



INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN FOSTERING MOSQUE TOURISM IN ATTRACTING TOURISTS TO VISIT MALAYSIA

Tengku Elvirozita Tengku Mansur^{1*}, Mohd Nor Ahmar Mohd Sanip², Noraziela Abdul Majid³,
Maimunah Abdul Aziz⁴

¹ Department of Hospitality Management, Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Malaysia

Email: elvirozita@tarc.edu.my

² Department of Hospitality Management, Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Malaysia

Email: nor@tarc.edu.my

³ Department of Hospitality Management, Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Malaysia

Email: noraziela@tarc.edu.my

⁴ Head of Tourism Section, University Kuala Lumpur Business School, University Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Email: maimunah@unikl.edu.my

* Corresponding Author

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Abstract:

This paper attempted to appraise the role of stakeholders in encouraging mosque tourism in a tourism destination. As a niche area in Islamic tourism industry, mosque tourism has gained a lot of attention from the tourists in the past few years. Since mosque tourism popularity is expanding and growing, the challenges face by the stakeholders are becoming more complicated due to rapid changes in the tourism industry itself along with competitive mosque tourism destinations. Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate the role of stakeholders in fostering mosque tourism in attracting tourist to visit Malaysia. Additionally, this study also seeks to identify the salient factors that attracts tourists to visit the mosque in Malaysia from the perspectives of the industry players including travel agencies, hoteliers and local authorities who are the backbone of the hospitality and tourism sector in Malaysia. By employing qualitative approach of thematic analysis, the paper went on to analyse the issues and concepts of the forthcoming study through a number of literatures of various disciplines. The result of this study has shown that cultural and educational significance, architectural marvel, historical value, religious factor, word of mouth, marketing and promotion plays significant role in influencing tourists to visit mosque in Malaysia. In regard to the role of stakeholders, it was discovered that mosque management and infrastructure

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development, collaborative efforts, educational awareness, and cultural preservation and community engagement are the four categories that was vital in fostering mosque tourism in Malaysia. Hence, future research may become an important platform for various hospitality and tourism stakeholders in developing the strategies and marketing tools to increase tourist's participation in mosque tourism in Malaysia. The study will also be relevant to local authorities to design effective mechanism to promote Malaysian mosque tourism industry as another dimension of attraction to visit Malaysia.

Keywords:

Mosque Tourism, Islamic Tourism, Tourism Marketing, Stakeholders Role, Malaysia.

Introduction

Considered as one of the world's most rapidly growing industries, tourism industry has fascinated man throughout the decades (Singh, 2016). Tourism which comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside of their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or other purposes (UNWTO, 1991) has become a popular way for people to rejuvenate, visit attractions and engage in recreational activities, bridge cultures, generate new opportunities, and promote sustainable development (Guterres, 2024). Hence, tourism destinations should have the appropriate amenities and facilities to cater the needs and wants by the tourists depending on the products offered including urban or city tourism, seaside tourism, gastronomic tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism, wine tourism, religious tourism, heritage tourism, among others (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2018).

As one of the niche sectors under the tourism umbrella, mosque tourism which is one of the segments in Islamic tourism industry, are becoming more popular and has sparked interest among the tourists who seeks for new exciting experiences while visiting a destination (Azizan, Zulkefli, Khadar, Noor & Roslan, 2023; Navajas- Romero, Hernandez-Rojas, Hidalgo-Fernandez & Jimber del Rio, 2020). Azizan et al. (2023) asserted that the mosque not only act as the main place for Muslims to perform their religious activities, but also works as an institution for social gathering. Further, the scholars highlighted that the mosque, which can be looked as a 'concrete symbol' of Islam, stands out to be a role model and icon in promoting Islam to other nation and ethnics. Similar notion was suggested by numerous researchers (Karimullah, 2023; Hoelzchen, 2023; Moghavemi, Sulaiman, Taha, Sukor, Mustapha, Mohtar, Jaafar and Zakaria, 2021; Jaffar, Harun & Abdullah, 2020; Rasdi, 2014) whom acknowledged the multifaceted roles of mosques in the society, extending beyond their primary function as a place of worship.

