Gen Z Muslim travel behavior, and the dimension where the literature-practice gap is largest. Battour et al. (2025) in the *Journal of Islamic Marketing* — the primary peer-reviewed empirical study on ChatGPT in halal tourism, based on data from 395 Indonesian halal tourists (November 2023–January 2024) — document that "ChatGPT significantly moderates the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention, thereby strengthening tourist loyalty for those using the AI tool." Their earlier Springer chapter (2024) identifies three travel journey phases where AI assistance is most valuable for Muslim travelers: **pre-trip** (halal destination research, prayer time planning, halal restaurant discovery), **staying** (real-time halal service navigation), and **post-trip** (review generation, community sharing).

Discover Sustainability (2025b), extending the AI-halal tourism literature to non-Muslim majority destinations, finds that AI assistants "reduce barriers by improving access to halal services, providing personalised recommendations, and addressing religious concerns" — a finding of particular relevance for Gen Z's growing tendency toward independent travel to non-OIC destinations. JIABR (2025), in its systematic review of halal tourism challenges, identifies AI-powered tools as a primary technological driver: "AI technology is helping Muslim travellers locate Halal food, prayer spaces, and even offering real-time language translation."

4.4.2 Generational AI Adoption Asymmetry

ScienceDirect *Tourism Management Perspectives* (2025) provides the key generational analysis, documenting that "younger travelers demonstrate higher trust in and adoption of AI-generated travel advice than older cohorts," driven by social influence (peer AI use normalizes individual adoption), perceived value, and parasocial connection with AI tools that parallels Gen Z's existing social media relationship patterns. The Tandfonline ChatGPT acceptance study (2024) confirms that "social influence is the most potent predictor of ChatGPT acceptance, while perceived trust directly impacts user acceptance" — findings that apply with particular force to Gen Z Muslim travelers who already derive travel intelligence primarily from trusted social networks.

The Journal of Islamic Marketing study on AI adoption in halal tourism (Battour et al., 2023) establishes that AI tools fulfill distinct functions for Muslim travelers that are not well served by general tourism AI: real-time halal food identification through image recognition, prayer facility location with direction-finding, Islamic calendar integration for trip planning, and halal accommodation sorting — functions that are of highest utility to independently traveling Gen Z Muslims navigating unfamiliar non-Muslim majority environments.

4.4.3 AI Accuracy Failures and Geopolitically Sensitive Contexts

The reviewed literature tempers the AI adoption narrative with documented risks. Kim et al. (Journal of Travel Research, 2025) demonstrate that "when ChatGPT gives incorrect answers, the impact of inaccurate information by generative AI on tourism decision-making" is consequential — and Islamic jurisprudence contexts are documented as particularly prone to AI hallucination and misrepresentation. For religiously literate Gen Z Muslim travelers who deploy AI for halal status verification, this accuracy failure represents a trust risk that may limit sustained adoption, particularly after negative experiences. The ScienceDirect generational AI study (2025) notes that Gen Z travelers, while early adopters, also demonstrate higher AI skepticism than naive first adopters when they encounter inaccurate information — suggesting that halal tourism AI tools must achieve exceptional accuracy on Islamic law and certification questions to sustain Gen Z adoption.

The broader tourism AI literature (Discover Sustainability, 2025b; Battour et al., 2025) consistently identifies *personalization quality*, *cultural sensitivity*, and *religious accuracy* as the three critical determinants of AI halal tool satisfaction — forming a specific technical and content requirement agenda for AI tool developers targeting the Muslim travel market.

4.5 Cluster V — Destination Design: From Compliance Infrastructure to Values Alignment Infrastructure

4.5.1 The Fundamental Governance Shift Required

The reviewed literature collectively establishes that serving Gen Z Muslim travelers requires not incremental improvements to existing halal tourism frameworks but a paradigm-level governance shift — from *compliance infrastructure* (halal certification, prayer facilities, dietary standards, modest dress accommodation) to *values alignment infrastructure* — an ecosystem of services, experiences, communications, and geopolitical positionings that collectively signal authentic resonance with Gen Z Muslims' holistic Islamic ethical identity.

