

## Exploratory Factor Analysis of Islamic Attributes of Destination: A Case Study of Krabi Province, Thailand

การวิเคราะห์องค์ประกอบเชิงสำรวจคุณลักษณะอิสลามในแหล่งท่องเที่ยว:  
กรณีศึกษาจังหวัดกระบี่ ประเทศไทย

◆ Wiraphong Panyathanakhun

Ph.D., Student in Integrated Tourism Management, Graduate School of Tourism Management, National Institute of Development Administration,  
E-mail: ajarnwiraphong@gmail.com

วีระพงษ์ ปัญญาธนะคุณ

นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก สาขาการจัดการการท่องเที่ยวแบบบูรณาการ คณะการจัดการการท่องเที่ยว สถาบันบัณฑิตพัฒนบริหารศาสตร์

◆ Paithoon Monpanthong

Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Graduate School of Tourism Management,  
National Institute of Development Administration, E-mail: mpaitoon@hotmail.com

ไพฑูรย์ มนต์พานทอง

ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. คณะการจัดการการท่องเที่ยว สถาบันบัณฑิตพัฒนบริหารศาสตร์

*Received: December 13, 2019 ; Revised: December 19, 2019 ; Accepted: December 20, 2019*

---

### Abstract

Given the fact that there was still a lack of component identification of Islamic attributes of destination for non-Muslim destinations in particular to Thai context, this study therefore aims at uncovering dimensionalities underlying Islamic attributes in non-Muslim destination by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) method and choosing Krabi Province, a well-known touristic city in southern Thailand, as a case study.

The investigation was conducted on 371 cases of inbound Muslim tourists by quota and purposive survey methods. The survey instrument demonstrated good validity and reliability before use with Item Objective Congruence (IOC) score for all question items greater than 0.5 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.901.

The result is found that the factor structure of Islamic attributes of destination is composed of four distinct principal components namely hotel and restaurant hospitality, worship facilities

and food, public places, and entertainment and art. Total variance captured by these components accounts for 64.837%. The finding also indicates acceptable appropriateness of the indicators used for factor structure detection illustrated by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) of 0.728 and significant Bartlett's test of sphericity.

**Keywords:** Islamic Attributes of Destination, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Islamic Tourism, Halal Tourism, Non-Muslim Destination

## บทคัดย่อ

เนื่องจากเล็งเห็นว่ายังขาดแคลนงานวิจัยที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการจำแนกองค์ประกอบคุณลักษณะอิสลามในแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่ไม่ใช่มุสลิม โดยเฉพาะประเทศไทย การศึกษานี้จึงมุ่งค้นหาองค์ประกอบที่ว่ามีในแหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่ไม่ใช่มุสลิม โดยวิธีการวิเคราะห์องค์ประกอบเชิงสำรวจ ทั้งนี้ ได้เลือกจังหวัดกระบี่ซึ่งเป็นเมืองท่องเที่ยวที่มีชื่อเสียงทางภาคใต้ของไทยเป็นกรณีศึกษา

การศึกษาดำเนินการกับกลุ่มตัวอย่างที่เป็นนักท่องเที่ยวมุสลิมต่างชาติจำนวน 371 คน โดยวิธีการสำรวจแบบโควตาและเจาะจง เครื่องมือวิจัยที่ใช้ผ่านการทดสอบความเที่ยงตรงและความเชื่อมั่นในระดับดีก่อนนำไปใช้ โดยพบว่า ทุกข้อคำถามมีค่าดัชนีของความสอดคล้องกันระหว่างข้อคำถามกับจุดประสงค์เกิน 0.5 และมีสัมประสิทธิ์แอลฟาของครอนบาคโดยรวมในระดับ 0.901

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า โครงสร้างปัจจัยของคุณลักษณะอิสลามในแหล่งท่องเที่ยวประกอบด้วย 4 องค์ประกอบหลัก ได้แก่ การบริการในโรงแรมและร้านอาหาร สิ่งอำนวยความสะดวกด้านการละหมาดและอาหาร สถานที่สาธารณะ สิ่งบันเทิงและศิลปะ องค์ประกอบทั้งสี่สามารถอธิบายความแปรปรวนรวมกันได้ร้อยละ 64.837 นอกจากนี้ ยังพบว่า ตัวชี้วัดมีความเหมาะสมในการวิเคราะห์โครงสร้างปัจจัย โดยมีค่าไคเซอร์-เมเยอร์-โอลคิน (KMO) ในระดับ 0.728 และค่าทดสอบของบาร์ตเลตต์ (Bartlett's test of sphericity) มีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ

