

## THE IMPACT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON MUSLIM CUSTOMERS IN SHARIAH COMPLIANT HOTEL

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**Abstract:** *Shariah compliant hotel is a new innovative and creative services found in the hotel industry. This development can be found in countries where Muslim residents are the majority population as Malaysia and Indonesia. This research aims to study the impact of service quality and Muslim customers, to study the relationship between facilities and Muslim customers, to study the relationship between food and beverage department and Muslim customers, and to study the relationship between Muslim customers and the Shariah compliant hotel. The data collected using questionnaires distributed to 110 guests in halal hotel and SPSS20 was used to analyze the data. The findings showed that Muslim Customers had a positive influence on the Shariah compliant hotel. The Shariah-compliant hotels are not only limited to serving halal food and drink, but the operation throughout the hotel would also be managed based on Shariah principles such as the Quran and prayer mats available in each room, no alcohol, Beds and toilet positioned so as not to face the direction of Mecca, Bidets in the bathrooms, Prayer rooms and Islamic funding*

**Keywords:** *Shariah Compliant; Hotels; Service Quality; Customer*

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### Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the world's largest and fastest growing economic sectors (Mowforth, & Munt, 2015). For Malaysia, the tourism industry is expected to continue to be one of the top five contributors to the national economy. In fact, the industry was worth RM 36.9 billion of gross national income (GNI) in 2009 and is expected to increase. Malaysia aims to achieve the target of 38:168 that is tourist arrivals of 38 million and receipts of RM168 billion by the year 2020 (Amir *et. al.*, 2015). Due to the economic benefits of the tourism industry and the target of becoming a high-income developed nation, this industry has been selected as one of the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) that needs to be continuously improved.

Malaysia has been branded as a tourist destination in Asia. Malaysia was one of the three countries in Asia (after Taiwan and Hong Kong) which achieved a double-digit growth in tourism receipts despite the adverse economic downturn of 2009 (Samori, & Abd Rahman, 2013). The theme of “Malaysia is truly Asia” seems to work in Malaysia. In 2010 the number of foreign visitors to Malaysia was 24.6 million with receipts of RM56.5 billion compared to only 5.50 million visitors and receipts of RM8.6 billion in 1998. That is a 347% increase in visitor arrivals and 557% increase in receipts within the 12 year period (Razalli, *et. al.*, 2012).

The Shariah compliant hotel is a new innovative and creative services found in the hotel industry. Lately, the present of the Islamic hospitality or Shariah hotel is being built beyond gulf countries in Asia. This development can be found in countries where Muslim residents are the majority population as Malaysia and Indonesia. However, it is not in the countries with Muslim resident are minority population, such as Thailand, Philippines and China. Nevertheless, oppose that there is no comprehensive study found in halal or Shariah compliant practices in the Malaysian hospitality industry (Jailani *et. al.*, 2011). Being a Muslim country, Malaysia breaks new ground in introducing a comprehensive standard for halal product through MS 1500 : 2004 (Malaysian standard: halal food production, preparation and storage – general guideline amendment 2009 and has a number of laws regulating halal product and services such as the trade description act 1972. (This set of general guidelines Malaysian was developed by the department of standard Malaysia under the ministry of science, technology and innovation with close involvement from the Malaysia Department of Islamic development (Samori *et. al.*, 2014).

Shariah is an Arabic word which means the path that should be followed by Muslims (Sahida, *et. al.*, 2011). Therefore, Shariah-compliant hotel can be defined as a hotel that provides services in accordance to the Shariah principles (Jurattanasan & Jaroenwisana, 2014). The Shariah-compliant hotel or Islamic hotel is not only limited to serving halal food and drink, but the operation throughout the hotel would also be managed based on Shariah principles.

The significant size of Muslim customers and the growing demand by the Muslim travelers around the world would make the concept of Islamic hotel to be welcomed. However, the real challenge is to provide services to these customers that are rich enough to allow competitive comfort and luxury, but at the same time maintaining the standard of spiritual quality that is demanded by Muslims (Razalli, *et. al.*, 2012). In other words, the level of acceptance of the Islamic hotel concept among Muslim travelers depends on the level of service provider’s initiative in integrating the existing hospitality concept and the Shariah rules and regulations as permitted by Islam. Again, this requires more understanding of the concept among hoteliers and this might be even more challenging to the western hotel chains. The development of Islamic hotel has brought options to Muslim travelers. The emergence of Islamic financing has also raised the number of Islamic hotels in the market as the banks often insist that the hotels they financed to be in line with the Islamic principles. However, these hotels would face potential challenges down the road as they try to compete with the mainstream establishment. One of the problems may come from banning an alcohol in their food and beverage operations. Alcohol sales are immensely profitable and constitute a sizeable portion of revenue for many hotels (Zulkharnain & Jamal, 2012). International hotel management companies are reluctant to operate Islamic hotels as they are unwilling to accept the loss of revenue because they perceive the availability of the alcohol to be the expectation of their guests. Serving alcohol has a direct impact on the bottom line in terms of loss of alcohol revenues and it is also has an indirect impact by reducing the number of people who will want to dine at the hotel restaurant and limiting the number of people who may want to stay at the hotel.