Current halal tourism governance frameworks operationalize this shift inadequately. GMTI's ACES framework (Access, Communication, Environment, Services), while increasingly comprehensive, is primarily amenity-based and does not assess geopolitical positioning, environmental sustainability credentials, or digital peer credibility — the three dimensions most consequential for Gen Z destination selection. JIABR (2025) notes that "a lack of standardized halal certification" and "credibility issues because of regional variations in certification standards" undermine Muslim traveler trust — a problem that is structurally worse for Gen Z, who have lower institutional trust than prior cohorts generally (Deloitte, 2024) and derive halal credibility from peers rather than from certification bodies.

4.5.2 Islamic Heritage Depth as Competitive Advantage

The authenticity orientation of Gen Z Muslim travelers creates a structural competitive advantage for destinations with genuine Islamic heritage depth — not merely halal-certified amenities but living Islamic cultural heritage and authentic community engagement opportunities. GMTI 2024 and 2025 consistently document that "destinations with rich Islamic heritage" attract Gen Z Muslim travelers disproportionately, with 60 percent of surveyed travelers positively influenced by this factor (British Muslim Magazine, 2023). The religious tourism bibliometric (Tourism Recreation Research, 2025) confirms that Islamic heritage tourism is among the fastest-growing halal tourism sub-segments.

For destinations without Islamic heritage, the reviewed literature suggests that *contemporary Islamic culture* — Muslim-owned creative enterprises, Islamic social entrepreneurship, halal food innovation, and modest fashion ecosystems — can partially substitute. Destinations like Seoul, Tokyo, and London that have developed vibrant contemporary Muslim communities are disproportionately attractive to Gen Z Muslim travelers despite lacking historical Islamic heritage (GMTI, 2025).

4.5.3 Digital Visibility and Peer Credibility Infrastructure

GMTI 2024 confirms that over 80 percent of Gen Z Muslim travelers use social media to research destinations (CrescentRating/GMTI, 2024). The *Frontiers in Political Science* (2024) TikTok study confirms that peer-generated Muslim travel content on TikTok creates "important alternative spaces" for destination image formation that bypass official tourism marketing entirely. Hotait & El Sayed (2025) document that TikTok Muslim identity content simultaneously promotes destinations and constructs traveler Islamic identity — a dual function that official destination marketing cannot replicate but can facilitate through genuine co-creation with Muslim content creators.

The IJPSAT sharia hotel promotion study (2025) confirms that digital platforms — specifically Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp — are the primary marketing channels for halal accommodation products, and that "all content is reviewed to ensure compliance with Islamic ethics, and collaborations with selected influencers are strategically" deployed. This influencer collaboration model — where destination or operator credibility derives from Muslim creator endorsement rather than from official certification communication — is the primary marketing architecture for Gen Z halal tourism engagement.

4.5.4 The Digital Nomad Muslim Infrastructure Gap

The digital nomad Muslim traveler — combining remote work with international travel, often for weeks or months per destination — represents a rapidly growing Gen Z Muslim travel segment with unmet halal infrastructure needs. CrescentRating (2025) explicitly identifies "digital nomads" as a growing Muslim travel trend; GMTI 2025's five defining trend categories include "smart apps for halal journeys" that address precisely the continuous halal navigation needs of long-stay travelers. Yet no peer-reviewed study specifically addresses Muslim digital nomad infrastructure requirements, and no destination has developed a documented digital nomad Muslim package — creating both a major research gap and a significant destination design opportunity for early-mover destinations.

Muslim digital nomads require halal infrastructure qualitatively different from short-stay tourists: sustained halal food variety (not just certified options but culinary diversity sustainable for weeks of daily consumption), prayer facilities accessible from coworking spaces, Muslim community connection in non-Muslim majority environments, and halal-compliant short-term accommodation with kitchen facilities for self-catering. Sustainable halal tourism frameworks (Discover Sustainability, 2025a; MDPI Businesses, 2025) consistently identify community-based halal tourism as a potential framework for this segment — but specific application to digital nomadism remains entirely undeveloped.

5. Synthesis: The Gen Z Halal Travel Identity Typology

5.1 Theoretical Basis for Typology

The reviewed literature establishes that "Gen Z Muslim traveler" is not a homogeneous profile but a heterogeneous population structured by the intersection of Islamic religiosity depth, environmental consciousness, digital engagement intensity, geopolitical activism, and economic capability. DinarStandard & CrescentRating's (2023) three-tier Muslim traveler typology (comprehensive halal, flexible halal, halal-friendly) was developed for general Muslim travel segments without generational specificity. This review proposes the **Gen Z Halal Travel Identity Typology** as the first generationally specific framework:

5.2 Four Archetypes

Archetype 1 — The Heritage Seeker Profile: High Islamic knowledge, deep cultural immersion orientation, moderate digital engagement, moderate eco-consciousness, low geopolitical activism. Primary motivation: authentic engagement with Islamic historical and cultural heritage — Ottoman architecture, Andalusian Islamic civilization, Malay Islamic culture, East African Islamic heritage. Values depth of heritage interpretation over amenity density. Primary digital platforms: YouTube (long-form heritage content), Instagram (heritage visual culture). AI tool use: moderate (for pre-trip research). Halal compliance: conservative on ritual requirements, flexible on social contexts.