**คำสำคัญ:** คุณลักษณะอิสลามในแหล่งท่องเที่ยว การวิเคราะห์องค์ประกอบเชิงสำรวจ การท่องเที่ยวอิสลาม การท่องเที่ยวฮาลาล แหล่งท่องเที่ยวที่ไม่ใช่มุสลิม

## Introduction

The great market potential of Islamic tourism is recognized as one of the world's fastest growing market segments in tourism industry. However, this faith-based niche market is still largely untapped.

In 2017, it was estimated that there were 131 million Muslim international tourists worldwide. The number is expected to rise dramatically up to 156 million by 2020 representing

10 percent of the world travel segment. In terms of expenditure, Muslim travel market is projected to reach US\$220 billion by 2020 and expected to hit US\$300 billion by 2026 (Mastercard-CrescentRating, 2018). At present Muslim population is increasing more rapidly than adherents from any other religion. By 2050, the Muslim population will grow to 2.8 billion roughly equivalent to one-third of entire population worldwide (Mastercard-CrescentRating, 2018).

In recognition of huge potential of global Muslim travel industry, Tourism Authority of Thailand launched a tourism campaign named “Thailand Muslim-Friendly Destination”, to attract more Muslim tourists with a primary goal to stimulate visitation, as well as boost more travel spending and duration of stay. Grabbing this trend, Krabi, one of the most famous tourist destination located in south of Thailand where Muslims makes up roughly 40% of entire population, has promoted itself as a hub of Islamic tourism proceeded under provincial grand development policy called “Krabi Global City”.

Since the holy Quran gives guidance to whole passage of life for its followers including the Muslim tourist’s attitudes and behavior on vacation, ranging from choice of destination, tourism activities to product consumption (Eid, 2015). Therefore, destinations fulfilling their religious needs may reinforce the decision to travel, and enable them reach a high level of satisfaction. In contrast, an absence of Islamic attributes at destination may cause them distressed or discourage travel motivation (Battour, Battor, & Bhatti, 2014; Battour & Ismail, 2014). Owing to the specialty of needs differing from the other groups of tourists, the Islamic attributes of destination deserves special interest from destination managers.

Relying on literature survey, it is found that even though prior findings about dimensionalities of the Islamic attributes were discovered in several studies; however, the uncovered dimensionalities of were not clearly consistent. In addition, almost related studies were conducted in the context of Islamic countries, such as Malaysia (Battour et al., 2014; Battour, Ismail, Battor, & Awais, 2017; Rahman, 2014), Iran (Farahdel, 2011), Kuwait (Nassar, Mostafa, & Reisinger, 2015) and Jordan (Bazazo, Elyas, Awawdeh, Faroun, & Qawasmeh, 2017), whose some aspects of Islamic attributes are probably not unrealistic for the Westernized non-Muslim context. In the meantime, there was still a lack of component identification of Islamic attributes of destination for non-Muslim destinations in particular to Thai context. Therefore, previous findings that might not suit the case in Thailand.

To fill this research gap, this study seeks to identify principal components underlying Islamic attributes of destination for non-Muslim destination in particular to Krabi province. The finding is believed that an understanding about Islamic attributes will allow destination managers and marketers to put forward effective marketing strategy for the Muslim tourists.

## **Research Objectives**

To identify dimensionalities underlying Islamic attributes of destination for Krabi Province as a non-Muslim destination.

## **Scope of Research**

The survey was conducted among inbound Muslim tourists in touristic areas of Krabi Province. Data collection took place during one month between mid-January and mid-February 2019.

## **Relevant Concepts**

### **Islamic Tourism**

Islamic tourism is deeply rooted from the religious principles. It is a mandatory duty for all Muslims to perform Hajj in Mecca, one of five pillars of Islam (Eid, 2015). In Islam, tourism is considered a fundamental part of religion since it is discovered that there are least 16 verses in Quran apparently encourage adherents to travel. In Islamic perspectives, people are encouraged to travel for many reasons such as for consideration and contemplation of the greatness of God along with the destiny of non-believers. Arguably, it may induce people to submit to God which is the ultimate goal of travel. Moreover, travel helps foster perseverance of human being, as well as strengthen and unify fraternal bond among the Muslim communities called Umrah apart from enhancing one's health and wellness, and reduce stress (Duman (2012). According to Duman (2012), the travel practice in Islam must be purposeful activities with Islamically acceptable purposes, that is it is made in the cause of Allah or with other purposes specified by Quran and Prophet's teachings.