In the meantime, another question may arise. Is it really true that serving alcohol is the main attraction to hotel's customers? The AlMulla Hospitality in Dubai is one of the many examples that position its hotel as the Shariah compliant hotel. The alcohol free is associated with a healthy living style which would be more appealing to everyone. The hotel is expanding their operations for building Shariah-compliant hotels in the Middle East, North Africa, Southeast Asia and Europe (Razalli *et. al.*, 2012). The Amulla is targeting what so-called the "conscious lifestyle" customers who respect the environment, culture, heritage, wellness, and the ecology of the destinations they visit (Henderson, 2010). As a matter of fact, this is the niche market for Islamic hotel. The niche market actually tends to do even better than the standard hotels (Schaar, 2013) that provide standardized services to all customers. For Muslims, Islamic values are important and hotels that incorporate these values would be best suiting their needs. Hence, we can argue here that the issue of serving alcoholic drinks to the customers is still debatable. Furthermore, a few differences in terms of operations of Islamic hotel have to be carefully noted in the planning and the implementation stage. Capacity management is a challenge imposed by the requirements of gender segregation in the Islamic hotel. Hotels with floors dedicated to a particular type of guest (family, single man, single woman) may on occasion lose revenue and turn away demand because that demand does not match the type of rooms available. In addition, the constraints placed by the staffing of women-only floors by women and men-only floors by men could make staffing schedules more difficult and might result in the need to increase the number of employees. These considerations could lead to extra costs to the hoteliers (Karim, *et. al.*, 2014).

Travelers who are demanding Islamic hotels are going to have to prove that there are enough of them who are willing to pay a premium to make up for the extra cost of providing Islamic hotel facilities and services. Further, one might argue why do we need to customize to the Muslim needs as many Muslim guests stay at the existing hotel chains have become their repeat customers? To this group, Muslims can have their 'Islamic stay' at the existing hotels by using their common sense in avoiding the impermissible. On the other hand, hotel industry experts say that providing Islamic concept hotel facilities to Muslim travelers is a good move and this is a big sector that has not been fully tapped into so far has indicated that the existence of Shariah compliance environment, and Muslim-friendly services offer in the hotel would cater the needs of Muslim travelers in Malaysia and this will further stipulates the tourism industry of the country (Pamukçu & Arpacı, 2016). The implementation of this concept, however, requires development through an indigenous-led workforce, Islamic styles of leadership, and intrinsic forms of service delivery that follow Islamic principles (Stephenson, 2010). Moreover, the issue of acceptance of the concept among existing hoteliers and the western visitors need also be further studied. Are the existing hotels would take the risk to implement this concept? How to position themselves in the market? Would the existing brand be damaged? Are the non-Muslim customers would also be comfortable with the Islamic hotel concept? Would they stay in the Islamic hotels? All of these questions cannot be ignored if the concept of Islamic hotel to be successfully implemented (Marzuki & Zannierah, 2012). However, there are no formal criteria for this concept even in the Middle East, but only the scrutiny of statements made by industry practitioners and analysts reveals broad agreement about a set of attributes that are suggested.

## **Literature review**

### ***Hotel sector***

A hotel is an establishment that provides services such as accommodation, food and drinks for the guest or temporary residents who intend to stay at the hotel (Medlik, 2012). As stated by Omar, *et. al.*, (2013) mentioned that the hotel sector is commonly known as a lodging sector because hotels provide overnight accommodation to the guests. Furthermore, the hotels are also defined as an operation that provides accommodation and ancillary services to the people that are away from home. Hotels also contribute to the economy of the country. This is because when the guests stay at the hotels they will spend on the hotel services and buys products from the local shops, thus contributing to the local economy. In Malaysia, the hotel sector has continued to grow since 1994 (Yuhanis, 2007). The continuous growth of tourism industry in Malaysia has increased the number of hotels in Malaysia. The number of new hotels being opened has grown due to increase tourist arrivals and increase demand for accommodation services while they are travelling or attending certain events. For instance, the demand for hotel rooms increased significantly for Visit Malaysia Year 1990 Campaign and also Commonwealth Games in 1998 (Ching, 2008).

