

## The Perspective of Millennial Tourists on Halal Tourism and its Reflection to Halal Tourism Development in West Sumatera

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### ABSTRACT

As halal tourism demand show significant growth due to increase awareness of muslim tourists on consuming halal products and services during their travels, muslim millennials travelers becomes the most targeted market from destinations in the world, especially as they represent 25% of total tourism visitor arrivals. Therefore, this paper intends to reveal the perception of millennials on halal tourism and after that, the results to be projected in the development strategy of halal tourism in West Sumatera. It is an exploratory descriptive research in which primary data are collected through the distribution of questionnaire to 185 millennials in Jakarta. The results show that faith based needs especially the provision of halal food as well the opportunity to perform salaath and the availability of praying facilities along with water usage friendly washrooms are the most important services on their leisure travels. Muslim friendly accommodation, tourism attraction and shopping are the important facilities required, while the millennials search travel information and share their experience in social media. The most favorite tourism activities in halal tourism are adventure and family based tourism. To be successful in offering its halal tourism to millennials, West Sumatera should create its halal tourism products and services in accordance to the millennials tourists expectation.

**Keywords:** halal tourism, muslim millennial travelers requirements, muslim friendly travel.

### ABSTRAK

Karena permintaan pariwisata halal menunjukkan pertumbuhan yang signifikan karena meningkatnya kesadaran wisatawan muslim dalam mengonsumsi produk dan layanan halal selama perjalanannya, wisatawan milenial muslim menjadi pasar yang paling dibidik dari berbagai destinasi di dunia, terutama karena mewakili 25% dari total kedatangan pengunjung pariwisata. Oleh karena itu, tulisan ini bermaksud untuk mengungkap persepsi generasi milenial terhadap wisata halal dan selanjutnya hasilnya diproyeksikan dalam strategi pengembangan wisata halal di Sumatera Barat. Merupakan penelitian deskriptif eksploratif dimana data primer dikumpulkan melalui penyebaran kuesioner kepada 185 milenial di Jakarta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kebutuhan berbasis agama khususnya penyediaan makanan halal serta kesempatan untuk shalat dan ketersediaan sarana shalat serta toilet yang ramah penggunaan air merupakan layanan terpenting dalam perjalanan liburan mereka. Akomodasi ramah muslim, atraksi wisata dan belanja menjadi fasilitas penting yang dibutuhkan, sementara kaum milenial mencari informasi perjalanan dan berbagi pengalamannya di media sosial. Kegiatan pariwisata yang paling favorit dalam wisata halal adalah petualangan dan wisata berbasis keluarga. Agar sukses menawarkan wisata halal kepada milenial, Sumatera Barat harus menciptakan produk dan layanan wisata halal yang sesuai dengan ekspektasi wisatawan milenial. Kata kunci: wisata halal, kebutuhan wisatawan milenial muslim, wisata ramah muslim.

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## INTRODUCTION

Millennial generation will slowly but surely take over the main market share of global tourism. If the previous generation sees tourism as a secondary need, the millennial generation sees tourism as a primary need and tourism activities are aimed at improving the quality of life. A survey conducted by Topdeck Travel of 31,000 people from 134 different countries stated that most tourists aged 18-30 years stated that they have traveled overseas up to three times a year. This generation has far more interest in travel than the older generation, with tourist destinations at home or abroad.

An interesting fact revealed by HalalTrip, an online travel platform, millennial is an important segment of the Muslim travel market. The global Muslim population is projected to grow rapidly compared to other major religious groups, with a population average age 23.7 years younger than the global population average (Lipka, 2016). Trips made by the muslim millennials reach 25% of the total annual travel visitor arrivals with a figure of 1.1 billion (UNWTO & WYSE Travel Confederation, 2016). The increase knowledge and awareness on halal products and services turns growing demand on halal industry. It also results in the emergence of halal tourism as new phenomenon as muslim tourists care on the consumption of products and services that in accordance to syariah when visiting tourism destination (Sabriana & Faridah, 2018). According to HalalTrip, the millennial generation has a great desire to explore the world while still fulfilling religious-based needs (Vargas-Sánchez & Mirko Perano, 2018).