In another viewpoint, Henderson (2003) as cited by Kessler (2016) suggested that a mosque itself may be considered as a tourist attraction if they are unique and outstanding. It is well known that throughout the Muslim world, mosques are known for their majestic appearances; decorated with beautiful calligraphy; embedded with geometric patterns and the use of Quranic quotations, which serve to indicate that the building is sacred and to convey a spiritual message to passer-by and people coming to pray (Kessler, 2016). Additionally, the geometric patterns also serve to enrich and beautify the interior, which will create a calm meditation atmosphere for prayers, and enhance metaphysical significance (Frishman & Khan, 2002; Kessler, 2016). From the perspective of cultural and educational experience, touring mosques provides an

immersive cultural experience for the visitors, allowing them to learn about Islamic practices, customs, and beliefs. According to Utaberta, Chen and Tahir (2021), in some countries, most of the mosques welcome non-Muslims as a sign of openness to the rest of the community as well as to encourage conversion to Islam. Moreover, mosque as a tourist attraction place can help them to gain more understanding about Islam and its customs. This practice can be found at Jumeirah Mosque in Dubai which aimed to promote cultural understanding and first-hand experience as an insight to Islamic religion. With the policy “Open Doors, Open Minds”, the mosques were designed to bring in different nationalities together, and to give a better understanding of Islam (Utaberta et al., 2021).

In Malaysia, mosque tourism sector has started to attract tourists all over the world. Throughout the years, there is an increase in the development of mosques in different districts from time to time which represent the socio-culture of Muslims in this country. The mosque not only act as a place for prayers or other religious activities, but also function as education center, as well as an institution for social gathering (Azizan et al., 2023). The steady growth of mosque tourism in Malaysia reflects the country’s efforts to leverage its Islamic heritage and architecture to attract both domestic and international tourists. According to Aziz, Ibrahim, Jahnkassim and Abdullah (2016), the mosque can be looked as a pivotal institution for the Muslim community, and the mosque mostly appeared as the symbol of ‘architectural pride’ of Muslim society, and did not function to create an understanding of Islam. A mosque or ‘masjid’ were inextricably linked to the global advent of Islamic society, culture, as well as civilization.

As a country rich with diverse cultures and ethnicities, Malaysian tourism industry is famous for its cultural heritage resources, which has been used continuously by the local authorities and industry players as a medium of attraction in marketing Malaysia as a tourism destination in the global tourism market. Attractions which includes religious attributes are often showcased in tourism promotional materials throughout the years (Razak, 2019). According to David (2017), more than 30 Malaysian mosques have been presented as places of interest for tourists to visit while holidaying in Malaysia. Yeoh (2014) on the other hand highlighted that a mosque trail has been created in state of Perak to promote religious buildings as tourism attractions in Malaysia. All of these efforts shown by the Malaysian local authorities has shown their eagerness in fostering mosque tourism as the latest medium of attraction particularly in the Islamic tourism market.

Problem Statement

Located at the heart of the Southeast Asian region, geographically, Malaysia was surrounded by neighbouring countries including Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, and the Philippines which comprises of multi-ethnicities and multi-cultural values. Muslim represent the majority of population in this country with 63.5%, followed by Buddhism with 18.7%, Christianity (9.1%), Hinduism (6.1%), and others (0.9%) (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2022). The high population of Muslim in this country has open the opportunities to attract Muslim tourists especially from the Middle East and other Asian countries who have the fear for safety and security issues in some parts of the world, in which they feel unwelcome in non-Muslim countries particularly in Europe and North America (Razak, 2019, Shafei & Mohamed, 2015). As a Muslim-friendly country, Malaysia is known to offer variety of products and services to cater both Muslim and non-Muslims tourists needs (Irshad, Sahari & Halim, 2022) including halal food and beverages, Muslim-friendly tour packages, facilities such as prayers room and mosques, as well as accommodations.

Throughout the years, it has been observed that there is a growing interest towards a niche sector of the Islamic tourism industry, which is mosque tourism. According to Islamic Tourism Centre Malaysia (2021), mosques not only become an attraction for tourists who appreciate the unique design and history of these houses of worships, but at the same time become a tourist's attraction due to the surrounding natural landscapes, unique communities, the authentic cuisines offered within the localities of the mosque's surroundings, as well as other local attractions within the area. Having said that, it has shown that mosque tourism can be another niche tourism sector which should be fostered by the local authorities and stakeholders within the tourism industry (Moghavemi et al. 2021).