### ***Muslim Customers***

The existence of halal food product which presented at the point of purchase product displays of halal product at retail stores become increasingly important for Muslim customers, particularly Muslim customers who living in a country where the majority of the population are not Muslim. Consequently, the purpose of this research is to study and try to investigate and also clarify how Muslim customers' perception toward the variables (safety, religious values, health and exclusivity) of halal food product which presented in the POP displays of halal product influence Muslim consumer's attitude toward halal food product. As we know, the number of Muslims population in the world is more than 1.3 billion people, and trade in halal products is about 150 billion dollars (Egan, 2002).

### ***Services quality, Facilities, Food and Beverages***

#### ***Services quality***

The tangibility dimension refers to the appearance of the physical surroundings and facilities, equipment, personnel, and the way of communication and creating first hand impressions. Parasuraman (1985) stated that tangible is the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials. Tangible is the travel agency has the modern looking equipment, physical facilities at the travel agencies are visually appealing, staff at the travel agency appear neat, material associated with the service are visually appealing at the hotel (Bigne *et. al.*, 2003). The reliability dimension refers to the performing and completing the promised service quality, and accuracy within the given set requirement between the company and the customer. The ability to perform the promised service dependably accurate as mentioned by Parasuraman (1985). The responsiveness dimension refers to the willingness of the company to help its customers in providing them with good quality and fast service (Bigne *et. al.*, 2003). Responsiveness means that staff in the service industry will inform customer exactly when services will be performed, responsiveness means the willingness to help consumer and to provide on time service. The assurance dimension refers to the company's employees, the skilled employees will be able to gain the trust and confidence of the customers, the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence (Parasuraman, 1985). Parasuraman studied the empathy as the provision of caring, individualized attention to customers, empathy of the staff assures the understanding of customer specific needs and gives attention to their extra values.

The quality of service in the hotel industry is an important factor of successful business. The existing trend of complete quality management in hotel industry ensures the achievement of

competitive advantage of hotel companies and is therefore the subject of contemporary research into service quality in the hotel industry. The concept and the conceptual model of service quality is indispensable if we wish to understand the genesis of service quality and potential gaps in quality. In order to ensure and keep the quality expected by today's customer/tourist, we need to differentiate two aspects of quality in general with particular attention to tourism, namely: design quality and the quality of conformity with the design. The design quality is a concept implying the presentation of products/services directed to the needs of the clients. The hotels do market research in order to determine who their customers are and which of their demands require special attention. The quality of conformity with the design completes the first aspect because it represents the level which the product/service meets the demands of the market. The quality represents the satisfaction of the client's needs and in order to achieve it and keep it in time, we not only need a continuous research into the demands of the clients but also of our own capabilities. Such an approach would ensure the pursuing of constant improvements, according to the demands of the clients.

The harsh competition on the tourist market requires the development of a new approach to management known as TQM – Total Quality Management. When introducing the quality management system, hotel companies use various approaches adapted to their business conditions. The following part of the paper describes the most common service quality measurement criteria, in particular the model of internal service quality and the SERVQUAL model. In order to achieve rationality the models of business excellence also, in a way, determine whether the criteria have been met, but the evaluation of business excellence is based not only on the fulfillment of the set criteria, but also on the determination of the level up to which the criteria have been fulfilled (systems of points). When analyzing the quality of service it is desirable to analyze the largest possible number of companies supplying the same type of service. As we already mentioned, if a company carries out a research and finds that the results are negative, it can interpret this information in the wrong way and conclude that it provides services in a totally wrong way. On the other hand, when analyzing a large number of companies, it is possible to compare data and obtain a realistic picture of the position of an individual company compared to others regarding quality. In hotel industry, service quality, as an extremely subjective category, is crucial to the satisfaction of the client. It is therefore imperative for managers in hotel industry to apply the SERVQUAL model for the measurement of service quality in their own hotel company, in order to satisfy the guest's expectations and ensure a position in the growing global tourist market (Gržinić, 2007).

