



Scan for download

The Revival of Muslim Friendly Tourism and Hospitality: A Case Study of Hotels in Pakistan

Mohammad Alam ^{1*}, Shakirullah ²

Lecturer ¹, Associate Professor ²

Department of Archaeology Hazara University Mansehra Pakistan

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 22 Oct. 2020

Revised 23 Dec. 2020

Accepted 30 Dec. 2020

Online 31 Dec. 2020

DOI:

Keywords:

Dhiyafah,

Halal hotel,

Islamic hotel,

Muslim Friendly

Tourism,

Niche Market

ABSTRACT

Muslim Tourism is branded in the global scenario as halal tourism or Islamic tourism, while Gen Y in Muslim countries is the halal tourism market's leading consumers. Islamic traditions can revive through increasing the commercial utilization of Muslim heritage and Hospitality (Dhiyafah). The current hospitality practices in Pakistani hotel are influenced by western principles of leadership and operations practices. Moreover, these rules are arguably not responsive to the religious principles and socio-cultural sensitivities of Islamic culture. To move forward and to know about the expert opinion of the fully Islamic hotel operation. A group of 50 experts of TT&H business responded by accepting the Islamic hotel concept in Pakistan. The expert's opinion mining was about developing and fully operational MFT hotel or Islamic hotel for sensitive guests as competitive to conventional hotels. The development of Islamic hotels will be a step towards reviving the traditional hospitality under the Muslim heritage and Islamic economic model.

* Corresponding author's email: alampices@gmail.com



Introduction

Tourism & hospitality have significant value in the economies. The international tourists rise to 1.4 bn with US\$ 1.7 trillion receipts¹. The Crescent Rating predicted Muslim tourist to 156 mn by 2020 with total spending of 230 mn by 2026². Tourism is a complex system of supply and demand within the destination, providing tourists with distinct products and experiences³. Islam acknowledge and encourage the movement of individuals from one location to another with foresight for good reasons, such as Hajj and Umrah, health, education, industry, trade, leisure, and relaxation, but will not go beyond the rules and regulations of Islamic Sharia⁴. The Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) Malaysia has defined Islamic tourism that any activity, event, and experience undertaken in a state of travel by Islam⁵. Heritage tourism is becoming an integral part of the global tourism industry, particularly in countries that seek to divert from the 3s tourism, the sea, sand, and sun⁶. In this kind of tourism, tourists travel to understand past cultures and places and typically fall within cultural tourism or vice versa. Muslim Heritage Tourism has created significant attention in Halal tourism in both practice and academic research. Muslim tourism can be seen in different forms; although the term 'Islamic' describes religious, political, repressive affairs, recently, it has also become connected to the market and commercial affairs⁷. *Haq* and *Medhekar*⁸ illustrated 'Islamic' in the commercial context focusing on the revival of the traditions and virtues of Islam that offer a comparative edge to Muslims at all levels. In all tourism theory and practice, Islamic tourism is a relatively recent notion. In all tourism theory and practice, Islamic tourism is a relatively recent notion. Islamic tourism's main elements, including hotels, restaurants, logistics, banking, and travel packages, are identical to conventional tourism. 'Muslim Friendly Hotels' are all hotels with services and amenities that adhere to or at least some of the faith-based demands of Muslim tourists. Islamic hotel to be presented as the heritage attractions which represent a replaceable tourism resource for the tourism industry to conserve and revive the Islamic heritage. The Majority of hotels in OIC are non-MFT and mixed MFT hotels and businesses⁹. Islamic hotel is a heritage transformation of the traditional tangible features of Islamic heritage into the modern environment. Most of the contemporary heritage tourism product relies upon its creation or re-creation of cultural or religious traditions. Generation Y has shown to have special and distinct traits compared to previous generations as highly consumer-oriented, trend-oriented, and brand-oriented. They are the largest single and perhaps most lucrative users for the halal industry's present and future¹⁰. The true hospitality or (*dhiyafah*) concept can be pronounced as undertaking respectable manners to offer guests needs. Hospitality is the ethics or customs that ALLAH orders believers to include in their social life. In the Sunan Ibn Maja¹¹, reported that the Messenger of Allah

(peace be upon him) says: "Whoever believes in Allah and the last day should be hospitable to his or her guests."