Nevertheless, the lack of recognition and focus given to mosque tourism by the tourism stakeholders may significantly influence the level of attraction, satisfaction and revisits by local as well as international tourists. As asserted by Kessler (2016), since mosque tourism was associated with Islam, Muslims and Muslim countries are often misjudged and feared. The researcher further suggested that the misconception towards this niche sector has huge impacts on the tourism map and somehow have shift the holiday destinations of Western as well as Muslim tourists, specifically after September 11th event and Arab Spring movement in the last decade. Majority of the Western tourist tourists have selected non-Muslim destinations for their holiday destination, while for the Muslim tourist has opted to travel regionally and turn to neighbouring countries or other Muslim countries (Kessler, 2016; Utaberta et al., 2021).

Aiming to encourage the development of mosque tourism sector, it is worth understanding the role of stakeholders and their strategies in attracting the local as well as international tourists to visit the mosque in the country. Additionally, by acknowledging the factors that influences the visit intention by the tourists from the hospitality industry players, not only it will give a clearer picture on the needs and wants of the tourists related to mosque tourism, but at the same time identify the strategies that should be taken into consideration by the local authorities and the industry players to ensure that this latest trends of Islamic tourism have its own contribution to the country economic development along with other niche tourism sectors. Thus, there is a clear need to study the role of stakeholders in fostering mosque tourism industry in Malaysia.

Methods

Qualitative methods of in-depth interviews were employed to obtain the empirical information in the quest of investigating the role of stakeholders in fostering mosque tourism to visit Malaysia. According to Denzin (2001), an interview should be more than just an information collecting instrument. Instead, this method of data collection should be reflective and be able to mirror the true life and situation of the research subject in a phenomenon.

For this study, a total of 9 respondents from three different categories; travel agencies, hoteliers, and local authorities were selected to convey their opinions and thoughts on the determinants that encouraged mosque tourism in attracting tourists to visit Malaysia. These stakeholders were chosen as they can provide a comprehensive view of mosque tourism from different angles – from marketing perspective, guests experiences, as well as policy implementation. It should be highlighted in this study that the combination of their perspectives are crucial in identifying the factors that encourage mosque tourism, ensuring that it attracts tourists effectively while at the same time being sustainable and respectful of local cultures. The respondents who came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, and localities in

Malaysia were recruited through a composite of convenience sampling technique, comprising of purposive sampling technique. Respondents' background for this study was strictly confidential, whereby their information would be anonymized, allowing them to share their thoughts honestly and freely (Mohd Sanip, Mustapha & Mohamed, 2023). An inclusion criterion was set by the researcher before conducting the interviews. The criteria were (1) local Malaysian citizen and above 18 years old; (2) possess the knowledge and experience regarding the topic of the study; (3) possess effective communication skills; and (4) willing to participate and share their knowledge and experiences related to the topic of study. Table 1 below summarize the respondent's profile for this study.

Table 1: In-depth Interviews Respondents Profile

Category	Code	Age	Race	Gender	Education Level
Travel Agencies	TA1	37	Chinese	Female	Bachelor's degree
	TA2	44	Chinese	Female	Bachelor's degree
	TA3	48	Malay	Male	Bachelor's degree
Hoteliers	HT1	38	Malay	Male	Bachelor's degree
	HT2	40	Chinese	Female	Bachelor's degree
	HT3	35	Malay	Female	Diploma
Local Authorities	LA1	50	Malay	Male	Bachelor's degree
	LA2	41	Malay	Female	Master's degree
	LA3	42	Malay	Female	Master's degree

Findings and Discussions

Participants and Characteristics

A total of 9 participants aged 35 until 50 were recruited for this study. 4 of the participants are from the range age of 31 to 40, 4 participants from the age range of 41 to 50, and 1 participant from the age range of 50 respectively. 3 of the participants were males (33.33%) while another 6 participants were female (66.67%). Majority of the participants were Malay (66.67%) while another 3 participants were Chinese (33.34%). 2 of the participants had completed their education at Master's level (22.22%), followed by Bachelor degree (n= 6, 66.67%), and diploma (n=1, 11.11%) level of education.

Factors Influencing Mosque Tourism Visit Intention in Malaysia: Stakeholders Perspectives

The participants suggested several factors that influences the mosque tourism visit intention by domestic and international tourists in Malaysia. The most pivotal factors were cultural and educational significance (n= 9, 100%); followed by architectural marvels and historical value (n = 8, 88.89%); religious factors (n =7, 77.78%); and word of mouth, marketing and promotion (n = 4, 44.44%). The least factor were community and social engagement (n =2, 22.22%). Findings of the study are captured and discussed accordingly.