Halal tourism is a type of special interest tourism that is currently in vogue and has increased rapidly so that many countries have started to look at this tour. In 2017, it is estimated that 131 million Muslim visitors are traveling, up from 121 million in 2016, which is estimated to grow to 156 million visitors in 2020 or representing 10 percent of the world travel segment (GMTI, 2018). The halal tourism market is even considered as one of the fastest growing tourism segments in the world. The projection is that in 2020 the contribution of the halal tourism sector will increase by 35% to US \$ 300 billion to the global economy or an increase from US \$ 220 billion in 2016 (CNBC Indonesia, 2019) and is one of the strategies to

bring in foreign tourism, based on data in the world as much as 157 million tourists who will take a walk and are predicted to spend 315 billion US dollars (Kompas, 2019).

According to Battour & Ismail (2015), the term Halal is defined as that which is permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists, and the doing of which the law-giver, Allah, is allowed. Halal term means permissible according to Islamic teaching (Sharia law), also one of five action that categorizes the morality of human action in Islam, others being Fard (compulsory), Mustahabb (recommended), Makruh (disliked), and Haram (forbidden). From Islamic perspective, Halal as defined to any practise or activity in tourism which is permissible according to Islamic teaching.

To explore the great potential of halal tourism, many countries, both Muslim and non-Muslim, have started to offer tourism products, facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of Muslim tourists. However, there are still many business people and tourism stakeholders who are still constrained in understanding the halal tourism products, facilities and infrastructure (Satriana & Faridah, 2018).

Indonesia occupies the top position among the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and non-OIC in 2019 with a balanced score with Malaysia as a Muslim-friendly tourist destination. The use of digital technology for the development of halal tourism is considered very profitable due to the rapid digital transformation because the Halal tourism market is very much determined by experience and connectivity or what is called Halal Travel 2.0. Halal Travel 2.0 utilizes technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (augmented reality) and virtual reality (virtual reality) to better engage Muslim tourists in this digital era.

The opportunity for Indonesia to advance halal tourism and as a center for world halal tourism is huge because apart from benefiting from technological advances, Indonesia also has advantages in terms of demographics. Indonesia is predicted to experience a demographic bonus in 2020 - 2030. In that year, the population of productive age (15-64 years) will reach 70 percent. The rest are residents of non-productive age (CNN Indonesia, 2018).

Developing halal tourism in West Sumatra is a responsible choice because this development is in accordance with the culture and traditions of the Minangkabau people. Adai basandi syaria which means that custom and religious law go hand in hand is the philosophy of the religious life of the Minangkabau people. Therefore, this research is aimed at identifying how the development of halal tourism in West Sumatra is of interest to the millennial generation as the main market for tourism in the future.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Halal Tourism

There are various terms as halal tourism which is also known as Islamic tourism or sharia travel. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2008 stated that Islamic tourism is when Muslim tourists travel to a destination where Islam is the dominant religion of the population, with religious purposes forming the majority of their intentions.

The word halal comes from the Arabic language halla, yahillu, hillan, wahalalan which has the meaning of being justified or permitted by the syarak law. It means as something that is permitted by Allah. The definition of halal based on the Qur'an and hadith is everything good for body, mind and soul. On the other hand, everything that brings harm to health, body, mind, and soul is haram. According to Islam, consuming what is halal, holy and good is a religious commandment and the law is obligatory. According to MUI decree, halal tourism is a travel activity carried out by a person or group of people by visiting places for recreational purposes, self-development, learning the uniqueness of tourist attractions for tourism according to sharia principles while the definition of tourism is in accordance to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), anyone visits a country outside his / her place of residence, is motivated by one or more needs without intending to earn income at the place visited and the length of the visit is not more than 12 months.

Al-Quran support a journey with spiritual, physical, and social goals. Through a trip, a deeper surrender to Allah is made possible by seeing first hand the beauty and the gift, creation, and understanding the smallness of humans can magnify the greatness of God.

Travel can also improve health and reduce stress, making it possible to pray better. Muslims believe that hosts must provide hospitality to tourists or

visitors, therefore Islam emphasized a good relationship between tourists (guests) and hosts and sees the activities as religious matter. Islam also grants safar prayer or makes special ease prayer while traveling. So Islam has a great influence on travel and encourages tourism.