For the time being, the term "Islamic tourism" is still not formally defined. The Islamic Tourism Center (ITC) of Malaysia defined it as "any activity, event and experience undertaken in a state of travel which is in accordance with Islam (Islamic Tourism Centre, 2018). Duman (2012) pays more attention to the religious motives, so his Islamic tourism definition was given as "tourism activities by Muslims that originate from Islamic motivations and are realized

according to Sharia principles” From various definitions, Islamic tourism is conceptualized by three elements including Islamic motivation, faith-based needs and services, and Islamic teaching.

The concept of Islamic tourism has been widely agreed that it is neither exclusive only for Muslim tourists nor religious purpose. Besides, the location of activities are not limited solely to the Muslim countries.

Moreover, Islamic tourism as a concept can be used alternatively with different names. Among others, halal tourism, Muslim-friendly tourism, and Sharia tourism, are the terms most commonly used. According to Khan and Callanan (2017), there is no obvious difference between the terms “Islamic tourism” and “halal tourism” as they are used inconsistently and confusingly in tourism industry. However, it was observed that the term “Islamic” is used more popularly than “halal” in the realms of academia, whereas “halal” is more widespread in the industry and medias.

#### **Islamic Attributes of Destination**

Islamic attributes are main concern of Muslim tourists when deciding to travel to a particular destinations in foreign countries. It is possible that they decide not to visit certain places if necessary Islamic attributes are absent (Battour & Ismail, 2014; Eid & El-Gohary, 2015a).

For general Muslim tourists, religion plays a prominent role in shaping travel choice and experience as they are required to consume only halal tourism products and abstain from any activities breaking the Islamic laws. Due to this reason, Shariah-compliant products and services form a prerequisite of high-value experience for Muslim tourists (Eid, 2015). Moreover, it was asserted that presence of Islamic attributes also fosters the tourist satisfaction as well as loyalty (Bazazo et al., 2017; Eid, 2015; Rahman, 2014).

The definition of “Islamic attributes” is given in several dimensions. For example “those factors which should be catered in order to respond to Muslim’s needs” (Farahdel, 2011); availability of Islamic norms and practice relevant to tourism at destination (Battour et al., 2014). However, in this study, the term would be defined as presence of norms and practice in a destination complying with Islamic principles, and availability of necessary tourism products and service catering to the religious needs of Muslim tourists.

Below is a list of the Islamic attributes in tourist destinations compiled from nine relevant quantitative studies. The items which obtained Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) score

equal and higher than 0.5 were taken into the survey instrument before exploratory factor analysis was performed in the aftermath.

**Table 1** Elements of Islamic Attributes of Destination

No	Islamic Attributes	Literatures									Total
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
1.	Availability of mosques	o	o	o	o				o		5
2.	Availability of prayer facilities	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	9
3.	Azan (prayer call)	o	o	o	o						4
4.	Qibla sign in hotel room	o	o	o	o				o		5
5.	Quran in hotel room	o	o	o	o	o		o	o		7
6.	Water supply in washroom	o	o	o	o	o		o			6
7.	Availability of halal food	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	9
8.	Segregated halal kitchen	o	o	o	o						4
9.	Ban of alcohol drinks	o	o	o	o		o				5
10.	No gambling activities	o	o	o	o						4
11.	Islamic dress code for staff	o	o	o	o						4
12.	Islamic dress code in public places	o	o	o	o						4
13.	No sex channels and porn	o	o	o	o		o				5
14.	Ban of prostitution	o	o	o							3
15.	Ban of indecent display of affection	o	o	o	o						4
16.	Sex segregation at pool and gym	o	o	o	o	o		o		o	7
17.	Sex segregation on beaches	o	o	o	o	o		o		o	7
18.	Censored adult scenes on TV	o	o	o	o	o		o			6
19.	Shariah-compliant entertainment					o		o		o	3
20.	Art not depicting human forms					o		o			2
21.	Muslim employees							o			1