A majority of the participants agreed that the vital factor influencing tourists to visit the mosque in Malaysia resonates on the cultural and educational purposes. All of the participants acknowledged that Malaysia was blessed with multicultural diversity which contribute to the uniqueness of the society. The high tolerance and acceptance among the communities who lives together for more than a decade has contributed to the development of mosques at every district and states in this country. The participants further claimed that the rich cultural heritage which was showcase through the mosque during cultural events and festivals such as Eid, Ramadan, wedding events and other religious festivals have connected and drawn visitors in

experiencing the cultural vibrancy. In respect to educational purposes, the participants claimed that guided tours and educational programs that specifically structured on the mosque's history, architecture and religious practices can be a significant attraction among intellectually curious visitors. The learning opportunities which was offered during the mosque visitation not only will enhance the tourists understanding on the role of mosque in the society, but eventually promotes intercultural understanding about Islam and how it reflects the local culture and traditions.

Another paramount factor that was recognized from the thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews lies on the architectural marvels that the mosque portrays. As highlighted by the participants, many mosques in Malaysia can be looked as an architectural masterpiece, featuring distinctive styles, intricate designs, and innovative engineering. In comparison to countries in the Middle East such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt who built colossal mosques with magnificent architecture, Malaysia has many beautiful mosques, either old and new, in every corner of the country. The diverse architectural styles, which was inspired by world greatest mosques, traditional Malay architecture, as well as local culture and design can be a major attraction for the tourists the visit the mosque. Other than the unique architecture, the history of the mosque would be another significant factor that can captivate the tourists to visit the mosque in Malaysia as claimed by the participants. According to them, ancients' mosques with historical and cultural background can be looked as an interesting subject to be visited. As mentioned by LA1, *'some of the mosques in this country have a long history to start with, such as Masjid Peringgit and Masjid Tengker in Malacca. These mosques which was built since the early 18th century by the Arab traders and Muslim missionaries who brought Islam to Malay Peninsular have gone through a lot throughout the decades. The rich history of how the mosques was built, its function to the local villagers and to the community, how the mosques survives the wars, yet still intact and sustain can be a source of attraction to the visitors'*. This notion was supported by another participant, TA3, who claimed that, *'tourists especially those who comes from Western countries was mesmerized on the history and architectural design of our traditional mosques. For them, the influences of different designs including colonial, Oriental, Moorish and colloquial which was adapted in building the mosques was outstanding. Some of the tourists was also surprised to learned that these mosques have gone through a lot of historical events but still standing strong till today. For them, these monuments should be preserved by the local authorities as it can be looked as a symbol of historical pride'*.

Additionally, religious factors are also listed as another determinants that influences mosque tourism in Malaysia. According to the participants, for the tourist, specifically Muslim travellers, visiting mosques can be considered as a spiritual journey - offering a place for prayer, rehabilitation, meditation and resting especially during long journey. Since 75% of Malaysian citizens is Muslim, therefore visiting mosque is considered a must, either for daily prayers, Friday prayers, during religious celebrations or community or cultural events. For instance, participants mentioned *'visiting mosque is a must during Ramadan or when traveling back to hometown especially during Eid-al-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha. Also, during the Ramadan month, mosque will become alive at night time as all the Muslim will performed their Tarawih (night prayers) and I'tikaf, to focus on worship and asking for forgiveness from Allah'* (TA3, HT1, HT3, LA1, LA2, LA3). This notion was supported by another participant who asserted, *'I personally believed that religious factor would be an essential factor to be considered when it comes to mosque tourism. Therefore, it is important for the local authorities to ensure that all*

the amenities at the mosque such as clean restrooms, information areas, and rest areas are well-built and taken care off to enhance tourists' experiences when visiting the mosque' (LA2).

