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The impacts of Shariah-compliant hotel attributes on Muslim travellers revisit intention: Religiosity as a moderator

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The Impacts of Shariah-Compliant Hotel Attributes on Muslims Travellers Revisit Intention: Religiosity as a Moderator

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**The Impacts of Shariah-Compliant Hotel Attributes on Muslims Travellers Revisit
Intention: Religiosity as a Moderator**

Abstract

Purpose- This study aims to investigate the impact of Shariah-compliant hotel attributes on Muslim travellers’ revisit intention.

Design/methodology/approach- A total of 361 Muslim travellers who have stayed at Shariah-compliant hotels in the previous 12 months were recruited to take part in this research. The hypothesized research model was assessed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach.

Findings- The analysis revealed that Muslim travellers’ revisit intention is dependent on the halal food and beverages and the provision of Shariah-compliant facilities at the hotel; whereas the Shariah-compliant operation and interior design of hotels are not significantly associated with it. The findings also uncovered that religiosity moderates the impacts of Shariah-compliant facilities and interior design on travellers’ revisit intention.

Practical implications– Guidelines to offer services that meet Muslim travellers’ needs can be developed based on the results of this study to help Shariah-compliant hotel marketers attract and retain more customers.

Originality/value– The findings of this study have provided insights into the importance of halal attributes and practices in retaining Muslim customers at Shariah-compliant hotels.

Keywords: Halal tourism, Shariah-compliant hotel, Muslim travellers, Halal practices, Revisit intention

The Impacts of Shariah-Compliant Hotel Attributes on Muslims Travellers

Revisit Intention: Religiosity as a Moderator

Introduction

Muslims' knowledge and concerns on the principles of Shariah have been increased and they seek better quality services that are in line with the Shariah-compliance. Tourist industry players and policymakers, thus, need to be more strategize in offering their services to attract and retain more Muslim customers. Compliance with religious obligation is important criteria for Muslim tourists and travellers, which make their needs quite different from other tourists. To meet the complex demands and needs of both local and foreign Muslim travellers, some hotels have started to adopt the Shariah principles (Salleh *et al.*, 2014). It is important for organizations to offer new or innovative services that could meet the religious requirements of Muslims to attract more customers (Idris and Abdul Wahab, 2015; Steinicke *et al.*, 2012). Considering the role of customer loyalty in the success of service companies (Ebrahimi *et al.*, 2019; Gunawan *et al.*, 2020), this study aims to investigate the drivers of Muslim travellers' revisit intention.

The tourism industry plays an important role in accelerating a nation's economy, especially in developing countries like Malaysia, which aims to diversify revenue through the tourism industry and hotel sector (Iranmanesh *et al.*, 2018; Zailani *et al.*, 2016). Finding a new segment of customers is one of the ways to expand the tourism market for the country. Attracting more Muslim tourists from around the world is an important strategy for the hotel industry. Today, many countries have developed strategies to target Muslim tourists (Pamukcu and Sariisik, 2020). Malaysia is one of the top preferred destinations for Muslim tourists and more than five million. Muslim tourists from all around the world visited Malaysia in 2015, which accounted for 20.4% of the whole tourist market of this country (Idris and Wahab, 2015). In 2015, the standard numbered MS 2610: 2015 for Muslim-friendly hospitality services was issued by the Malaysian Department of Standards in response to the need for a universally accepted service standard. Accordingly, Muslim and Non-Muslim travellers' behaviours towards halal tourism have received growing attention from scholars in recent years (Battour *et al.*, 2018, 2019; Said *et al.*, 2020).

To date, several studies have investigated different topics related to Shariah-compliant hotel, which include Islamic hotel categories (e.g., Jaswir and Ramli, 2016), developing a halal standard for hotels (e.g., Musa *et al.*, 2017), opportunities and challenges of Shariah-compliant

hotels (e.g., Samori and Rahman, 2013), attributes of Shariah-compliant hotels (Salleh *et al.*, 2014), and drivers of Muslim tourists' satisfaction (Battour *et al.*, 2012). However, the intention to revisit Shariah-compliant hotels is a topic that has received less attention in the literature. Furthermore, the studies on attributes of Shariah-compliant hotels are qualitative in nature and there is a lack of empirical study on the influences of these attributes on behaviours. To address these gaps in the literature, this study aims to investigate the impact of Shariah-compliant hotel attributes on Muslim travellers' revisit intention.

Studies found that religious people tend to be more conservative and more concerned about moral standards (Hopkins *et al.*, 2014), and consequently the Shariah-related attributes are expected to have more effect on their revisit intention. As religiosity may vary among travellers, current research also intends to examine the moderating influence of religiosity on the association between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes with traveller's revisit intention. The following two research questions are addressed in this study:

1. What is the influence of Shariah-compliant hotel attributes on Muslim travellers' revisit intention?
2. Does religiosity moderate the associations between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes and revisit intention?