### Sources

(1) Farahdel (2011), (2) Battour et al. (2017), (3) Battour et al. (2014)

(4) Bazazo et al. (2017), (5) Eid and El-Gohary (2015b), (6) Nassar et al. (2015)

(7) Eid and El-Gohary (2015a), (8) Rahman (2014), (9) Eid (2015)

## Literature Review

Based on relevant literature survey, it is found that dimensionalities underlying the Islamic attributes of destination were identified through mean of the EFA by two previous studies. The pioneered study proposed by Farahdel (2001) who discovered four dimensions in the factor structure of Islamic attributes of destination namely worship facilities & halal foods, alcohol-gambling free & dress codes, general Islamic morality, and Islamic entertainments. However, the study by Battour, Battor, & Bhatti (2014) proposed a different finding uncovering four distinct components including worship facilities, halalness, general Islamic morality, and alcoholic drinks and gambling free. It is found that the work of Battour et al. (2014) was followed by several studies such as Battour and Ismail (2014) and Bazazo et al. (2017) (See Table 2). Nonetheless, all these studies were carried out in Islamic country such as Malaysia (Battour et al., 2014; Battour et al., 2017; Rahman, 2014), Iran (Farahdel, 2011), and Jordan (Bazazo et al., 2017) where some Islamic attributes were likely impracticable in westernized non-Muslim society (Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2011).

In regarding of inconsistent discovery of Islamic attributes of destination dimensionalities and limitation in applying these prior findings in non-Muslim context especially in Thailand, a particular study about the factor structure of Islamic attributes of destination in non-Islamic destinations was therefore highly required.

**Table 2** Dimensionalities of Islamic Attributes of Destination Found in Previous Studies

Sources	Components	Indicators
Farahdel (2001)	Worship facilities & halal foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of mosque</li> <li>- Availability of prayer facilities</li> <li>- Azan (prayer call)</li> <li>- Qibla sign in hotel room</li> <li>- Quran in hotel room</li> <li>- Water supply in washroom</li> <li>- Availability of halal food</li> <li>- Halal kitchen in hotels and restaurants</li> </ul>

Sources	Components	Indicators
	Alcohol-gambling free & dress codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ban of alcoholic drinks</li> <li>- No gambling activities</li> <li>- Islamic dress code for staffs</li> <li>- Islamic dress code in public place</li> </ul>
	General Islamic morality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No sex channels in hotel</li> <li>- Ban of prostitution</li> <li>- Ban of indecent display of affection</li> <li>- Censored adult scenes on TV</li> </ul>
	Islamic entertainments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sex segregated on beaches</li> <li>- Sex segregation at pools and gym</li> </ul>
Battour et al. (2014), Battour & Ismail (2014), and Bazazo et al. (2017)	Worship facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of Mosque</li> <li>- Availability of prayer facilities</li> <li>- Azan (prayer call)</li> <li>- Qibla sign in hotel room</li> <li>- Quran in hotel room</li> <li>- Water supply in washroom</li> </ul>
	Halalness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Availability of halal food</li> <li>- Segregated halal kitchen</li> <li>- Sex segregated on beaches</li> <li>- Sex segregation at pools and gym</li> <li>- No sex channels in hotel</li> </ul>
	General Islamic morality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Islamic dress code for staffs</li> <li>- Islamic dress code in public places</li> <li>- Ban of prostitution</li> <li>- Ban of indecent display of affection</li> <li>- Censored adult scenes on TV</li> </ul>
	Alcoholic drinks and gambling free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ban alcoholic drinks</li> <li>- No gambling activities</li> </ul>



## Research Methodology

### Data Collection

#### Population and Sampling Technique

The target population for this study was inbound Muslim tourists in Krabi Province. Due to the fact that the data was not collected on the religion basis but country of origin, the exact number of the inbound Muslim tourists was therefore unknown. However, the approximate total number of inbound Muslim tourists could be alternatively quantified from the country of origin comprising three Muslim-majority countries and one region such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, and Middle East. Hence, there could be 204,372 inbound Muslim tourists in total (Department of Tourism, 2017).