In regards to word of mouth, marketing and promotions, half of the participants agreed that positive word of mouth, effective marketing campaigns and social media presence would increase the tourist intention to visit mosque in Malaysia. As claimed by three of the participants (TA1, TA2 and TA3), positive reviews from previous visitors can significantly influence other potential tourists to joined the mosque visitation. By organizing a specially curated tours on themes like Islamic architecture, historical journeys, or spiritual experiences, not only it can attract niche tourists, but eventually enhance the cultural experiences during their holidays. From the viewpoint of marketing and promotions, the participants asserted that, *'aggressive marketing campaign which has been taken by our local authorities has started to create a demand on mosque tourism in this country' (LA2)* and *'I believed that our government have eventually recognized other sector that can be promoted in the tourism industry, which is mosque tourism. Although it is a new niche sector, it has been accepted widely by other countries, specifically among those who seeks Muslim friendly tours' (HT2)*. LA1 on the other hand contended that, *'Currently, the government is aggressively promoting mosque tourism to domestic as well as international tourists. For example, last year, the Mosque Open Day was launched by Islamic Tourism Centre Malaysia to appreciate the intricate designs, cultural symbolism, and historical significance that the mosques hold. This has shown our government efforts in marketing mosque tourism in the global tourism market.'* This have shown that promotional efforts have been taken seriously by local authorities in enhancing the visibility and appeal of mosque tourism in this country.

On the other hand, very few participants stressed on the community and social engagement factor as a determinant that influences mosque tourism visitation. For instance, participants TA1 asserted that *'In my viewpoint, I rarely heard any lectures, workshops or cultural exhibitions was organized at any mosque before. It is hard to see any involvement on the community in promoting mosque tourism among tourists.* Similar notion was expressed by participants HT1 who asserted that, *'In my opinion, the community only involved in social engagement at the mosque during certain occasion such as wedding, during Ramadan night prayers or during Eid-al-Adha. I don't really see any more engagement of the community at the mosque especially at town area. The situation might be different if the mosques was located at villages where the bonding between the communities are still strong and united'.*

The Role of Stakeholders in Fostering Mosque Tourism in Malaysia

In identifying the role of stakeholders in fostering mosque tourism in Malaysia, the analysis conducted have recognized four main categories; (1) mosque management and infrastructure development (n= 9, 100%); (2) collaborative efforts (n = 8, 88.89%), (3) educational awareness (n= 7, 77.78%), and (4) cultural preservation and community engagement (n = 5, 55.56%). Each of these categories is considered as pivotal in creating a vibrant and sustainable mosque tourism sector in this country and were explained accordingly.

Majority of the participants agreed that numerous strategies has to be taken by the stakeholders in ensuring that the mosque tourism would have their own segment of attraction among the tourists within Malaysian tourism umbrella. One of the major roles that was highlighted by the participants would be mosque management and infrastructure development. According to participants TA1, mosque management is considered a very important component particularly

in maintaining the overall mosque environment, managing the visitor experiences, and in ensuring that all facilities are safe and available during the tourists visit, *'I believed that when it comes to mosque tourism, managing the mosque alone is the most crucial part. It is a very tedious job – taking care of the facilities, ensuring that every single details of the mosque are in good hands, checking the environment for safety and security. Yes, it involves a lot of works'* (TA1). Participants LA3 supported the notion, and asserted, *'In my opinion, when it comes to managing the mosque, you have to have the eagle eyes. You need to see everything from the top and then only you will be able to identify which part that needed to be improvised, which part needed to be maintained, vice versa. I agreed that yes, managing the mosque needs a lot of attention. It needs a team, rather than an individual.'* (LA3). In regards to infrastructure development, HT1 claimed that, *'it is important for the stakeholders to ensure that all the mosques have the necessary facilities – a clean restrooms, signage that tells the history of the mosque, or even information centers so that if the tourists have any questions, they may clarify it with the appointed person'*. From another viewpoint, HT3 suggested that, *'It would be great if the mosque can provide areas for the tourists to rest, eat local delicacies maybe like small food court, or have a small shop to sell souvenirs. This not only will enhance the tourist's experiences, but I believed that it will support the local businesses at the same time'* (HT3).

The next role which was recognized from the analysis was the collaborative efforts between all the stakeholders; government and local authorities, tourism agencies, as well as hospitality industry players in encouraging mosque tourism in this country. The participants stated that to established mosque tourism as one of the marketable tourism products, all stakeholders should work together, hand in hand, in developing and implementing the strategies whether at district level, state level or national level. For instance, TA2 contended that, *'From the viewpoint of travel agent, I believed that our government should provide more funding on the marketing aspects such as local and international tourism campaigns, focusing on the cultural experiences that the tourists will encounter when visiting our historical and modern mosques. Additionally, by participating in international travel trades and events, it can open the doors to a lot of opportunities when it comes to mosque tourism'* (TA2). Other participants on the other hand suggested, *'In my opinion, besides the allocated funding's on marketing collaterals or mosque maintenance, the industry players should also create combined tour packages between the hotels, travel agencies and the mosque management to offer unique, culturally immersive tour packages to the tourists. Another way of doing this would be by collaborating with travel influencers or bloggers; showcasing our attractive monuments and the experiences while visiting it'* (HT2).