The findings of the study contribute to the literature in various ways. Firstly, it extends the literature on Shariah-compliant hotels by investigating the attributes that could drive Muslim travellers' intention to revisit. The study has a methodological contribution and the roles of Shariah-compliant attributes tested using an empirical approach. Thirdly, the study offers new insights on the moderating effect of religiosity, which is rarely researched. From the practical perspective, understanding the expectation of Muslim travellers could help hotel marketers and managers to offer better quality services that fulfil travellers' expectations and enhance the possibility of their revisit the hotel. Stakeholders in the hotel industry need to be aware of the link between religious needs, travellers' decision making and their revisit behaviour (Arli and Pekerti, 2017), which are crucial in attracting and retaining more Muslim customers.

Literature review

Shariah-compliant hotel

Shariah is characterized as a principle or way of life which originated from God to mankind through Prophet Muhammad and consists of three primary parts: Aqidah (Belief), Fiqh (individuals' doing and saying and the relationship between him/her with others) and Akhlak (moral and ethics). Rezak and Yusof (2019, p. 98) defined a Shariah-compliant hotel as "A Shariah-compliant hotel is a hotel that meets the needs of Muslim tourists based on the Shariah law where the hotel normally uses certain standards or laws to certify the requirements provided to achieve Shariah compliance". A Shariah-compliant hotel acknowledges Islamic attributes in the hospitality industry (Stephenson, 2014), and stresses on fulfilling the travellers' religious needs, which focuses on the environment, safety, health, and the economy of all mankind, regardless of culture, faith, and race (Salleh *et al.*, 2014). Suci *et al.* (2020) highlighted that the entire operation of Shariah-compliant hotels should be based on Islamic rules or guidance of Shariah. Shariah-Compliant Hotel is different from other hotels in terms of room concept, facilities offered, kitchen, food and beverage, housekeeping, and workers dress code (Jeaheng *et al.*, 2020). A few characteristics of a 'friendly Muslim hotel' has been highlighted by Samori and Sabtu (2014), such as any prohibited foodstuffs or beverages should not be served in the hotel room, has separation of male and female rooms as well as having the Qibla (direction to perform prayer), prayer mat and Quran translation in each room. Evidence and studies suggest that Shariah-compliant hotel has a promising market potential as Muslims form around 24% of the global population (Papastathopoulos *et al.*, 2020; Shnyrkova and Predvoditeleva, 2019). This study aims to investigate the associations between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes and revisit intention of Muslim travellers.

Behavioural Intentions

Behavioural intentions focus on a person's future desire and action to participate, consume, and use or not use a specific service or product (Han and Hyun, 2017). The consequences of behavioural intentions have been established in prior marketing research. Oliver (1999) defined behavioural intentions as an individual's willingness or interest to engage in a specific behaviour, while both recommendation and repurchase intention and intention are the main components of an individual's behavioural intention. Several studies referred to behavioural intention as a functional construct, which relates to the loyalty of individuals including revisit intention (e.g., Choo *et al.*, 2016; Tanford and Jung, 2017). Similarly, Han and Ryu (2007) stated that revisit intention is an acceptable and important tool for measuring the future

behaviour of a traveller. In this research, behavioural intention represents the future desires/plans of Muslim travellers regarding the intention to revisit a Shariah-compliant hotel. Although acquiring a new customer is a first and important step toward success in the hotel industry, the long-term success of a hotel depends on keeping customers loyal. As such, this study aims to investigate the determinants of the intention to revisit Shariah-compliant hotels.

Push and pull theory

Push and pull theory was developed by Dann (1981). This theory was used frequently in the literature to explain the motivations that affect tourist behavior (Kraftchick *et al.*, 2014; Suni and Pesonen, 2019). The theory has shown great explanatory power in the context of halal tourism (Battour *et al.*, 2012; Harahsheh *et al.*, 2019). According to this theory, there are two major forces that affect travelers' choices. First, there is what the traveller needs and desires, and, second what the travel destination has to offer to satisfy these needs and desires. The push motivations are internal forces that are more concerned with the desire to travel, whereas the pull motivations are more related to external forces of attracting people to certain destinations (Dann, 1981).

The potential drivers of revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels were selected in a two-step process. Firstly, the attributes of Shariah-compliant hotels were identified from the literature. Secondly, based on the experts' opinion the most important factors namely halal food and beverages (Han *et al.*, 2019; Samori and Rahman, 2013; Zailani *et al.*, 2011), Shariah-compliant facilities (Battour and Ismail, 2016; Mohsin *et al.*, 2016), Shariah-compliant operations (Karim *et al.*, 2017; Samori and Sabtu, 2014), and Shariah-compliant interior design (Han *et al.*, 2019; Yousaf and Xiucheng, 2018) were selected. The attributes of Shariah-compliant hotels are pull factors as these factors play role in attracting customers to the hotels. Furthermore, considering the fact that Muslims with different levels of religiosity may have different needs, in this study religiosity was considered as moderator.