The three-domain approach of Hospitality by Lashley and Morrison¹² was presented in which the commercial domain is concerned with the hospitality business's industrialisation. In the halal hospitality industry, the services are significant, like halal hotels, halal food, halal tourism agents and operators, etc. Islamic hotels fascinate the common interest guests who respect ethnic, social heritage, and environment. The total hotel's OIC share was estimated at 10% compared to the global market¹³. The hotel industry in Pakistan is consists of small size hotel businesses. Islamic hotels fascinate the common interest guests who pay respect to the ethnic, social heritage, and environment¹⁴.

Literature Review

The numerous terms used to represent Islamic Hospitality (halal, Muslim friendly, Islamic, etc.) Still, they do not have a definite distinction to the readers, but the word Islamic is commonly used by academicians, although industry and the media use different terminologies¹⁵. Islamic Hospitality is pretending from the prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) ethics¹⁶. Hospitality (*dhiyafa*) and generosity (*karam*) are core principles in Islamic culture¹⁷. The law of Hospitality in Islam is receiving and serving guests (s) in good intention, generosity, an act of charity, and kindness¹⁸. Whether Muslim or non-Muslim, guest or relative, rich or poor, a guest needs to be honored and treated with kindness, dignity, and respect. According to El-Aswad¹⁹ hospitality is linked with core concepts of grace or blessing (*Baraka*) as ALLAH is a cosmic provider, host receptive to divine mercy and kindness. *Dhiyafah* (ضيافة) is defined as an obligatory right for and to all Muslims by providing food, water and shelter for three days and nights for the sake of ALLAH²⁰. In the early Islamic period, the Muslims contributed to providing Islamic *Dhiyafah* through the concepts of Waqf and Rebat. In recent decades, halal hospitality's curiosity is increased²¹. Many Muslim countries established Islamic hotels to cater to Muslim travelers' demands and demand further induced to the establishment of Islamic Hotel, Sharia-compliant hotel, or dry hotel concepts²². Islamic hotel which may be defined as a hotel which provides services consistent with Shariah principles considered as a code of ethics to lay the guidelines for the entire life in Islam²³. *Khatkhatay*, (2007) states that Quran, Hadith, and *Ijtihad* are the three basics for Sharia-compliant hotel operation. Islamic hotels organised with personalised marketing ethos with the Islamic business model and positioned itself with Islamic law. Several studies articulate that halal is itself is brand; therefore, Islamic hotel or halal hotel will be a comparative hotel in the market based on faith-based needs²⁴. Islamic hotel or Sharia-Compliant hotels were considered interchangeable words²⁵. The variances involve in almost overall hotel operation & management, which is include the

concept of hotel design, guest room design, the concept of services and facilities offered, kitchen operation & management includes food and beverage offered, housekeeping service and workers dress code²⁶. Nowadays, it is quite rare to find lodging that accommodate the special needs of religious tourists of any faith²⁷. In the countries like India, Pakistan, Middle East, hotels providing few services to religious travellers. In Pakistan in sites eg. Nankana sahib, Kartharpur, Hasanabdal accommodation caters Sikh Yatri with religious need, while 5-star hotels catering customers on their social needs. If consider the *halal hospitality* concept and avoiding *halal* requirements, the Muslim customers may not be comfortable with accommodation services and consequently the providers may miss the prospect to penetrate into Muslim market either local or global²⁸. In many countries, obligations originate from cultural or religious restrictions that regulate social and economic relationships. According to Islamic teaching guest who visit should be comfortable; one should sit with them in order to make them feel comfortable and happy.

In recent years, it has been observed that there is a growing interest in a new tourism concept such as 'Islamic tourism' or 'halal' hospitality which similar to the concept of Halal food which had been recognized in many countries including those in the Middle East.²⁹

Research Methodology

A Mixed-methods research technique collects information to increase the strengths³⁰ The easy and affordable convenience sampling is good and suitable to our industrial environment because it easy readily available. This study is based on 50 respondents in Focus Group Study Opinion Mining based on expert opinions regarding Islamic hotels' basic concept and acceptance. Expert interviews have been converted to useful themes and patterns based on content analysis. Tourism scholars have adopted content analysis as an effective way to analyze text data, literature, interviews, and online reviews³¹ use content base analysis on *Sharia* hotel analysis exemplified in Figure 1.

