

Halal tourism with the family: destination – local islands of the Maldives

Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the attributes of halal tourism with family members by exploring the experiences of Muslims who had travelled with their families to the local islands of the Maldives. This country was chosen as the context of the study as it is a destination with a fully Muslim population, which served as a normative context for studying halal tourism. **Design/methodology/approach:** A basic qualitative design was adopted as the research methodology, with the data collected through in-depth interviews with the selected Muslim families. **Findings:** Nine emergent themes unique to the context of halal tourism with family members extend the existing discussion on family tourism and halal tourism. Overall, halal family tourism experience is laden with Islamic family values, characterised by the dimensions of group organisation, safety, practicality, risk management as well as mutual respect and benefit between travellers and providers, and among family members. This experience leads to increased family bonding and the internalisation of Islamic values. Hence, this study highlights halal tourism with family members as a form of dignified tourism. **Originality/value:** Travel with the family deserves greater academic attention due to the large market size and the distinctive nature of travel undertaken by groups of individuals bonded through familial relationships. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this study is among the first to explore the attributes of halal tourism with family members, and the normative Islamic context of the local islands of the Maldives assisted in elucidating the emergent themes and values of this form of halal tourism with family members. Halal family tourism, as a nexus of family tourism and halal tourism, offers a huge potential of future research avenue.

Keywords

Family tourism; Family wellbeing; Halal tourism; Maldives; Muslim travellers; Sustainable tourism