Please insert Figure 1 about here

Hypotheses development

Halal Food and beverages

Food and food habits are well-established as a representative symbol of culture, causing individual and collective identities (Wright and Annes, 2013). The food preparation principles based on Shariah emphasized that the sources of food and process must conform to Islamic faith principles (Samori and Sabtu, 2014; Zailani *et al.*, 2019), and covers different segments such as preparation, storage, slaughtering, nurturing, sanitation, hygiene, and display (Lau *et al.*, 2016; Zailani *et al.*, 2018). Utensils, machinery, and equipment should be cleaned based on Islamic rules and untainted by contact with prohibited materials (Henderson, 2016). Actions and permissible objects are classified as halal, whereas haram indicates those deemed unacceptable ones (Wright and Annes, 2013). The availability of halal cuisine is an important aspect of traveling for Muslims (Iranmanesh *et al.*, 2019; Yousaf and Xiucheng, 2018), and Halal food is recognized to be the top unique needs of the Muslim tourist market (El-Gohary, 2016). Muslims have great concern about halal food and beverages due to safety, cleanliness, hygienic, and animal welfare (Marzuki *et al.*, 2012). Shariah-compliant food and beverages practices refer to serving halal food, providing non-alcoholic beverages, and providing direction of halal restaurants nearby hotel. Halal food and alcohol-free drinks are some of the characteristics of the Muslim-friendly hotel (Henderson, 2016; Samori and Rahman, 2013; Zailani *et al.*, 2011), which give an added competitive advantage to the Shariah-compliant hotels to retain both local and international Muslim travellers. Han *et al.* (2019) demonstrated that food and beverages are essential elements to form high degrees of recommendation and revisit intentions of Muslim travellers to a specific destination. Taking into account that the religiosity of Muslim consumers is probably the most important element linked with their behaviour (Jamal and Sharifuddin, 2015), it can be concluded that providing halal food and beverages for Muslim travellers may increase the probability of their willingness and intention to revisit Shariah-compliant hotel. Based on the aforementioned discussion, the following hypothesis was developed:

H1. Halal food and beverages have a positive influence on travellers' revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels.

Shariah-Compliant Facilities

The facilities in Shariah-compliant hotels should be operated based on Shariah principles. Shariah-compliant facilities refer to separate floors for single male, single female, and families, separate facilities, providing praying room and religious information, having Quran, prepare

mat, and Qibla sign in the rooms, no disco and gambling, and selling halal products. For Shariah-compliant hotels, it appears necessary that the facilities such as guest and function rooms, swimming pool, gym, spa, and floors should be separated for male and female. These factors should be considered at the stage of designing or developing plans for Shariah-compliant hotels (Jafari and Scott, 2014). As Muslim travellers are obligated to pray five times a day, one of the essential demands is the availability and accessibility of the hotel prayer room (Battour and Ismail, 2016; Mohsin *et al.*, 2016). Providing praying equipment and place and ablution are the minimum facilities that Shariah-compliant hotels should provide for Muslim guests (Suci *et al.*, 2020). In addition, previous studies endorsed the availability of Washroom facilities/ritual washing area (Wuddu) (Henderson, 2010) and rooms with Shariah-compliant facilities (e.g., Holy book, prayer mats, Qibla sign, etc.) (Battour and Ismail, 2016; El-Gohary, 2016) are vital for Muslim tourists. It has been found that the decision-making processes of individuals are influenced by religious issues (Essoo and Dibb, 2004). As such, the intention to revisit Shariah-compliant hotels is expected to be affected by offering facilities in accordance with the religious beliefs of these travellers. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

H2. Shariah-compliant facilities have a positive influence on travellers' revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels.

Shariah-Compliant Operation

All activities by all departments in the Shariah-compliant hotels must have approval from the Shariah-compliant manager, which is positioned to cover up all Shariah-compliant operations and standards, to make sure there is no haram activity running in the hotel. Shariah-compliant operation measures the Shariah-compliant practices including Islamic greeting, staffs' legitimately dress, and forbidden entry for unmarried couples. As a service provider, human interactions between hotel staff and travellers are critical in satisfying customers and motivating them to revisit the hotel (Wu and Gao, 2019). Hence, the role of receptionists at the front office of the hotel is very important, and Islamic greeting may influence positively travellers' revisit intention. Islam charges both genders to dress modestly, as a way to keep up good social request and to ensure a man's honour, Muslim staffs working at Shariah-compliant hotels are required to legitimately dress as per the Islamic law. For the female, their uniforms ought to be neither transparent nor shape-uncovering. In addition, they ought to cover their

hair, arms, and legs. For male staff, their work attire should have the capacity to cover their torso and upper legs (Karim *et al.*, 2017). Forbidden entry for unmarried couples is another religious obligation that should be adopted by Shariah-compliant hotels. Jaffar and Musa (2016) found religious obligation as one of the most important drivers of Muslims' behaviour. Considering the importance of Islamic rules in operation for Muslims, it is expected that implementing halal rules in hotels' Shariah-compliant operations influence positively Muslim travellers' intention to revisit. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was structured:

H3. Shariah-compliant operation has a positive influence on travellers' revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels.

Interior design

Stephenson *et al.* (2010) stated that the art should not exhibit the human or display any form of jewels which does not reflect any sign or symbol. Han *et al.* (2019) added that a Halal-friendly atmosphere should not have any nudity in the decorations, designs, and paintings. This is because seeing nudity decorations, designs, and paintings placed at the hotel would not be an appropriate view for those Muslim travellers' who bring their children together. It is emphasized that beds and toilets should not be placed in the Mecca direction (Yousaf and Xiucheng, 2018). Jaffar and Musa (2016) emphasized that religious obligation is the most important factor that plays a significant role in Muslims' behaviours and decisions. As such, it is expected that travellers who experience a positive perception of interior design at Shariah-compliant hotel, are likely to intend to revisit that hotel in the future. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H4. Shariah-compliant interior design has a positive influence on travellers' revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotel.