According to CrescentRating, there are five goals to achieve in order to develop halal tourism : 1) Integration, diversity and faith which is expected to enable Muslims to be active as a society in the global community while still fulfilling their spiritual obligations.; 2. Historical, cultural and connections in order to connect Muslim tourists with fellow Muslim tourists, local communities, cultural and historical heritage in their chosen destinations; 3) Education, insights and capabilities in order to increase understanding among the community, increase the knowledge of academics and industry players to increase the capabilities of stakeholders; 4) Industry, innovation and tradeto create new opportunities to increase trade through the tourism sector and promote growth in various sectors; and finally 5) Prosperity and sustainable tourism in order to recognize the responsibilities of stakeholders in the tourism sector and their social impacts on tourists, the wider community and the environment.

The concept of halal tourism which is also commonly referred to as Muslim Friendly Tourism, based on the analysis of research conducted by CrescentRating in 2015 consists of the following three main components:

1. The religious-based needs for Muslim tourists, which includes at least 6 basic needs needed for Muslim tourists, including:
  - a. Halal food  
Halal food or a restaurant that provides a halal menu is the most important thing that must be available for Muslim tourists. Food or restaurants that provide halal menus for Muslim tourists must have a halal certificate from the relevant institution as a guarantee that the food provided is completely free from non-halal elements.
  - b. Salaath  
Performing prayers is the most important element in Islam. Prayer is the second of the five pillars of Islam and it is an obligation for Muslims to do so.
  - c. Ramadan services

Even though there are not many Muslim tourists who travel during the month of Ramadan, this does not mean that it is not a reason for Muslims to travel. Especially because this period coincided with school holidays. This month, Muslim tourists have special needs, such as finding a menu to eat.

- d. Water-friendly washrooms  
Cleanliness is also important for Muslims. They are used to cleaning themselves using water. Seeing this habit, it would be nice if the tour manager provides toilets that use water so that Muslim tourists feel more comfortable.
- e. No non-halal activities  
This is something that Muslim tourists also pay attention to. Basically, they will avoid facilities that provide alcohol, being near discotheques or casinos.
- f. Recreational with privacy  
Some Muslim tourists are also looking for facilities that provide privacy for men and women, such as female-only swimming pools and so on

2. Based on the demand side products (reasons for muslims traveling)

From the demand side reasons to travel as follows :

- a. Religious Travel  
Religious Journeys undertaken by Muslims are divided into 3 types of activities, namely; Hajj, Umrah and also visiting Islamic sites for the purpose of worship.
- b. Leisure Travel  
The motives or reasons of Muslims for making this trip are quite diverse. The majority of them make this trip for sightseeing, shopping and also tasting various culinary delights in an area. Not only that, some of them also made this trip for a honeymoon, visiting relatives or for the purpose of exploring and learning more about Islamic history.
- c. Business Travel  
Tourists who make these trips take advantage of business opportunities to invest in developing countries. This is also

influenced by the growth in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) which is currently growing.

3. Based on the supply side (travel and hospitality services and facilities)  
The offers and services provided for Muslim tourists must be in line with the concept of Muslim-friendly tourism. The dimension on halal travel and hospitality services and facilities are :
  - a. Muslim friendly accommodation
  - b. Muslim friendly attraction
  - c. Muslim friendly events
  - d. Muslim tour leader / tour guide

The conceptual framework on halal tourism based on the above premises shown in Figure 1 below.

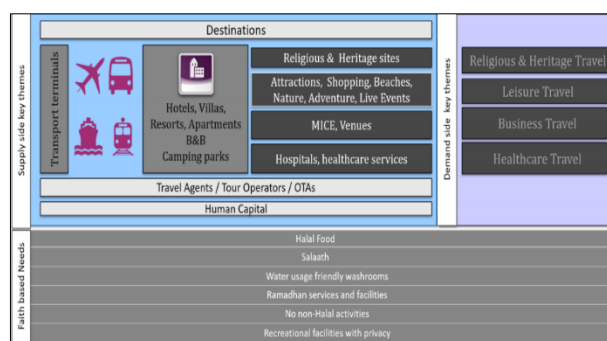


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Halal Tourism  
Source: CrescentRating, 2015

