

Exploratory research of the Halal restaurants at the most traveling destinations for Muslims in Tokyo - Osaka, and Kyoto

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ABSTRACT

Tourism plays an important role in Japan's economy. Japan has been working on enhancing its position in various sectors to attract a greater number of tourists each year. It successfully reaches the 3rd rank in 2019 as a Muslim-friendly country among the non-Muslim majority countries. However, there is still a limitation in the number of halal restaurants in Japan, especially at tourist destinations. While Halal tourism is one of the recent trends in Japan's tourism industry, the previous research has mainly highlighted the Muslim tourists' challenges in finding Halal food (the demand side) and it did not emphasize understanding the root cause of this problem from the halal restaurants (the supply-side). This research is an attempt to understand the reasons behind the limited number of halal restaurants in Japan, exploring the challenges and difficulties they are facing in adopting the halal principles in their restaurants, and set business guidance for the potential Halal restaurants. semi-structured interviews have been conducted with the Halal restaurant owners at most travel destinations for Muslims in Japan. The method used for this research is framework analysis. Through this methodology, five initial core concepts have been developed; halal certification, supply and demand, media strategy, profitability, and halal adoption in Japan. in agreement with these core concepts, the

principal limitations that have been founded from the restaurants' owners' collected data are; lack of Halal awareness, culture differences, technical difficulties, complementary ingredients supply accessibility, lack of communication, culture change resistance, and the contradiction between the Halal certification providers.