Thus, in light of the above techniques, interviews transcript to translate it into meaningful. The relevant themes, patterns, words, and phrases in the interviews were searched; by listening or written materials were analyzed, a list of keywords with the help of literature was developed. Each transcript has been read carefully.

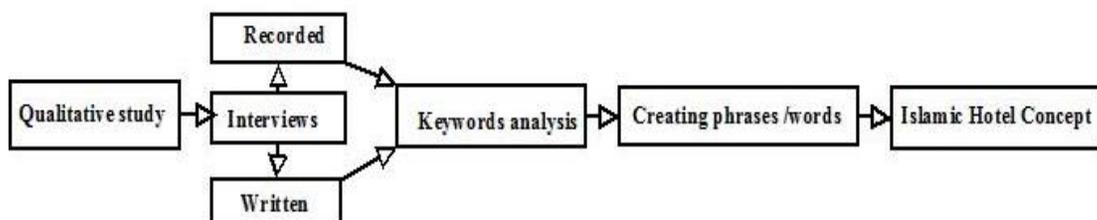


Figure 1: Conceptual design of the study

The final finding is given in Figure 2.

Objective

Review the perception and awareness of Islamic practices in hotel experts?

Analyse attitude towards the establishment of an Islamic hotel in Pakistan?

Investigate the product and services for the development of an Islamic hotel in Pakistan?³²

the good and forbidding the evil as well as performing the obligatory religious³³.

The three main objectives of Sharia include:

1. Educating the individual
2. Establishing justice
3. Realizing the public welfare.

The ultimate goal of Sharia is to serve the interest of all human being and to save them from harm³⁴. Therefore, based on this discussion, a Sharia-compliant hotel operations (SCHOP) refers to the "operational practices of a hotel that are guided by the Islamic law and principles, the precepts of which are founded upon the Qur'an and the Sunnah".

Sharia Islamic Hotel Assessment Tool SIHAT is a proposed tool developed to assess SCHOP.

Data Analysis & Results

The demographic of the study is given in table 1. A clear male-dominant (80%) expert group with nearly three fourth (74%) in the age between 31- 50 years is the most energetic, usually completed the master qualification Initially, a total of 43 themes, words patterns, and phrases were identified, these were recorded in Ms-Excel sheet and frequency distribution was developed. Synonymous themes, words, and phrases were combined in a single theme, word, and phrase. Hence, we obtained a total of "25" combinations of words, phrases, and some specific themes, as given in table 2. The respondents' written answers or interviews were decoded before to start consciences about the respondents' perceptions of Islamic hotels. These findings were used to develop a consensus for further studies based on theme words identified during content analysis. The respondents were agreed that to plug from awareness program (n=39) as capacity building, mitigation for the halal standards for hoteliers, the Islamic hotel concept must be reflected from govt policies (n=24) as other OIC counties created standards and taking the advantages of the halal market. Malaysia, UAE, Qatar, Turkey has developed a halal ecosystem and ranked as leaders. The halal/ Islamic hotel is an innovative idea and getting popularity (n=13) in Muslim countries, but non- Muslim countries also adopt the new business concept (n=). Islamic hotels not only providing a family environment (n=18). It is concluded that awareness and marketing efforts are important to make this idea practical (n=29). The experts agree that halal lifestyle, halal tourism, and halal accommodation are a new potential market (n=11). The real difference between the halal hotel and traditional hotel is that the essence of the Islamic culture and tradition (n=33) should be followed at

organizational, management, and operational levels and shape a hotel with Islamic traditions and respect a peaceful environment (n=26).

This study reported the respondent's opinion that it was agreed that Islamic hotel is practically applicable (n=29); it is a genius idea (n=13). The Islamic hotel building design (n=26) should be different because cultural identity is also the demand. The rapid development and modernization are decreasing the Islamic cultural identity; therefore, the Islamic building design is compliant to guest needs and current trends of space allocations, but it will also revitalize the Islamic cultural identity as a business brand. The respondent also emphasizes that Islamic hotels should be economical (n=17). Simultaneously, the COMCEC, (2016) analysis confirms that the Muslim tourist is willing to pay a little extra for hotel compliance to sharia principles.