### Millennials Travel Characteristics

Millennial is a term in demographics cohort that means followers or groups. There are currently four major cohorts in demographics, namely Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), Gen-X (born 1965-1980), Millennials (born 1981-2000), and Gen-Z (born in 2001-present). In other literature, according to Absher and Amidjaya, the millennial generation is a generation born between 1982 and 2002, a difference that is not too significant (Ali & Lilik Purwandi, 2017, pp. 3,4). The current millennial generation (in 2017) Iffah al Walidah 319 are those aged 17-36 years; those who now act as students, early jobbers, and young parents. Millennials were born between 1981-2000. (Ali & Lilik Purwandi, 2017).

Millennial generation is a generation raised by technology. In this era there was also the industrial revolution 4.0. Departing from this, the convergence of technology that occurs through the use of digitization of information is termed the internet of things (IoT). This term is defined as the relationship

between various types of things such as products, services, places, and so on and people. This relationship occurs through the use of technology for information accessed through various forms of platforms (Schwab, 2016).

The impact of shifting cyber culture, which can be seen from digital transformation in the era of tourism 4.0, is a change in the travel decision-making process for the millennial generation. Typical cyber culture that focuses on social and networking phenomena (Manovich in Macek, 2014), makes social media play a significant role as a source of reference for the millennial generation in determining travel destinations.

When traveling, according to Halaltrip (2017) millennials are usually interested in authentic experiences such as new destination discovery, local cuisine and flexible itinerary. They also want to find affordable services for accommodation, transport and activities, and as native digital users, technology and social media have a high role to play in influencing muslim millennial traveler. It is not uncommon for their decision to determine a trip as they were influenced by content posted by other travelers. They also uses social media to share their travel experiences and also searches for information about destination destinations and makes it easier for them to book transportation and accommodation tickets. Factors that are considered important when booking accommodation are affordability, location and free wifi. With regard to Muslim friendly services and facilities, they value the availability and proximity to halal food options, mosques and prayer facilities and water-friendly facilities (Abu Bakar, B., Tan, E., Nair, S., Lim, T. (2018).

Apart from these characteristics, millennials are also the generation with an intense level of social media use when compared to the previous generation. Fotis et al (2012) states that millennials are the heaviest social media users, who like to share their experiences online through various forms of media such as writing, photos and videos. Millennials are also interested in becoming active when traveling and they like activities like improving their knowledge, wellness, and also want to look good in altruism activities.

## METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research which would explain the perspective of 185 millennials on halal tourism. Three Likert scale measurement is used to measure millennials perspective on halal tourism products

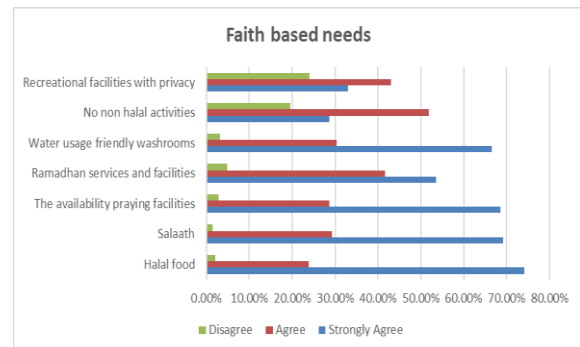
and services. The results then projected to halal tourism development in West Sumatera.

## DISCUSSION

The perspectives on choosing halal tourism according to the survey on muslim millennials in Jakarta as follows:

### 1. Faith based needs

Millennials believe that their choices on halal tourism, as stated in Figure 1, are consecutively in order to fulfil the needs for halal food, the assurance to carry out worship and the availability of praying facilities during traveling as well as to get water friendly washrooms. The interesting information is that they do not really demand for Ramadhan facilities or separate recreational facilities for male and female or the assurance that during traveling they are far from the non halal activities such as gambling, discotheque and so on. It means that millennials wants convenience in fulfilling their private religious obligations and during their travels they do not need to be completely sterile from local activities which is not really comply to Syariah. Indonesian millennials



are open minded and have high tolerance as long as they are able to perform their basic religious requirement.