### ***Facilities***

Tourism is believed as an increasingly globalized sector in which inter-destination competition is becoming greater and greater. However, hoteliers are now finding themselves in a better position to compete in international destinations, which in turn results in increased international competition, not only between destinations but also between hotel establishments. On the other hand, tourists are increasingly demanding and do not only focus on the price. Within this scenario, the hotel enterprise's competitiveness must focus on improving performance through better service quality and the search for differentiation (Zailani & Omar, 2016). Costa claimed that the greater competitiveness has made service quality become a key factor for hospitality companies. As consequence, Tsai, *et. al.*, (2011) highlighted the service quality for hotel as clean, comfortable and well-maintained rooms, convenient location, accessibility, safety and security and room facilities. Furthermore, prompt and courteous service, food and beverage quality, convenient parking as well as aesthetics are major concerns. For older tourists, additional tangible aspects of safety-related physical design features in the hotel room or public

areas may signal a hotel's positive image to travelers. In addition, Ryan & Huimin (2007) looked at differences between frequent and infrequent business travelers. They found that good quality towels, free newspapers in-room safety and fax machines were the amenities that were significantly more important to frequent business travelers. Meanwhile, Hua, *et. al.*, (2009) gave support to the findings that travelers evaluated significantly higher loadings on the standard of personal services, physical attractiveness and opportunities for relaxation, standard of services, appealing images and value for money and suitability for business guests.

### ***Food and beverages***

Malaysia, well-known as a pioneer in establishing halal food laws in the early 1980s (Ahmad *et. al.*, 2015). For some years expressed its aspiration to become a global halal hub for the production and distribution of halal products and services (Anis Najiha, 2015). To achieve this status, it is important for Malaysia to prime itself, not just in terms of supporting infrastructure and technology, but also in the human resources sector. In addition, well-trained human resource that is capable of facilitating knowledge and expertise is essential to make a fast entry into the global halal market (Suzana & Che Wan Jasimah, 2006). Surveys on knowledge and perceptions among students in higher education institutions are common in various fields such as health science, food studies and biotechnology (Anis Najiha, 2015). These studies are mainly sought to evaluate whether students receive adequate education on specific issues or subjects (Glinkowski *et al.*, 2013).

Strategies to modify institution's curricula then can be suggested to improve students' understanding as a future workforce (Paraniala *et al.*, 2014). Similarly, the study of knowledge and perception is also needed in the halal food matter. In addition, although issues of alcohol are critical for Muslims and for those in food services and industries, there is a lack of publications discussing this matter. Therefore, this paper seeks to address the gap, specifically by assessing the congruity between perceived knowledge about halal food and the actual knowledge of alcohol in halal food among undergraduate food technology students. This target population was chosen because they are regarded as the future pool of manpower and expertise in food industries. In addition, they are also expected to have a strong knowledge pertaining to current halal food issues, especially as some of the respondents has already been exposed to the concept of halal food in the halal food management course offered as an elective course in the university.

### ***Shariah Compliant Hotel***

Shariah is an Arabic word which means the path that should be followed by Muslims (Doi, 1984). Therefore, Shariah-compliant hotel can be defined as a hotel that provides services in accordance to the Shariah principles (Shamim Yusuf, 2009). The Shariah-compliant hotel or Islamic hotel is not only limited to serving halal food and drink, but the operation throughout the hotel would also be managed based on Shariah principles. However, there are no formal criteria for this concept even in the Middle East, but only the scrutiny of statements made by industry practitioners and analysts reveals broad agreement about a set of attributes that are suggested by Henderson (Henderson, 2010).

### ***No alcohol***

#### ***Alcohol in Islam***

Linguistically, alcohol derived from grapes. This is what is prohibited by specific texts of the Quran. Therefore, alcohol is categorically unlawful (haraam) and considered impure (najis). Consuming any amount is unlawful, even if it doesn't create any drunken effects. The Prophet

Muhammad of Islam said, “Intoxicants are from these two trees,” while pointing to grapevines and date-palms. Alcohol derived from dates or raisins is also prohibited, again regardless of the amount consumed, as explained on Islamic site Seekers Guidance. At first, a general warning was given to forbid Muslims from attending prayers while in a drunken state (Quran, 4:43). Then a later verse was revealed to Prophet Muhammad, which said that while specifically alcohol had some medicinal benefits, the negative effects of it outweighed the good (Quran, 2:219). Finally, “intoxicants and gambling” were called “abominations of Satan’s handiwork,” which warned people with self-consciousness to not turn away from God and forget about prayer, and Muslims were ordered to abstain (Quran, 5:90-91). The Prophet Muhammad also instructed his companions to avoid any intoxicating substances (paraphrased), “if it intoxicates in a large amount, it is forbidden even in a small amount.” For this reason, most observant Muslims avoid alcohol in any form, even small amounts that are sometimes used in cooking.