In addition to the two mentioned roles, the participants also draw the attention to the role educational awareness. As mentioned by the participants, by providing awareness and insights on the definition of mosque specifically among the international tourists, not only it can educate them on the beauty of Islam as a religion, but at the same time promoting religious tolerance and intercultural dialogue. According to participants HT1, *'I believed that mosque tourism plays a very significant role in creating the awareness and understanding towards what Islam is all about. As we know after the September 11 attack, the Islamophobia has risen and affect the whole Muslim nations. Therefore, for me mosque tourism can be the most effective way to educate the tourists that Islam is a peaceful and harmonious religion'* (HT1). In line with this notion, other participants added, *'As for me, mosque tourism can be a platform where tourists can share their thoughts and opinions about what Islam is all about. Perhaps by organizing an interfaith dialogue during the mosque visitation, or running campaigns related to these topics,*

it not only can educate all the parties about the importance of religious tolerance and the cultural significance of the mosques, but also promotes understanding and respects' (HT3).

The fourth role which was emphasized by the participants was cultural preservation and community engagement. For this category, several participants acknowledged that the stakeholders are the best ambassador in preserving the culture and creating the community engagement. The participants believed that the mosque often embodies the cultural heritage of the region, showcasing local traditions, customs and arts. This role was highlighted by participants *TA1* who asserted, *'I personally agreed that the stakeholders must preserved the mosque which was under their responsibility. For your information, I have been to Masjid Tengkeru in Malacca, and the government as well as the local communities there have done a very good job in preserving the mosque. This is an important task to be taken as the mosque have such a significant history and represent the local community cultures' (TA1)*. Another argument was contended by participants *HT1*, *'Mosque not only represents the culture, but eventually it is the place where you can find the local traditions, customs and arts together in one roof. Before the modernisation took place, mosque is the place where the local communities socialize; that would be the place to meet and participate in communal activities such as marriages or nikah ceremonies, place to listening to lectures or sermons, coming to learn the Quran or other Islamic teachings, and others. However, as the urbanization comes, the frequency of using mosque as a socialization place has slowly changed. But still, until today, some of the mosques remains the same as it was before especially if you go to the sub-urban area in a few states in Malaysia. It is the place where local traditions, customs and arts come together during certain occasions throughout the years.'* (*HT1*).

Conclusion

The aim of this study which was to investigate the role of stakeholders in fostering mosque tourism has successfully identified the key elements that is considered essential in attracting tourists to visit Malaysia. From the analysis of the in-depth interviews, mosque management and infrastructure development, collaborative efforts between stakeholders, educational awareness, as well as cultural preservation and community engagement each plays an important role in supporting the strategies set by the government in marketing mosque tourism as another niche sector in Malaysian tourism industry. Additionally, this study also managed to outlined the factors that influences tourist visit intention specifically related to mosque tourism. Cultural and educational factors, architectural marvel and historical values, religious factors, word of mouth, marketing and promotions are among the salient factors that was recognized from the analysis. Despite the limited scale of this study which relies heavily on individual in-depth interviews, it is hoped that the findings of this study will encourage further research on mosque tourism in Malaysia. As a new niche sector in the tourism industry, mosque tourism certainly has the opportunities to be develop as another significant tourism attraction for this country. In line with the study by Moghavemi, Sulaiman, Taha, Sukor, Mustapha, Mohtar, Jaafar and Zakaria (2021), the mosque in Malaysia are in acceptable condition and generally ready to attract tourists, however attention should be focused on other aspects such as dining options, hospitality services and facilities such as hotels and public toilets, and accessibility such as public transportations, safety and security, to name a few. By investing in these aspects, mosque tourism not only can enhance the understanding of international tourists on the beauty of Islam, reducing Islamophobia among non-Muslims, but eventually become a platform to educate and create awareness about the value and importance of preserving what the country has for future generations in Malaysia (Moghavemi et al., 2021).

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