Moderating role of religiosity

Religiosity, which is also called individuals' religious commitment, refers to "the degree to which a person is devoted to the principles his or her religion which in turn, is mirrored in their attitude as well as behaviour" (Ramly *et al.*, 2008, p. 48). Religiosity measures the importance of religion in the life of an individual and the extent to which his beliefs lie behind an

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individual's whole approach to life and influence all his leaving in life (Atal *et al.*, 2020). An individual with high religious commitment reads books and magazines about faith and spends time to grow his understanding of faith. Religiosity is one of the most cultural forces which shapes individuals' behaviours (Abror *et al.*, 2019). Religious commitment is one of the key drivers of Muslim consumers' consumption patterns as it provides guidelines for individuals' behaviours throughout their lives and assists them in decision-making (Iranmanesh *et al.*, 2019). However, prior studies affirmed that religiosity plays a significant role in Muslim behaviour (Ustaahmetoğlu, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2020), but their behaviour varies among them and depends on the extent of their commitment to the religion (Elseidi, 2018). It is also evident that Shariah principles play a more important role in the behaviours and decisions of Muslims, who have high levels of religiosity in comparison to the ones with a low level of religiosity (Iranmanesh *et al.*, 2019). As such, it is expected that the more religious a person, the more likely that person will be offended by the inadequate religion-based attributes at Shariah-compliant hotel, and consequently, the moderating effect of religiosity on the relationships between attributes of Shariah-compliant hotel and intention to revisit was proposed. The moderating role of religiosity has been approved in the previous studies (Abdullah and Razak, 2019; Akhtar *et al.*, 2020; Wisker, 2020). Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H5. The positive relationship between (a) halal food and beverages, (b) Shariah-compliant facilities, (c) Shariah-compliant operation and (d) Shariah-compliant interior design and intention to revisit Shariah-compliant hotel will be stronger for travellers with high religiosity.

Research methodology

Research instruments

To evaluate the hypotheses, a survey questionnaire was used to collect the data. The following steps were taken to develop and test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. First, the draft version of the questionnaire was developed in English based on previous studies. Second, the developed questionnaire was pretested with three scholars and revised based on their inputs. Third, the questionnaire was translated into the Malay language. Fourth, two academics who were bilingual in Malay and English reviewed the translation and compared it with the original version. Finally, the pilot data was collected from the guests of a Shariah-compliant hotel in

Penang. The pilot was conducted with 34 travellers and Cronbach's alpha of all constructs was above the threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978).

The survey questionnaire comprises two parts. The first part comprises a set of items to measure the theoretical constructs in the research model, and the second part identifies the demographic information of the sample. The survey indicators were adapted from previously published sources to ensure content validity. Measurement indicators related to the halal food and beverages were adapted from Samori and Sabtu (2014), Karim *et al.* (2017), Omar *et al.* (2013), and Saad *et al.* (2016). To measure facilities in Shariah-compliant hotels, nine items were adapted from Karim *et al.* (2017), Omar *et al.* (2013), Samori and Sabtu (2014), and Saad *et al.* (2016) (e.g., "Providing religious information such as the nearby mosque or prayer times"). Three items for measuring Shariah-compliant operation and four indicators for measuring Shariah-compliant interior design were adapted from Karim *et al.* (2017), Omar *et al.* (2013), Saad *et al.* (2016), and Samori and Sabtu (2014). In light of Liu *et al.* (2020), two items measuring the Muslim travellers' revisit intention for Shariah-compliant hotel were adapted. The composite reliability of revisit intention was 0.87 in the study of Liu *et al.* (2020). Five items from Benk *et al.* (2016) were adopted to assess the Muslim travellers' religiosity. The Cronbach's alpha of religiosity was 0.68 in the study of Benk *et al.* (2016). The instrument of the current research was designed in a 5-point Likert-type format. The measurement items can be found in Table 1.

Study participants and data collection

The current research used a survey method, employing a questionnaire to examine the research model and hypotheses structured. As it is not possible to get a list of all elements in the population (Qiu *et al.*, 2015; Soliman, 2019), a convenience sampling approach was utilized to collect data. The data were collected using an online survey and the link of the developed questionnaire in google forms was shared on Malaysian social media pages. Filtering questions were used to reach respondents that meet the inclusion criteria of the population. The Muslim respondents who answered "yes" to the question of "Have you stayed at Shariah-compliant hotel in the previous 12 months?" were qualified for the survey. A total of 378 Muslim travellers, those who had experience in staying at Shariah-compliant hotel, participated in this study as respondents, and filled out the questionnaires. After initial screening and excluding 17 responses (incomplete answers), 361 valid responses were obtained for further analysis. The

final sample consisted of 201 females (55.7%) and 160 males (44.3%). The majority of respondents (60.1%) were ranged between 25-34 years.

Common method bias (CMB) needs to be examined when a self-reported questionnaire is used to collect data (Foroughi *et al.*, 2019) and when the same respondents answer all variables. The CMB was evaluated to confirm the validity and reliability of the study's variables and tested relationships (Fuller *et al.*, 2016). Simmering *et al.* (2015) proposed the marker variable approach as a reliable way of testing common method bias. Accordingly, the correlations between constructs of the study and a marker variable (i.e., "attitude toward buying green products") were evaluated and no significant correlation was detected, indicating CMB is not a concern (Lindell and Whitney, 2001).