### ***Halal food***

Muslims around the world practice the religion of Islam. The practice of Islam includes observing dietary laws which come from Islamic teachings. Islamic dietary laws define foods that are Halal, meaning lawful or permitted. Muslims avoid food and beverages that are Haram, meaning not permitted. Increased awareness of cultured acceptable foods improves our ability to meet the needs of a diverse society. It is important to take into consideration each individual’s perspective on his/her cultural and religious practice. The information provided in this guide will assist you when planning and serving meals, snacks or refreshments for the Muslim community.

Choice of modern and in vogue method has to be considered with caution and, it should be in line with Islamic principles. Since pork is forbidden, halal slaughtering must not be done where pigs are slaughtered or in the vicinity of pigs slaughtering area. There are a few more edicts and rules that have to be followed in the interest of animal welfare. For example, an animal has to be fed as normal and given water prior to slaughter, one animal must not see the other being slaughtered, the knife should be four times the size of the neck and razor sharp, and as far as possible the slaughterer and the animal should face the *Qibla* or Mecca and the animal must not be suffering from any ailments or any lacerations.

Halal is an Arabic word meaning lawful or permitted. The opposite of *halal* is *haram*, which means unlawful or prohibited. Halal and haram are universal terms that apply to all facets of life, but this discussion will be limited to food products, meat products, cosmetics, personal care products, pharmaceuticals, food ingredients, and food contact materials. (Khan & Haleem, 2016). While many things are clearly halal or haram, there are some things which are not clear. Further information is needed to categorize them as halal or haram. Such items are often referred to as “*mashbooh*”, which means doubtful or questionable. All foods are considered halal except: Swine/Pork and its by-products, animals NOT properly slaughtered according to Islamic method or dead before slaughtering, alcoholic drinks and intoxicants, carnivorous animals and birds of prey, blood and blood by-products, and foods contaminated with any materials mentioned. Foods containing ingredients such as gelatin, enzymes, emulsifiers, and flavors are questionable ‘*mashbooh*’, because the origin of these ingredients or components thereof may be *haram*. Meat and poultry should be processed according to Islamic requirements. This is commonly referred to as *Zabiha* or *Dhabiha*. *Zabiha* refers to slaughtering of an animal or bird by a Muslim according to Islamic requirements (Al-Mazeedi, *et. al.*, 2013).

### ***Quran and prayer mats available in each room***

Another important aspect is the availability of prayer facilities for Muslim guests. *Salaath* facilities offered to Muslim guests are also an important deciding factor when selecting a hotel. Many Muslims-friendly hotels offer designated prayer room areas for guests as well as facilities such as prayer mats, prayer timetables and prayer dresses for ladies. Many hotels also provide a Quran in each guest room and have Qibla directions marked in the guest rooms. Additional facilities that Muslim travelers would require include services during Ramadan. Basic facilities for breakfast – such as dates and water – are a minimum level of requirements by Muslim travelers during Ramadan. Hotels that offers *Iftar* during Ramadan or Suhoor & Iftar buffets will be preferred. Certain hotels also provide Halal room service menus, a list of all the Halal restaurants in the area as well as transport to local mosques. Muslim travelers may also take the level of non Halal activities available in the hotel into consideration when selecting a hotel. Some Muslim travelers may prefer to avoid hotels that offer casinos, nightclubs, adult TV-channels and other non Halal activities. There are certain hotels that offer gym area, swimming pools and spa facilities with separate areas for men and women – which is the highest level of service offered to Muslim guests. Hotels that are located in close proximity to local halal restaurants, mosques and attractions are also preferred by Muslim travelers. With the Muslim market being amongst the fastest growing market segments in the travel industry, more hotels are implementing steps to better serve its Muslim guests. By establishing a “Muslim-friendly” brand image, hotels will be able to attract more Muslim travelers in the future and will become a preferred option amongst the Muslim community.

### ***Beds and toilet positioned so as not to face the direction of Mecca***

“When any of you goes to relieve himself, he should not face the Qibla nor turn his back on it. He should face the east or west.” [Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-Wudu]. These *Ahadith* demonstrate the *Sunnah* of being mindful of the *Qibla*, as it is the noblest of directions. Just as Muslims should observe proper etiquette with the Qur’an, we should also aim to observe proper etiquette with the Qibla as well. This etiquette entails that one faces the *Qibla* when doing honorable and praiseworthy actions: doing *Wudhu*, making *Dua*, reciting the Qur’an, sacrificing animals. It is similarly recommended to sleep on one’s right side while facing the *Qibla*. This etiquette also entails that one does not face the Qibla in situations where one is exposing oneself: such as when relieving oneself, taking a bath, or having sexual relations. It is similarly recommended to avoid having one’s back or pointing one’s feet to the *Qibla*.