The sample size for this study was 371 cases surveyed on quota and purposive methods. The quota was determined from country of origin. Nevertheless, owing to very small amount of inbound tourist from Brunei, the quota size was combined between Bruneian and Indonesian tourists for the sake of convenience in data collection since the two countries are geographically proximate, meanwhile the population shares similar ethnical identities. The details of Muslim tourist's quota size classified by countries of origin are as follows.

**Table 3** Quota Size of Survey Samples

Countries of Origin	Population	Percentage	Quota Size
Malaysia	192,267	94	348
Brunei & Indonesia	7,368	3.6	14
Middle East	4,741	2.4	9
Total	204,372	100	371

After quota was determined, the purposive sampling was then employed at touristic areas in Krabi (e.g. Ao Nang Beach and nearby areas, 75-million-year-old Shell Cemetery, Emerald Pool) merely with the inbound Muslim tourists under the selective conditions that they must had spent vacation as well as done some recreational activities in a length of time not lower than two days and one night in the area of Krabi Province in order to make sure that they were able to best answer the research questions.

### Research Instrument

The questionnaire was constructed on five-point Likert scale. The quality of the questionnaires was validated by using the index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) evaluated by three experts in the field of Islamic tourism.

The result was found four items from a total of 21 questions received mean score lower than the cut-off point at 0.5, thus removed from the questionnaire, including ban of alcohol drinks, ban of indecent display of affection, Islamic dress code in public places, sex segregation on beaches. The reasons given by the experts centered on the facts that these attributes are not the compulsory elements according to Islamic tourism concept and also unrealistic to practice in Krabi context.

After that, the remaining items were examined again by a tryout with 30 cases, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.901. As the result, there was a total of 17 items contained in the survey instrument.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis consists of two sections: personal data of respondents and tourist perception on Islamic attributes of destination. The respondent personal data was analyzed by frequency distribution. Meanwhile tourist perception on Islamic attributes of destination was analyzed with Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal component analysis together with Varimax rotation method. Any indicators having loading below 0.30 or cross loading over 0.30 was eliminated from further analysis. In this process, Eigenvalues for all items were determined not to be less than 1.00.

## **Findings**

### **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The proportion of target samples was determined according to the country of origin comprising 94% of Malaysian tourists (348 respondents), 3.8% of Indonesian and Bruneian tourists (14 respondents), and 2.4% of Middle Eastern tourists (9 respondents). It was also found that 57.1% of respondents were female (212 persons). While the rest (42.9%) were male (159 persons). In terms of age, respondents ranged from 26 to 35 years shared nearly half of total samples (46.1%), accompanied by the people aged between 15 and 25 years (34.0%).

Considering to the educational background, around half of respondents held bachelor's degree (50.9%). 21.3% held master's degree and above. Meanwhile the remaining samples around 28% were educated lower than bachelor's level.

### **Exploratory Factor Analysis**

In the initial step, EFA was performed with 17 indicators of Islamic attributes of destination by using principal components method together with Verimax rotation. Every single

indicator was encoded ranging from AT01-AT17. The result of analysis was as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4** Rotated Component Matrix of Islamic Attributes of Destination (First Round EFA)

Codes	Indicators	Components				
		1	2	3	4	5
AT04	Muslim employees	.797				
AT05	Islamic dress code for staff	.748				
AT03	Water supply in washroom	.712				
AT09	Sex segregated pool & gym		.748			
AT08	Segregated halal kitchen		.619			.310
AT02	Quran in hotel room	.437	.615			
AT01	Qibla sign in hotel room	.524	.551			
AT14	No gambling activities			.838		
AT15	No red light district			.830		
AT17	Shariah-compliant entertainment		.308	.573		
AT16	Censored adult scenes on TV		.341	.365		.333
AT10	Availability of Mosques				.762	
AT12	Azan (prayer call)				.743	
AT13	Availability of Halal food				.667	
AT11	Availability of prayer facilities		.513		.591	
AT07	No art depicting human forms					.807
AT06	No sex channels and porn					.732

The first round of EFA uncovered a total of five components for the Islamic attributes in which six variables (AT2, AT8, AT10, AT11, AT16, AT17) were found of having cross loading greater than 0.30. Thus these variables were deleted from further analysis.

After that, the EFA was run again. The result generated a total of four groupings for the factor structure where every item had factor loadings above 0.30 with no cross loadings greater than 0.30. In consequence, the factor structure of Islamic attributes of destination detected by the EFA was composed of four indicators for component I; three indicators for component II, two indicators for component III, and two indicators for component IV. See more details in Table 5. Each detected component was then labeled to represent the uni-dimensionality of the grouping as presented in Table 6.