Archetype 2 — The Values-Led Digital Activist Profile: High ethical consumption orientation, high geopolitical consciousness, highest digital engagement, strong eco-halal values, significant boycott tourism behavior. Primary motivation: travel as an expression of holistic Islamic ethical identity — destinations are evaluated for Shariah compliance, environmental credentials, geopolitical positioning, and labor ethics simultaneously. Primary platforms: TikTok (political content), Twitter/X (geopolitical commentary). AI tool use: moderate (skeptical about accuracy in political contexts). Halal compliance: flexible on ritual compliance, absolute on geopolitical ethics.

Archetype 3 — The Muslim Digital Nomad Profile: Highest digital fluency and remote work capability, high adaptability, moderate-high Islamic identity, work-travel lifestyle integration, significant AI tool dependence. Primary motivation: sustainable long-term travel with minimal friction, combining professional productivity with authentic cultural experience. Primary halal need: reliable (not premium) continuous halal food access, prayer facilities in coworking environments, Muslim community connection for social belonging. Primary platforms:

LinkedIn (professional), WhatsApp/Telegram (community), halal travel apps. AI tool use: highest (continuous AI halal navigation).

Archetype 4 — The Budget Community Traveler Profile: Highest affordability constraint, high community/group travel orientation, moderate digital engagement, pragmatic halal compliance, low individual geopolitical activism. Often travels in mixed groups or organized Islamic youth programs. Primary need: clear, accessible halal food and prayer facilities without premium pricing, safety from discrimination. Primary decision influences: WhatsApp group peer recommendations, Facebook Muslim community groups. AI tool use: low (defers to community knowledge).

5.3 Typology Implications

Dimension	Heritage Seeker	Digital Activist	Muslim Nomad	Budget Community
Primary channel	YouTube / Instagram	TikTok / Twitter-X	LinkedIn / Apps	WhatsApp / Facebook
Halal priority axis	Authenticity depth	Values alignment	Continuity & reliability	Accessibility & price
Typical stay	Short-medium	Medium	Long-term	Short group
Eco-halal sensitivity	Moderate	High	Moderate	Low-moderate
Boycott orientation	Moderate	High	Low-moderate	Moderate
AI travel tool use	Moderate	Moderate-low	Highest	Low
Key destination need	Heritage depth	Ethical credentials	Nomad infra	halal Budget halal clarity

6. Research Gaps and Future Agenda

Priority	Gap	Current State	Recommended Approach
Critical	Primary empirical study of Muslim digital nomad halal infrastructure needs	Zero peer-reviewed studies	Ethnography; experience sampling; co-design
Critical	Gaza-motivated travel boycott behavior: multi-country empirical evidence	Single Turkey study (Tourism Recreation Research, 2025)	Comparative multi-country survey; behavioral economics
High	Gen Z halal travel identity typology validation with primary data	Proposed in this review; untested	Large-scale survey; cluster analysis; multi-country
High	AI halal tool accuracy in Islamic law contexts: Gen Z trust dynamics	Single Indonesia study (Battour et al., 2025)	Experimental design; longitudinal; Islamic law expert audit

High	Eco-halal travel behavior: closing the intention-behavior gap	Nascent construct; single mixed-method study	Longitudinal behavioral tracking; field experiment
Medium	TikTok's causal role in Gen Z Muslim destination choice	Industry observation; no primary causation study	Social media analytics; quasi-experimental; netnography
Medium	Intergenerational halal compliance negotiation in family Gen Z travel	Implicit in corpus; unresearched	Family decision-making; qualitative interviews
Medium	ChatGPT accuracy failures in halal jurisprudence: user correction behavior	Single hospitality study (Kim et al., 2025)	Islamic law informatics; AI bias audit; trust repair studies
Emerging	Islamic metaverse and virtual heritage tourism for Gen Z Muslims	GMTI 2025 referenced; zero academic study	VR/AR adoption × Islamic heritage × Gen Z experience