### ***Bidets in the bathrooms***

There are many people who think that the Hand Held Bidet Sprayer is actually a Muslim Shower or Toilet Sprayer. Nothing could be farther from the truth. In fact, many Asian Countries use the Bidet, Toilet Sprayer extensively and originally its use came about because of plumbing situations not religion. Muslims may have now incorporated it into their religion (nothing wrong with being clean when you pray right?) But it started with the fact that many countries do not (or historically did not) have the superior plumbing of most western countries. Without the ability to flush massive amounts of Toilet Paper down the toilet, if they even had toilet paper, the concept developed by using water from a bucket to splash and cleans with and this then evolved into the Toilet Sprayer. Without Toilet Paper it was actually quite common to use one’s left hand, which is why historically people would not eat food with their left hand and to this day it is still an insult to offer your left hand in a handshake with many Muslim People. Compare that to Western Countries where many times I have been offered a left hand shake because someone was holding something in their right hand.

### ***Prayer rooms***

Prayer is the method of worship and the main connection of man to Allah (God) and is considered to be the most important obligation and duty of a Muslim. Abandoning prayer is considered to be a major sin that a Muslim can commit. Every Muslim is expected to pray five times a day and not praying is not an option. However, Muslims do have the option of shortening and combining prayers when travelling. When Muslims are travelling there are special rulings that should be considered. The distance of the journey and the duration of the stay will play an important factor in deciding if the prayer can be shortened or combined. Destinations where Mosques are hard to find make it almost impossible for Muslim travelers to offer their prayers on time. They might have to go back to the hotel in order to pray when there is no adequate prayer facility. This would be inconvenient when the sites are situated a long distance away from the hotel. However, if the hotel is located in a central area to the places of interest or famous sites, Muslim tourists might not find it hard to go back to their hotel rooms in order to offer their prayers. The inconvenience of having to keep going back to the hotel might discourage Muslim travelers from visiting certain countries or cities where prayer facilities are harder to find, as prayer is a significant part of their daily routine. It might cause them to choose destinations that provide easier access to prayer facilities and other Muslim-friendly facilities.

### ***Grand BlueWave Hotel Shah Alam***

#### ***The Concept of Shariah Compliant Hotel***

Shariah means the totality of Allah's commands which regulate life for every Muslim in all aspects. The lodging sector consists of all the hotel business that provides accommodation service to the guest. The hotel sector is defined as the establishments which provide sleeping rooms or other various service facilities to the guest (Sahida *et. al.*, 2011). Meanwhile, Shariah compliant hotel can be defined as a hotel that provides services in accordance to the Shariah principles (Shamim, 2009). The Shariah compliant hotel is not only limited to serving halal food and drink, but the operation throughout the hotel would also be managed based on Shariah principles. There are a few requirements a hotel must meet in order to be a Shariah compliant hotel. It is important to note in order to be considered as Shariah compliant hotel, it should ensure that the operation, design of the hotel and also the financial system of the hotel complies to Shariah rules and principles. The hotel facilities should be operated based on Shariah principles. For example, the facilities such as spa, gym facilities, swimming pool, guest and function room for male and female should be separated (Rosenberg and Choufany, 2009). Besides facilities, a Shariah compliant hotel should not serve any alcoholic beverage and there should not be a mini bar in the premises. This will create a Halal environment for the hotel and provide a safe and healthy living environment for the guest. According to Henderson (2010), the industry practitioners and analyst have come out with a set of Shariah compliant hotel attributes. Being inspired to be an Islamic tourism hub, Malaysia takes an initiative to introduce Islamic hotel or halal hotel as form of tourist services. This paper briefly discusses issues which focus on the awareness and acceptance of local non-Muslim customer toward Shariah compliant practice in Grand BlueWave Hotel Shah Alam (GBWHSA), an Islamic concept hotel who wins Islamic Quality Standard (IQS) for hotel design award by Universal Crescent Standard Center (UCSC) in 1<sup>st</sup> international Islamic tourism standard conference. The awareness and acceptance of local on Muslim customers toward Shariah compliant practice in GBWHSA were carried out through self-reported questionnaires from the customers who have the experienced stayed in the hotel.