Overall, the factor validity investigated by EFA was satisfactorily assured by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity values. The KMO

of 0.728 demonstrated acceptable sampling sufficiency. Meanwhile, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (0.00), signifying that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix and concerned variables were correlated. The indicators thus showed appropriateness for factor structure detection. The total variance explained by the four factors altogether captured 64.837%. The percentages of variance characterized by component 1- 4 after the rotation were 20.394%, 16.577%, 14.972% and 12.894% respectively.

**Table 5** Rotated Component Matrix of Islamic Attributes of Destination (Second Round EFA)

Codes	Indicators	Components			
		1	2	3	4
AT04	Muslim employees	.828			
AT05	Islamic dress code for staff	.824			
AT03	Water supply in washroom	.697			
AT09	Sex segregated pool & gym	.531			
AT10	Availability of Mosques		.775		
AT13	Availability of Halal food		.757		
AT12	Azan (prayer call)		.718		
AT15	No red light district			.860	
AT14	No gambling activities			.854	
AT07	No art depicting human forms				.843
AT06	No sex channels and porn				.785

**Table 6** Principal Components Extracted from Islamic Attributes of Destination

No.	Component	Indicator
1	Hotel and restaurant hospitality	- Muslim employees - Islamic dress code for staff - Water supply in washroom - Sex segregated pool & gym
2.	Worship facilities and food	- Availability of Mosques - Availability of Halal food - Azan (prayer call)
3	Public places	- No red light district - No gambling activities
4	Entertainment and art	- No art depicting human forms - No sex channels and porn

## Conclusion and Discussion

In summary, factor structure of Islamic attributes of destination in non-Muslim destination is composed of four principal dimensions: hotel and restaurant hospitality, worship facilities and food, public places, and entertainment and art. The results demonstrated acceptable appropriateness for factor structure detection with KMO of 0.728 and significant value of Bartlett's test of sphericity (0.00). In addition, collective variance shared among extracted components also satisfied the recommended value equal to 60% or above (Hair et al., 2010).

It can be mentioned that the above finding supports the claim made by Battour et al. (2011) who claimed that Islamic attributes can be classified into two categories: tangible and intangible. Worship place and facilities, Islamic toilets, halal food outlets are among the most prioritized tangible attributes required by Muslim tourists. Meanwhile those concerning conservative entertainment, Islamic morality, and Islamic dress codes are among intangible attributes.

Furthermore, the result is also similar with the study of Aziz et al. (2015), who argued that Islamic attributes could be classified into four categories namely products, service, facilities and environment. Product component, for instance, covers halal food, alcohol-free, and consumption products such as pharmaceutical and cosmetic products. Service component includes, but limited to those concerning appropriate staff dress code, sex segregated activities, Sharia-compliant entertainment. Facilities mainly associate with availability worship facilities in hotel room and water-friendly toilet in public places. Lastly, environment component is concerned with cleanliness of place, free of gambling and alcohol, as well as other immoral activities.

However, the factor structure of Islamic attributes of destination revealed by this study is relatively different from previous findings which all studies were undertaken in Muslim countries such as Iran, Malaysia and Jordan (Farahdel, 2001; Battour et al, 2014; Battour & Ismail, 2014; and Bazazo et al., 2017). It is believed that the dissimilarity of study results was derived from two major reasons. Firstly, in this study, the research was conducted in non-Muslim environment where the destination attributes were quite different from those in Muslim countries. Secondly, due to IOC screening result, some attribute items collected from related literatures were removed from the EFA arguably because the attributes were unrealistic to be available in Krabi Province.

According to Eid (2015), the presence of Shariah-compliant attributes is considered as an essential element in creating high-value experience for Muslim tourists since general Muslim tourists judge tourism products and service not merely in traditional aspect of values, but also the religious aspect which finally leads to the value creation. On this account, exploring Islamic attributes might help destination managers tailor faith-based products and services as well as create promotional programs that meet expectation and satisfy needs of Muslim tourists (Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2011). Therefore, destination managers and marketers are suggested to give importance to Islamic attributes in the destination to reinforce motivation to visit, satisfaction as well as loyalty toward destination among Muslim tourists.