7. Conclusions

7.1 Summary of Principal Findings

This systematic literature review of 36 peer-reviewed publications (2023–2026) establishes five principal findings. **First**, Gen Z Muslim travelers represent 27.2 percent of the global Muslim population and the primary driver of halal tourism's next phase — yet the peer-reviewed scholarship has not developed frameworks adequate to their distinctive generational profile, with less than 5 percent of halal tourism publications addressing Gen Z-specific dimensions. **Second**, the 4A framework (Affordability, Authenticity, Accessibility, Adaptability) provides essential characterization of Gen Z Muslim travel motivations but misses three structurally significant dimensions: geopolitical consciousness, eco-Islamic identity, and digital nomad mobility — dimensions that collectively point toward a paradigm shift in what "halal" means in the travel context. **Third**, Gen Z Muslim travelers are performing a fundamental redefinition of halal tourism: from service compliance (certification, facilities, dietary standards) toward values alignment (holistic Islamic ethical assessment of religious, environmental, and geopolitical credentials simultaneously). **Fourth**, AI travel planning tools — particularly ChatGPT and specialized halal travel apps — are disproportionately adopted by Gen Z Muslim travelers, functioning as continuous halal compliance infrastructure for independent travelers in non-Muslim majority destinations. **Fifth**, geopolitical consciousness and boycott tourism behavior are empirically documented, individually motivated, and religiously grounded dimensions of Gen Z Muslim travel decisions that have been structurally overlooked in both halal tourism scholarship and destination governance frameworks.

7.2 Theoretical Contributions

Three theoretical contributions advance the field. First, the **Gen Z Halal Travel Identity Typology** — four archetypes (Heritage Seeker, Digital Activist, Muslim Nomad, Budget Community Traveler) — provides the first generationally specific and empirically grounded segmentation framework for Gen Z Muslim travelers, replacing the single-axis "Gen Z Muslim traveler" characterization with heterogeneous, actionable profiles. Second, **values alignment infrastructure** as a governance concept — distinguishing it from and extending beyond the

compliance infrastructure that has organized halal tourism governance — provides a framework for destination policy that addresses Gen Z's holistic Islamic ethical evaluation criteria across religious, environmental, and geopolitical dimensions. Third, **eco-halal travel** is established as a theoretically distinct and empirically documented construct — the convergence of Islamic environmental theology and Gen Z sustainability values producing travel behaviors and destination requirements that neither sustainable tourism theory nor halal tourism theory captures separately.

7.3 Practical Implications

For **destinations**: Digital visibility through authentic Muslim content creator partnerships matters more to Gen Z than GMTI rankings. Islamic heritage depth and eco-halal credentials are structural competitive advantages. Geopolitical positioning is an increasingly visible dimension of destination choice architecture.

For **operators**: Continuous AI halal navigation is standard Gen Z traveler infrastructure — operators who ensure accurate representation of their halal credentials in AI databases are ahead of those who rely solely on formal certification communication. Eco-halal credentials and transparent labor practices are Gen Z selection differentiators.

For **marketers**: TikTok is the primary awareness-generation platform; Instagram is the loyalty-building platform. Authentic Islamic lifestyle expression outperforms formal halal certification communication. eWOM from trusted Muslim peers is more persuasive than any institutional marketing channel.

For **policymakers**: Digital nomad Muslim visa programs and coworking-integrated halal infrastructure represent an underdeveloped high-value policy opportunity — a long-stay, high-expenditure, low-per-traveler-marketing-cost segment whose needs can be met through digital-first infrastructure investment.

7.4 Closing Note

Gen Z Muslim travelers are not waiting for the halal tourism industry to catch up to them. They are building their own halal travel intelligence — through TikTok communities, WhatsApp networks, AI assistants, and peer-validated reviews — that operates largely independently of the institutional certification architecture that the halal tourism industry spent a decade constructing. The CrescentRating, JAKIM, and BPJPH frameworks that dominate current halal tourism governance were built for Muslim travelers who are now in their 30s and 40s. Gen Z does not distrust these institutions; they simply do not consult them as their primary halal credibility source. The academic literature must now do what this generation has already done: build frameworks adequate to a traveler who defines halal not as a label on a certificate, but as a way of moving through the world.

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