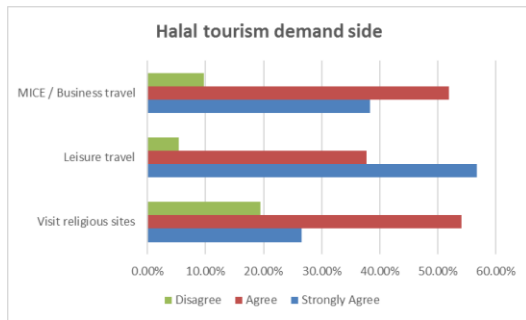
**Figure 1. Faith based needs during traveling**

Sources : research data

### 2. Demand side of halal tourism

Figure 2 shows that from the demand side, millennials prefer halal tourism for their leisure travel. It reflects that young generation realizes that they want to enjoy holiday and also fulfil their obligation to worship God. It reflects that more millennials understand their role as religious people. They will expand their expectation to experience more as global citizen and they balance it with what they are believed are expected from them as the believers. Young





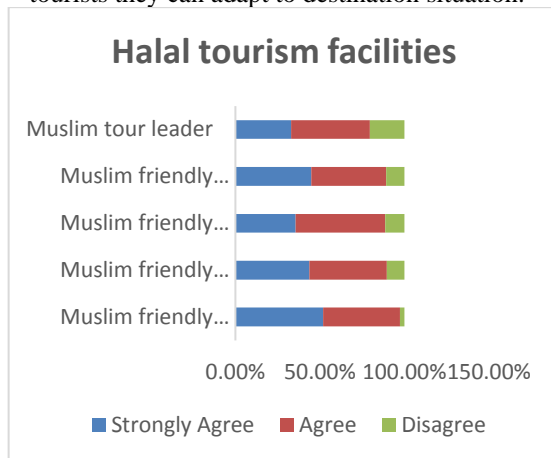
generation is more expressive and they are not afraid to show others what they are or what they want.

**Figure 2. Demand side of halal tourism**

Sources : research data

### 3. Muslim friendly facilities

Millennial tourists seek muslim friendly facilities for their accommodation, attraction and shopping (see Figure 3) although they are not as important as their faith based needs such as halal food, salaath facilities and opportunities. When traveling they do not really require muslim friendly events or tour guide. As quite religious tourists they can adapt to destination situation.



**Figure 3. Muslim friendly activities**

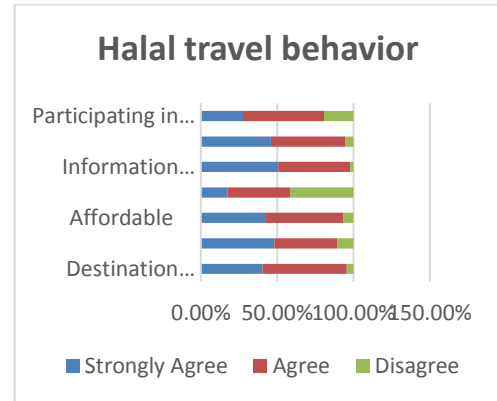
Sources : research data

### 4. Halal travel behavior

Travel behavior of muslim millennials is unique destinationas generic as the generic travel behavior. They seek information from digital media, sharing experience in social media, and try to find free wifi during their travels. They want affordable trips and consider destination connectivity. Interesting findings show that they do not really rely on

their social community or interested in only their peers' popular destination. They are

quite explorers and want to find new destination.

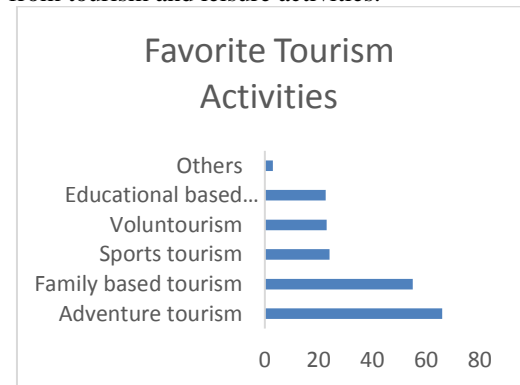


**Figure 4. Halal travel behavior**

Sources : research data

### 5. Halal tourism activities

Halal tourism activities interested by Millennials consequently are adventure, family based, sports, voluntourism and educational tourism. It reflects not only the interest of millennials for something challenging, improvement interest and altruism. They want to be better individuals from tourism and leisure activities.