Data analysis

The current research used Partial Least Square (PLS) path modelling to assess the proposed research model and test the hypotheses. The reason why we selected PLS is due to the prediction-oriented character of the current research, which aims to evaluate how well the exogenous constructs (halal food and beverages and Shariah-compliant facilities, operation, and interior design) can predict the endogenous variable (revisit intention to Shariah-compliant hotel). Following Hair *et al.*'s (2019) recommendation, this study employed the two-step approach (namely, measurement model and structural model) for data analysis. To test the moderating effect of religiosity, interactions between religiosity and four Shariah-compliant attributes were formed using the two-stage orthogonalization approach to ensure full independence between the moderator and the main effects (Little *et al.*, 2006).

Result

Measurement model

To assess the measurement model, convergent validity and discriminant validity were examined. To evaluate the convergent validity, item outer loadings, composite reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were assessed. The proposed values for item loadings, AVE, and CR should be higher than 0.7, 0.5, and 0.7, respectively (Hair *et al.*, 2017). As Table 1 depicts, all item loadings are well above 0.7. Additionally, composite reliability for all

constructs surpassed the recommended value of 0.7, and the AVE values pertain to respected constructs were higher than cut-off values of 0.5, indicating satisfactory convergent validity (Hair *et al.*, 2017).

Please insert Table 1 about here

To examine discriminant validity, present research employed the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The results provided evidence that the HTMT values were less than 0.85 (Table 2), thus fulfilling the discriminant validity of all given constructs (Kline, 2016).

Please insert Table 2 about here

Assessment of structural model

As proposed by Hair *et al.* (2017), the proportion of variance explained was utilized to indicate the predictive accuracy of the research model. In the present research, food and beverages, facilities, operation, interior design, and religiosity explain 32.7% of revisit intention ($R^2 = 0.327$). Furthermore, predictive relevance was measured by calculating the Stone-Geisser Q^2 (cross-validated redundancy) value based on a blindfolding process used in PLS. Chin (2010) states that a model demonstrates an acceptable predictive relevance if the Q^2 value is above zero. The findings reveal that the Q^2 values for revisit intention (0.238) are higher than zero, thus affirming the predictive relevance of the endogenous construct in this research.

To assess the structural model, we utilized non-parametric bootstrapping (Hair *et al.*, 2017) with 5,000 replications (Table 3). Halal food and beverages ($\beta = 0.249$; $p < 0.01$) along with Shariah-compliant facilities ($\beta = 0.221$; $p < 0.01$) had a significant effect on revisit intention. Despite the theoretical expectations, the results demonstrate that Shariah-compliant operation ($\beta = 0.359$; $p < 0.01$) and interior design ($\beta = 0.359$; $p < 0.01$) were not significant predictors of revisit intention. Thus, H1 and H2 were supported while H3 and H4 were not.

To assess the moderating effect of religiosity, the orthogonalization approach was applied (Little *et al.*, 2006). Four interactions between religiosity and Shariah-hotel attributes were created. Out of four interaction, the interactions of religiosity with Shariah-compliant facilities ($\beta = 0.145$; $p < 0.05$) and interior design ($\beta = 0.174$; $p < 0.01$) have significant effect on revisit intention. The significant interactions indicate that religiosity moderates the influences of

Shariah-compliant facilities and interior design on revisit intention. Hence, H5b and H5d were supported, while H5a and H5c were rejected.

Please insert Table 3 about here

Figure 2 shows that although facilities play important role in shaping the revisit intention of travellers with a high level of religiosity, it has almost no effect on the revisit intention of ones with a low level of religiosity.

Please insert Figure 2 about here

Additionally, Figure 3 illustrates that although the Shariah-compliant interior design has a positive effect on the revisit intention of travellers with a high level of religiosity, it has no effect on the revisit intention of the ones with a low level of religiosity.

Please insert Figure 3 about here

Discussion

With the growing number of Muslim travellers, Shariah-compliant hotels have received attention from both practitioners and academicians. Shariah-compliance has become an integral factor that influences Muslim travellers' choice of hotels. Thus, it is important for hotel managers to understand the aspects of Shariah compliance that affect Muslim travellers' decisions to revisit a hotel. Accordingly, this study has been crafted primarily to investigate the attributes that may affect Muslim travellers' revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels. Specifically, the present research has examined the attributes like halal food and beverages and Shariah-compliant facilities, operation, and interior design on travellers' revisit intention to Shariah-compliant hotels. It also examined the moderating role of religiosity on the association between travellers' revisit intention and its predictors. The findings revealed that although halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities have a significant effect on Muslim travellers' revisit intention, Shariah-compliant operation and interior design have no effect. Furthermore, religiosity positively moderated the impacts of Shariah-compliant facilities and interior design on travellers' revisit intention.