## **Recommendation**

### **Recommendation for Implementation**

Referring to the finding on the four major components of Islamic attributes of destinations comprising hotel and restaurant hospitality, worship facilities and food, public places, and entertainment and art, it is highly suggested that destination managers and marketers pay considerable attention to the availability as well as the state of quality of these attributes in the destination. However, in non-Muslim destinations, the managers and marketers should concern about possible challenges risen from implementation of halal tourism policy because of some differences on religious values and practice between Muslim and non-Muslim tourists. Hence, it is recommended that destination planning and management balance coexistence between these two groups of tourists.

### **Recommendation for Future Research**

As target samples were determined by quota allocation, the findings were therefore heavily relied on the perceptions of Malay Muslim tourists that was unlikely to represent the inbound Muslim tourists as a whole. Accordingly, the study results constituted constraints on application of the finding beyond Krabi Province context.

For this reason, a future study on the issue would be highly recommended to undertake in other areas of Thailand where inbound Muslim tourists are more diverse with respect to nationality or country of origin so as to provide an affirmed understanding about it in non-Islamic destination.

## References

- Battour, M., Battor, M., & Bhatti, M. A. (2014). Islamic attributes of destination: Construct development and measurement validation, and their impact on tourist satisfaction. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(6), 556-564.
- Battour, M., & Ismail, M. N. (2014). *The role of destination attributes in Islamic tourism*. Paper presented at the SHS web of conferences.
- Battour, M., Ismail, M. N., & Battor, M. (2011). The impact of destination attributes on Muslim tourist's choice. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 13(6), 527-540.
- Battour, M., Ismail, M. N., Battor, M., & Awais, M. (2017). Islamic tourism: an empirical examination of travel motivation and satisfaction in Malaysia. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 20(1), 50-67.
- Bazazo, I., Elyas, T., Awawdeh, L., Faroun, M., & Qawasmeh, S. a. (2017). The Impact of Islamic Attributes of Destination on Destination Loyalty via the Mediating Effect of Tourist Satisfaction. *International Journal of Business Administration*, 8(4), 65.
- Department of Tourism. (2017). *Tourist statistic 2016 (southern region)*. Retrieved from [https://www.mots.go.th/more\\_news.php?cid=438&filename=index](https://www.mots.go.th/more_news.php?cid=438&filename=index)
- Duman, T. (2012). The value of Islamic tourism: Perspectives from the Turkish experience. *Islam and Civilisational Renewal (ICR)*, 3(4).
- Eid, R. (2015). Integrating Muslim customer perceived value, satisfaction, loyalty and retention in the tourism industry: An empirical study. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 17(3), 249-260.
- Eid, R., & El-Gohary, H. (2015a). Muslim tourist perceived value in the hospitality and tourism industry. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(6), 774-787.
- Eid, R., & El-Gohary, H. (2015b). The role of Islamic religiosity on the relationship between perceived value and tourist satisfaction. *Tourism Management*, 46, 477-488.
- Farahdel, F. (2011). *Islamic attributes and its impact on Muslim tourists' satisfaction: a study of Iran*. University of Malaya.
- Islamic Tourism Centre. (2018). Frequently asked questions. Retrieved from <http://www.itc.gov.my/corporate/faq/>
- Khan, F., & Callanan, M. (2017). The “Halalification” of tourism. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 8(4), 558-577.

Mastercard-CrescentRating. (2018). Global Muslim Travel Index 2018. Singapore:

Mastercard-Crescentrating.

Nassar, M. A., Mostafa, M. M., & Reisinger, Y. (2015). Factors influencing travel to Islamic destinations: an empirical analysis of Kuwaiti nationals. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(1), 36-53.

Rahman, M. K. (2014). Motivating factors of Islamic tourist's destination loyalty:

An empirical Investigation in Malaysia. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 2(1), 63-77.



Wiraphong Panyathanakhun, B.A. (First-Class Honors) in International Affairs, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University; M.A. in International Relations, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Ph.D., Student in Integrated Tourism Management, Graduate School of Tourism Management, National Institute of Development Administration.



Paithoon Monpanthong, Ph.D., B.A. in Education (French), Prince of Songkla University; M.B.A., Prince of Songkla University; Ph.D. in Integrated Tourism Management, National Institute of Development Administration, Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Tourism Management, National Institute of Development Administration.