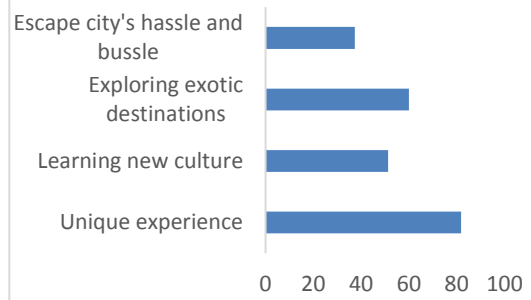


**Figure 5. Millennials favorite tourism activities**

Sources : research data

### 6. Millennials travel motivation

Travel motivation of millennials is to have unique experience, exploring exotic destinations and learning new culture which is also the generic characteristics of millennials when travelling as stated in the Figure 6.



**Figure 6. Millenials travel motivation**

Sources : research data

As the culture and social life cannot be separated from the Islamic values and way of living, halal tourism development is believed the best tourism development approach in West Sumatera (Elfitra, 2019; Huda et al, 2020). According to the findings above, it is highly suggested to develop its halal tourism as follows:

### 1. Tourist Attraction

West Sumatera is known for its very rich in natural beauty, heritage, unique culture with Islamic influence and the world's largest matriarchal society, which means it has high differentiation contents to be developed further as global tourism destination. West Sumatera also known as Minangkabau also famous with the Islamic figure as writer, poet and religious leader, Hamka as well as other important and respected intellectual figures nationally and globally, Sutan Syahrir and Muhammad Hatta. West Sumatera is also very famous with its culinary. Rendang has already announced as the most delicious food in the world. It is also known for its unique traditional housing architecture, embroidery and songket that are important as inputs to create unique experience that also fulfil the criteria as exotic destination and culture. Therefore, West Sumatera has a high potential to become an exotic destination so that it can serve educational tourism which enable people to learn and undertand new culture.

West Sumatera is also an interesting place for adventure and sports tourism. Tour the Singkarak is annual sports event with a global scale in West Sumatera, while to develop adventure tourism, West Sumatera has vast variety to offer such as surfing in Mentawai, mountaineering the active vulcano, beautiful lakes, islands, beach for surfing, paragliding, and so on. Not only that it can be explored further to attract family tourists.

### 2. Amenities

According to the findings on millennial's survey above, to be successful to launch halal tourism, West Sumatera should deliver halal food, create tour packages that enable the tourists to pray and provide facilities or place to Salaath. It must invest in good toilets and other tourist facilities such as muslim friendly accommodation, and shopping facilities.

### 3. Accessibilities

As the millennials consider good connectivity which means good transportation modes, system, hubs, and the ease to use public transport beside information. Therefore in order to fill market requirements, West Sumatera needs to invest on accessibility.

### 4. Digitalization and Information

It is also great importance to utilize digitalization technology and create digital platform in order to provide real time services, encourage sharing economy, market access for small and informal businesses.

### 5. Marketing and Promotion

Marketing and promotion should exploit social media. Big data and internet of things to support marketing, promotion and influence target markets are also unavoidable.

## CONCLUSION

In traveling, the majority of Muslim millennial tourists really need the availability of a place to pray and ensure that they can continue to worship during the trip and also the availability of halal food during the trip. These Muslim millennial tourists have the motivation to travel on vacation with the concept of halal tourism. The facilities that they really consider are Muslim-friendly accommodation, attraction and shopping. In addition, they are also very attached to the use of digital media. They admit that the majority of them are looking for information about their intended destination through digital media and need free wifi facilities at their destination. The location that is easily accessible and affordable facilities is something they really consider. Several things such

as the existence of a proper place to pray and also the availability of halal food are easy to find.

In order to become the preferred halal tourism destination, West Sumatera should combine adventure and family based tourism activities with proper basic faith based needs such as halal food, time for salaath and praying facilities during their travels. Develop comprehensive information in internet and virtual community is important so the millennials would be able to post and recommend their halal tourism trip to their peers.

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