This study found that food, beverages, and facilities have a positive effect on travellers' intention to revisit Shariah-compliant hotels, which is consistent with findings of Samori and Sabtu (2014) and Zailani *et al.* (2011). It means, if a hotel offers non-Shariah compliant services (e.g., serves non-halal food or mixed items with pork and alcohol), Muslim travellers

may not stay at this hotel in the future. Thus, the halal logo in menus must be clearly displayed to gain the confidence of Muslims that the food and beverages provided are halal. In addition, the availability of Shariah-compliant facilities such as a praying room is another important attribute that could attract Muslim travellers to revisit a particular hotel. This is because the facility could fulfil the daily practices of Muslims. In addition, Shariah-compliant hotels should also segregate the use of facilities such as spa, swimming pool, and gymnasium for males and females. Battour *et al.* (2014) confirmed the importance of segregation in the satisfaction of Muslim tourists. In short, hotels with the Muslim target market should comply with Islamic principles to enhance their intention to revisit and to retain their customers.

The findings showed that both Shariah-compliant operation and interior design have no significant effect on travellers' revisit intention. The results are not consistent with the findings of Henderson (2010), Karim *et al.* (2017), and Stephenson (2014). The reason for the insignificant association was probably due to the lower importance level of these attributes in the daily lives of Muslim travellers in comparison to halal food and beverages and Shariah-compliant facilities. Welcoming the travellers with Islamic greeting or wearing Islamic dress by hotel staffs for instance are not compulsory in Shariah and consequently have a less important role in their revisit intention.

Finally, the current research found that religiosity positively moderates the effect of Shariah-compliant facilities and interior design on travellers' revisit intention. According to Figures 2 and 3, although facilities and interior design play important role in the revisit intention of Muslim travellers with a high level of religiosity, they have no effect on the revisit intention of the ones with a low level of religiosity. These suggest that the roles of facilities and interior design are dependent on the extent of travellers' commitment to Shariah Rules. It is evident that individuals with higher levels of religiosity will adhere to the principles of religious obligation more rigorously than those with a lower level of religiosity (Madni *et al.*, 2016). However, some interior design can be offensive to religious travellers. Hence, hoteliers need to develop an understanding of travellers' potential reaction to improper interior design in order to mitigate the negative consequences of offending some Muslim travellers. The insignificant moderating effect of religiosity on the association between halal food and beverages and revisit intention and the significant direct effect on this attribute indicates that serving halal food and beverages is most important to Muslim travellers regardless of the extent of their commitment to Shariah rules. As such, Shariah-compliant hotels should place high importance on serving halal food and beverages and avoid serving any haram foods. Furthermore, the insignificant

moderating effect of religiosity on the relationship between operation and revisit intention and the insignificant direct effect of this attribute indicate that Islamic greetings, wearing of Islamic attire, and forbiddance of unmarried couples have no effect on revisit intention of Muslims regardless of the extent of their religiosity.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The findings have both theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, this study addresses the lack of empirical study on the determinants of revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels. The findings confirmed the significant effects of halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities on Muslim travellers' revisit intention. The influences of Shariah-compliant interior design and operation on revisit intention were not supported. These findings illustrate that the hotel attributes (Shariah-compliant facilities and halal food and beverages) which are directly related to Muslims' daily activities such as praying and eating halal food play a critical role in their revisit decision. According to the three-factor theory of customer satisfaction, the basic factors which are the minimum requirements of customers have a high effect on satisfaction and loyalty when their performance is low (Albayrak, 2018). It means the reason that halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities (basic factors) have a significant influence on travellers' revisit intention is the low performance of hotels in Malaysia in meeting these expectations of the Muslim travellers. The low performance of competitors in meeting the customers' expectations causes the high influence of halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities on revisit intention. Furthermore, Albayrak (2018) stated that excitement factors (the factors that increase customer satisfaction if delivered but do not cause dissatisfaction if they are not delivered) have a high effect on satisfaction when their performance is high. The insignificant effects of Shariah-compliant interior design and operation (excitement factors) on revisit intention are due to the low performance of the hotel industry in Malaysia in providing these excitement factors. Furthermore, the study extends the literature by testing the moderating effect of religiosity. According to the findings, religiosity moderates the impacts of facilities and interior design on revisit intention.

From the practical perspective, the findings could provide managers of Shariah-compliant hotels with crucial information that could be used to enhance the extent of the loyalty of Muslim guests. Special attention should be given by hotels to serving halal food and beverages

as this attribute is important for Muslim travellers regardless of their religious commitment. Shariah-compliant hotels should serve various halal food and non-alcoholic beverages. Displaying the halal logo and highlighting the halal status of food ingredients in the menu may ensure the Muslims that the food and beverages are halal. The moderating effect of religiosity on the effects of facilities and interior design on revisit intention indicates that to target travellers with a high level of religiosity, hotels should place more importance on ensuring that their facilities and interior design are appropriate for Muslim travellers. It means the hotels should provide praying equipment and place, segregated swimming pool, spa, and gymnasium, and position the beds and toilets in a way that not face the Qibla to keep Muslims with a high level of religiosity loyal.