The result from the content analysis raised the opinion in the acceptance category when the expert's answers were rated for most acceptance levels. The experts have an understanding of food hygiene and halal food. Therefore, all of the submitted their opinion on Halal food (n=58) and alcoholic Beverages (52), as the expert mentioned that up to three-star hotels in Pakistan alcoholic beverages are not served or remains prohibited under the law in the hotel service, or it is considered as a banned item. The food comes to the establishments are self-claimed halal food/establishment somewhere the business is shared or owned by the Muslim community. It also to be considered that the amenities used by the guest in the bathroom...i.e. bath Soap, bath get/ Shower gel, shampoo, oil, conditioners, lotions, toothpaste in the hotel generally comes from multinational companies or imported from China and none of them are compliance with halal, but the understanding on this aspect Halal Amenities((n=12) is fairly low among the respondents.

The Experts express that many guest demands come with No Noises No loud music (n=26) within the facility because People like traveling with families (n=33) to stay in places with full rest. The experts express their views that women in the Pakistani hospitality industry are fairly small due to cultural and social reasons or consider that job in a hotel for women is not fair and expresses their concerns & grievances.

Table 1: Demographics of Focus Group as a content base analysis

DEMOGRAPHIC		FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Gender	Male	40	80.0
	Female	10	20.0
	Total	50	100.0
Age	31-50 Years age	37	74.0
	51 years age and above	13	26.0
	Total	50	100.0
Education	Intermediate	2	4.0

The Revival of Muslim Friendly Tourism & Hospitality: A Case Study of Hotels in Pakistan

	Bachelor Degree	14	28.0
	Masters & above	34	68.0
	Total	50	100.0
Occupation	Tourism Experts	24	48.0
	Hoteliers & hospitality owner	8	16.0
	Consultants	3	6.0
	Travel Agents	4	8.0
	Tour Operators	3	6.0
	Govt Jobs	8	16.0
	Total	50	100.0

The hospitality research confirms that family visit is increasing or even some religious family avoid the hotel stay. So gender segregation means a type of hotel facility with Gender segregation (n=33) will be good for customers' requirements. When guests travel, they also ask guests for religious needs (n=22) during traveling and staying. The experts mentioned that they would expect the items in Islamic hotels" Halal food (n=58), No alcoholic Beverages (n= 520), Masjid /Prayers Facility/Azan (=56), Ablution Facilities (n=17), Quran prayer mats (n=46) Muslim showers (n=45).

Conclusion

Muslim travelers' lifestyle demands religiosity on products and services. The Islamic hotel will address the traveling issues of focus groups. It will attract conscious family travelers and guests who demand secure, comfort, and religious services during the stay. The Islamic hotel concept also gives a new commercial value to the Muslim heritage as an Islamic hotel brand. The hotel's Islamic value is new and unique in the current market; therefore, the idea will work for all. The market share depends on strategies based on unique activities in a competitive market. Pakistan is catering to travelers with self-claimed mixed offering Islamic hotel accommodations. As a whole, the hotel industry in Pakistan is not vertical, and the hotel industry is growing horizontally. The experts' and practitioners' consent to express the acceptability and adaptability of the concept in Pakistan shows the Islamic's

viability.