## Research Methodology

Informative research is used in this study in order to investigate the cause and effect relationship between variables in our study, causal research use to understand the relationship between service quality, facilities, food and beverage on Shariah compliant hotel, and the relationship of service quality, facilities, food and beverages towards the Shariah compliant hotel. The data collected using questionnaires distributed to 110 guests in the halal hotel (Grand Bluewave Hotel, Shah Alam) as one of the Shariah compliant hotels. For this research SPSS20 was used to analyze the collected data and the Reliability Test for this study value 0.887.

## Findings

**Table1: Demographic Profile**

Item	Stats				
Gender	44 Male	77 Female			
Ethnicity/Race	92 Malay	8 Chinese	13 Indian	8 Others	
Age	27 Under 20	76 (21-30)	11(31-40)	7 (41-50)	
Nationality	110 Malaysian	11 Non Malaysian			
Marital Status	99 Single	20 Married	2 Divorced		
Education	10 Secondary	19 Diploma	83 Degree	3 Master	1 Ph.D.
Income	91 Less than RM2000	6(2001-3000)	4(3001-4000)	20(4001 and above)	

Table1 shows that the total number of respondents was 121, 44 were male and 77 were female. 92 were Malay, 8 were Chinese, 13 were Indian, and 8 were other races. 27 their age below 20, 76 age between 21 - 30, 11 age between 31-40, and 7 aged between 41-50. 90.9% were Malaysian and 9.1% were non-Malaysian. 10 were secondary school, 19 have diploma, 83 have degree, 3 hold masters, 1 hold a PhD and 5 others. 91 respondents gain less than RM2000, 6 from RM 2001-3000, 4 of the respondents from RM 3001-4000, 20 of the respondents were RM 4001 and above.

**Table2: Perception Towards Halal Certification In General**

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Important aspect in the hotel industry	1	0	9	55	56
Signifies food quality	1	1	9	60	50
Signifies trust	0	0	10	58	53
Signifies being hygienic	1	0	10	56	54
Signifies conformance to Halal standard	0	0	9	57	55
Positive impact on customer satisfaction	1	0	7	65	48
Increase demand from the Muslim customers	1	0	8	61	51
Increase demand from the non-Muslim customers	1	1	29	57	33
Increase confidence level among the Muslim customer	0	0	9	59	53
Increase confidence level among the non-Muslim customer	0	0	25	61	35
Provides customers with peace of mind during the visit	0	0	11	55	55
Is a trademark establishment	1	0	16	58	46
Attracts the tourism market	0	0	11	64	46
Act as a marketing strategy tool	0	0	10	66	45
Gives competitive advantages over non-certified Halal Hotels	1	0	17	63	40
As a way to increase the number of customers	1	0	11	67	42
As a adding value to their Hotels	0	2	12	64	43
Is familiar to the local people	0	2	15	66	38
Is a gaining acceptance from the foreign people	0	2	15	68	36
Benefits everyone	0	1	13	57	50

Table 2 shows the frequency of important aspects in the hotel industry: about halal as an important aspect in the hotel industry 9 were neutral, 55 agree and 56 were strongly agree. For food quality 9 respondents were neutral, 60 agree and 50 were strongly agree. About trust 10 respondents neutral, 58 agree and 53 were strongly agree. For hygienic 10 respondents neutral, 56 agree and 54 were strongly agree. For different signifies conformance to halal standard 9 of the respondents were neutral, 57 agree and 55 were strongly agree. About the impact on customer satisfaction industry 7 respondents were neutral, 65 agree and 48 were strongly agree. For increase demand from the Muslim customers 8 respondents were neutral, 61 agree and 51 strongly agree. And increase demand from the non-Muslim customers, 29 were neutral, 57 agree and 33 were strongly agree. For increase confidence level among the Muslim customers 9 respondents neutral, 59 agree and 53 were strongly agree. For increase confidence level among the non-Muslim customers 25 respondents neutral, 61 agree and 35 were strongly agree. About provides customers with peace of mind during the visit 11 neutral, 55 agree and 55 strongly agree. For the trademark establishment 16 neutral, 58 agree and 46 are strongly disagree. Attracts the tourism market 11 neutral, 64 agree and 46 strongly agree. Different act a marketing strategy tool 10 neutral, 66 agree and 45 strongly agree. Different gives competitive advantages over non-certified halal hotels 17 neutral, 63 agree and 40 strongly agree. Way to increase the number of customer's 11 neutral, 67 agree and 42 strongly agree. Adding value of their hotels 12 neutral, 64 agree and 43 strongly agree. Familiar to the local people 15 neutral, 66 agree and 38 strongly agree. Important aspect in the hotel industry 15 neutral, 68 agree and 36 strongly agree. Benefit everyone 13 neutral, 57 agree and 50 strongly agree.