Limitations and future research

As with any research, the present study had some limitations, which should be considered in further research. First, it relied on a cross-sectional design, which does not contribute to causal inferences between the variable. Therefore, longitudinal or experimental studies can be carried out to examine the causal relationships between the variables. Moreover, this study only focused on attributes that were related to Shariah rules, future research may examine the role of more general factors such as reputation, brand image, and perceived value of services in predicting travellers' intention to revisit a hotel. Replication of this study in other cultural contexts and countries can also explore the potential differences in the factors and contribute new insights into the topic of research. For instance, based on the three-factor theory of customer satisfaction, we expect that halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities (basic factors) have a lower effect on shaping traveller revisit intention in Iran, as providing these facilities are compulsory in this country. In another hand, excitement factors (Shariah-compliant interior design and operation) can be provided to differentiate the service from competitors, and consequently, it is expected that Shariah-compliant interior design and operation have significant effects on revisit intention in countries like Iran. Finally, we encourage future studies to investigate the potential factors that explain the associations between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes and revisit intention such as satisfaction and attitude.

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Figure 1. Research framework

Figure 2. Interaction effect of religiosity and Shariah-compliant facilities on revisit intention to Shariah -compliant hotels.

Figure 3. Interaction effect of religiosity and Shariah-compliant interior design on revisit intention to Shariah compliant hotels.

Table 1. Measurement model evaluation

Constructs	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	AVE
Halal Food and Beverages (FB)	Serving various Halal food.	0.899	0.945	0.812
	Providing various non-alcoholic beverages.	0.890		
	Food safety, hygiene and sanitation are strictly comply with Halal regulation (Halalan–permissible and lawful; Toyyiban–wholesomeness, healthy, safe, nutritious and quality).	0.917		
	Providing maps and directions of Halal restaurants nearby hotel.	0.899		
Shariah-Compliant Facilities (FAC)	Separating single male, single female and families floor.	0.702	0.935	0.614
	Having the Holy Book Quran, prayer mat or arrow in bedroom that indicating the direction of the Qibla.	0.786		
	Providing spacious bedroom for Muslim guests to perform their prayer.	0.807		
	Providing segregated prayer room.	0.792		
	Providing religious information such as the nearby mosque or prayer times.	0.838		
	Segregating facilities such as swimming pool (male, female and family), spa and gymnasium or having different times to use the facilities.	0.797		
	No inappropriate red light entertainment/disco.	0.799		
	No gambling in the hotel.	0.777		
	Selling Halal and Islamic related products.	0.746		
	Islamic greetings.	0.911		
Shariah-Compliant Operation (OP)	Predominantly Muslim staffs with descent Islamic of dressing.	0.912	0.917	0.786
	Forbidden entry for unmarried couple (obligatory for issuing any married certification).	0.835		
	Providing banquet and meeting rooms (spacious function room to cater separate seating for male and female).	0.771		
Shariah-Compliant Interior Design (ID)	Decorating rooms and public area in the way that not depict the human and animal form.	0.824	0.898	0.689
	Positioning beds in the way that not to be face the Qibla.	0.852		
	Positioning toilets in the way that not to be face the Qibla.	0.870		
Religiosity (RE)	My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life.	0.875	0.928	0.721
	I spend time trying to grow in understanding of my faith.	0.892		
	Religious beliefs influence all my dealings in life.	0.818		
	Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life.	0.852		
Revisit Intentions (RI)	I often read books and magazines about my faith.	0.806	0.964	0.931
	I will give priority to this Shariah-Compliant Hotel as my first choice of stay compared to other hotels.	0.961		
	I will absolutely stay in this Shariah-Compliant Hotel again for my next visit.	0.969		

Note: CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT_{.85})

	FAC	FB	ID	OP	R	RI
Facilities						
Food and Beverages	0.451					
Interior Design	0.589	0.27				
Operation	0.581	0.292	0.663			
Religiosity	0.388	0.212	0.236	0.187		
Revisit Intention	0.479	0.417	0.283	0.305	0.375	

Table 3. Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Relationships	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Main Model					
H1	FB -> RI	0.249	3.964**	0.000	Supported
H2	FAC -> RI	0.221	2.795**	0.005	Supported
H3	OP -> RI	0.045	0.561	0.575	Not Supported
H4	ID -> RI	0.098	1.291	0.771	Not Supported
Moderating Effect of Religiosity					
H5(a)	FB*RE -> RI	0.021	0.180	0.857	Not Supported
H5(b)	FAC*RE -> RI	0.145	1.947*	0.049	Supported
H5(c)	OP*RE -> RI	0.059	0.467	0.641	Not Supported
H5(d)	ID*RE -> RI	0.174	2.418**	0.009	Supported

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01 (one-tail)

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:
Reviewer: 1

Recommendation: Minor Revision

Comments:

Unfortunately, I think that in its present form the manuscript is not fit for publication. The main problem is with the underpinning theory. However, I do believe that the manuscript has a potential for being reworked, rewritten, thoroughly language edited and subsequently resubmitted.

Thank you very much for taking your valuable time to provide constructive comments on our manuscript. Your comments, specially the three-factor theory of customer satisfaction, have significant influence on the quality of this manuscript.