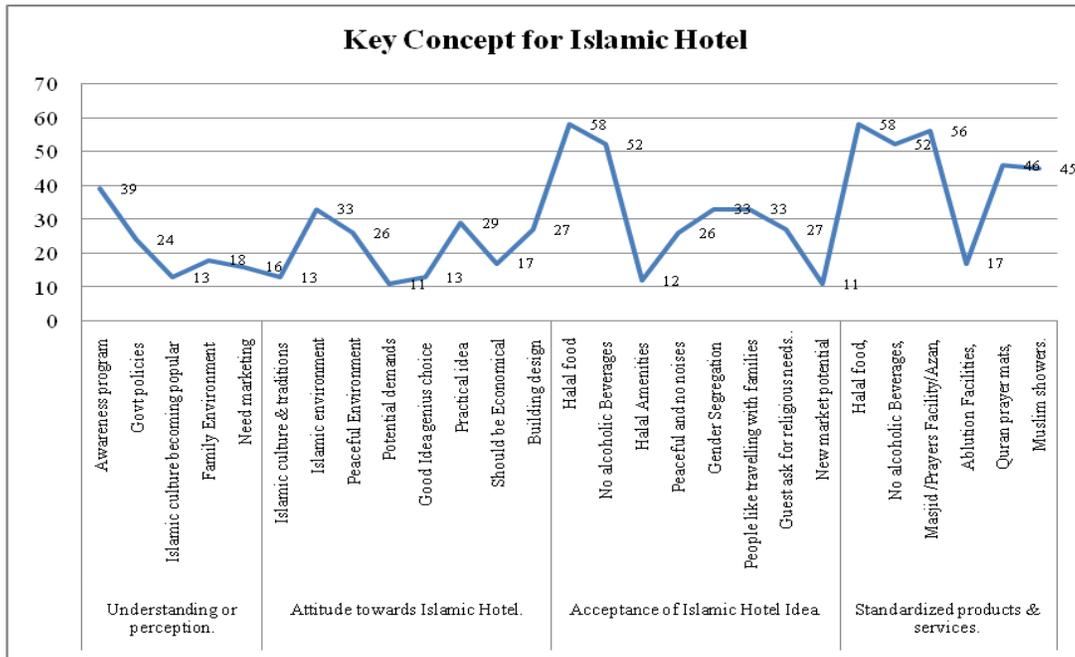


Figure 2: Demographics of Focus Group as a content base analysis



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 international license.

References & Notes:

- ¹ (UNWTO 2019:3).
- ² (GMTI, 2018:1-9).
- ³ (Timothy and Boyd 2006:1-16).
- ⁴ (SEERIC, na:3).
- ⁵ (COMSEC, 2016:25).
- ⁶ (Park, 2013:1-251).
- ⁷ (Alserhan, 2011:304-314; Henderson, 2010: 246-256).
- ⁸ (2015:190-216)
- ⁹ (Alam, 2019:67).
- ¹⁰ (Khalek, Ismail & Humanity, 2015: 608-612).
- ¹¹ Sunan Ibn Maja, vol. 2, *Ikram al-Dhaif* (Respecting the Guest)
- ¹² (2000:267)
- ¹³ (COMCEC, 2017: 125).
- ¹⁴ (Razalli, Abdullah, and Hassan, 2012:1-5).
- ¹⁵ Khan, 2017:558-577.
- ¹⁶ (Karban, Jusan, Hussein, and Al-Aboud, 2018: 225-229).
- ¹⁷ (Jaqfariyan, 2015: 462).
- ¹⁸ (Nasir, 2011, pp. 320-352).
- ¹⁹ (2015:39-56),
- ²⁰ (Karban et al., 2018: 225-229).
- ²¹ (Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2010:461-470).
- ²² (Henderson, 2010:3).
- ²³ (Rasit, Hamjah, & Mansor, 2016: 157), (Razalli et al., 2012: 1-5).
- ²⁴ (Temporal, 2011).
- ²⁵ (Razalli, Ismail, and Yaacob, 2015:55).
- ²⁶ (Idris and Abdul Wahab, 2015: 200-210).
- ²⁷ (Weidenfeld, 2006:357).
- ²⁸ (Abdul Razak, 2018:1-303; Samori,2014:44-57).
- ²⁹ (World Travel Market, 2007 cited in Battour, Nazari et.al, 2010)
- ³⁰ (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:. 671-701; Abdul Razak, 2018: 1-303).
- ³¹ Stepchenkova et al. 2009:454-469; Razzaq et al.,2016; Saad, et al.,2014:1-15; Che Omar, *et al.*, 2014: 76-87; Marzuki, 2012: 47-58; Battour, 2017:1-14)

³² 58 M.R. Razalli et al.

³³ (Twaigery and Spillman, 1989).

³⁴ (Dusuki and Bouheraoua, 2011).