**Table 3: Service Quality**

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Religious family oriented only	4	7	26	69	15
Business visitors whom demonstrate traditional and Islamic attitude	2	4	21	72	21
Should not confine to Muslims only	3	1	18	72	27
Hotel financed through Islamic arrangements	2	1	17	74	27
Hotel should follow Zakat principles	1	1	21	75	23
Art should be conservative	4	5	18	73	21
Toilets and beds should not be placed in the direction of Mecca	3	4	18	72	24
Arts in the hotel should not depict the human form	1	3	21	73	23
Design must reflect the spirit and culture of Islam	1	1	14	75	30
Sign indicating the direction of mecca in every room	3	1	15	72	29
The staffs should only serve guests from the same gender and it is also preferable if they are Muslim confession	3	4	19	71	24
The staffs should wear traditional uniforms	3	4	27	69	18
Female staff for single female floors and male staff for single male floors	2	4	23	76	16
Majority of the staffs are Muslims	2	2	20	76	21
Conservative staffs dress	3	0	21	73	24
Emphasizes on the convenience of location	2	0	14	77	28
Provide all basic amenities and facilities	1	2	9	75	34
All facilities such as gym and spa should be separated for men and women	2	1	13	69	36
Provide Quran, prayer mats and prayer each room or at the front desk	2	2	15	68	34
Should not have Bars and Night clubs	4	1	14	67	35
Should provide appropriate entertainment	3	2	15	69	32
No alcohol should be served	2	0	13	68	38
Food product must be Halal certified	2	0	12	66	41
Should follow all the halal procedures during food preparation	2	2	12	65	40
Should have majority of Muslim staffs	2	1	18	64	36
The hotel should not have any bar or night clubs	3	1	16	67	34

In table 3 respondents were agree with the service quality aspects mentioned in the study, Shariah hotels are suitable for Muslim and non-Muslim families, following the Shariah compliant finance and funding. It provides the Islamic facilities to perform the prayers, and follow the design which follow the Islamic rules. Majority of respondents were agree that Shariah hotels provide the halal food and drinks, preventing the bars and night clubs, have strict regulations about the same gender serving and housing, Islamic conservative dress, providing several kinds of separated facilities for men and women.

**Table 4: Customer Satisfaction**

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Reasonable price	2	1	25	64	29
Consistent price policy	3	1	33	59	25
The price is similar with normal full service hotels	3	2	33	58	25
Special promotions on room package	4	1	31	55	30
Have a good reputation on the services	2	1	28	57	33
Have a good physical appearance	2	3	28	52	36
Located in convenient location	2	1	32	50	36
All basic amenities provided. Such as ATM machines, Free parking	2	0	28	51	40
The guest rooms are comfortable	2	1	29	51	37
Friendly customer service	2	0	27	51	41
The surroundings are clean	2	0	28	50	41
Nature friendly environment	2	0	28	51	40

Respondents in table 4 showed their satisfaction about Shariah hotels, 25 respondents were neutral, 64 agree and 29 strongly agree with the prices and the consistent price policy. Majority of respondents were agree with the marketing and promotion activities, convenient location. All basic amenities were provided, and the rooms were comfortable. Based on respondents point of view, customer service was friendly provided by staff, surrounding was clean, and nature friendly environment.

## **Conclusion**

This research studied the service quality that involved facility and food & beverage department has a direct positive influence on Muslim Customer. For the dimension of service quality, the majority of the respondents was satisfied with the service given in the selected Shariah compliant hotel. The Muslim customers also satisfy with the facilities given in the Shariah compliant hotel and they felt comfortable and felt safe to stay in the hotels. Furthermore, the Muslim customers also satisfied with the food & beverage department where they feel safe and comfortable to have their Halal meals. The findings showed that Muslim Customers had a positive influence on the Shariah compliant hotel. It's related to the previous research that from Muslim customers is one the very important for target market Shariah hotel principle. The Shariah-compliant hotel or Islamic hotel is not only limited to serving halal food and drink, but the operation throughout the hotel would also be managed based on Shariah principles. However, there are no formal criteria for this concept even in the Middle East, but only the scrutiny of statements made by industry practitioners and analysts reveals broad agreement about a set of attributes that are suggested. These attributes such as the Quran and prayer mats available in each room, no alcohol, Beds and toilet positioned so as not to face the direction of Mecca, Building a Home Around These Principles, Bidets in the bathrooms, Prayer rooms and Islamic funding.

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