Additional Questions:

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?: This paper offer minimal novelty as the area of Shariah compliant hotel had been widely studied. In addition, current study focuses more Muslim-friendly hotels concept. Notably, there is high correlation between Shariah-compliance and religiosity - thus testing the moderating effect would def show positive effect between the two variables.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?: The literature is up to date. However, I sense a lot of self-citation. What are your underpinnings theory? I believe it should be the Theory of Planned behaviour and Theory of Reasoned Action. Even the authors did not explain anything on the Three-Factor Theory of Customer Satisfaction. As the context of your study is quite broad

Thank you. Drivers of behaviour are attitude and subjective norm in Theory of Planned Behaviour and Theory of Reason Action. However, these two variables were not considered in the conceptual framework of this study and these two theories cannot explain the proposed relationships. "Push and Pull" theory, developed by Dann (1981), is the underpinning theory of this study. The explanations on this theory and how it supports the conceptual framework of the study were provided in page 5.

In the revised version, we used the Three-Factor Theory of Customer Satisfaction to provide implications and propose future studies as follows:

Theoretical Contribution

The findings have both theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, this study addresses the lack of empirical study on the determinants of revisit intention of Shariah-compliant hotels. The findings confirmed the significant effects of halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities on Muslim travellers' revisit intention. The influences of Shariah-compliant interior design and operation on revisit intention were not supported. These findings illustrate that the hotel attributes (Shariah-compliant facilities and halal food and beverages) which are directly related to Muslims' daily activities such as praying and eating halal food play a critical role in their revisit decision. According to the three-factor

theory of customer satisfaction, the basic factors which are the minimum requirements of customers have a high effect on satisfaction and loyalty when their performance is low (Albayrak, 2018). It means the reason that halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities (basic factors) have a significant influence on travellers' revisit intention is the low performance of hotels in Malaysia in meeting these expectations of the Muslim travellers. The low performance of competitors in meeting the customers' expectations causes the high influence of halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities on revisit intention. Furthermore, Albayrak (2018) stated that excitement factors (the factors that increase customer satisfaction if delivered but do not cause dissatisfaction if they are not delivered) have a high effect on satisfaction when their performance is high. The insignificant effects of Shariah-compliant interior design and operation (excitement factors) on revisit intention are due to the low performance of the hotel industry in Malaysia in providing these excitement factors. Furthermore, the study extends the literature by testing the moderating effect of religiosity. According to the findings, religiosity moderates the impacts of facilities and interior design on revisit intention.

Limitations and future research

As with any research, the present study had some limitations, which should be considered in further research. First, it relied on a cross-sectional design, which does not contribute to causal inferences between the variable. Therefore, longitudinal or experimental studies can be carried out to examine the causal relationships between the variables. Moreover, this study only focused on attributes that were related to Shariah rules, future research may examine the role of more general factors such as reputation, brand image, and perceived value of services in predicting travellers' intention to revisit a hotel. Replication of this study in other cultural contexts and countries can also explore the potential differences in the factors and contribute new insights into the topic of research. For instance, based on the three-factor theory of customer satisfaction, we expect that halal food and beverage and Shariah-compliant facilities (basic factors) have a lower effect on shaping traveller revisit intention in Iran, as providing these facilities are compulsory in this country. In another hand, excitement factors (Shariah-compliant interior design and operation) can be provided to differentiate the service from competitors, and consequently, it is expected that Shariah-compliant interior design and operation have significant effects on revisit intention in countries like Iran. Finally, we encourage future studies to investigate the potential factors that explain the associations between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes and revisit intention such as satisfaction and attitude.

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?: Again, the survey measurement is quite outdated. Citing your instruments from a top notch journal doesnt mean that the instrument is up to date. It is a 11 years old instruments and many others had extended the instrument to suits the current research environment.

Thank you. The sources of items before 2010 were updated as follows:

Kim *et al.* (2009) was replaced by Liu *et al.* (2020).

Worthington *et al.* (2003) was replaced by Benk *et al.* (2016).

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions

adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?: In term of your research framework - How about satisfaction - They need to be satisfied with the Shariah-compliance services thus it enhance their wants to revisit the properties.

You are right. Satisfaction can mediate the associations between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes and revisit intention. We proposed future studies to test the mediating effect of satisfaction and attitude.

Finally, we encourage future studies to investigate the potential factors that explain the associations between Shariah-compliant hotel attributes and revisit intention such as satisfaction and attitude.

5. Implications for research, practice and/or society: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for research, practice and/or society? Does the paper bridge the gap between theory and practice? How can the research be used in practice (economic and commercial impact), in teaching, to influence public policy, in research (contributing to the body of knowledge)? What is the impact upon society (influencing public attitudes, affecting quality of life)? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?: Developing guidelines from a basic empirical research with specific number of sample size is quite ambitious. Would you suggest your study findings can be generalised - thus can be used to design the guidelines?

Thank you. We agree with your point and we requested future studies to test the model of this study in other cultural contexts and countries and also using longitudinal or experimental approach.

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.: Ok

Thank you.

Reviewer: 2

Recommendation: Accept

Comments:

the quality is improved.

Additional Questions:

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?: yes

Thank you.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?: yes

Thank you.

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or

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other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?: yes
Thank you.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?: yes
Thank you.

5. Implications for research, practice and/or society: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for research, practice and/or society? Does the paper bridge the gap between theory and practice? How can the research be used in practice (economic and commercial impact), in teaching, to influence public policy, in research (contributing to the body of knowledge)? What is the impact upon society (influencing public attitudes, affecting quality of life)? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?: yes
Thank you.

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.: yes
Thank you.