

Hotel Services Design for Halal Tourism in Tunisia-Algeria-Morocco (An empirical study using the conjoint analysis technique)

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Abstract:

This study aimed to design a hotel service combination that meets the aspirations of a special category of customers, distinguished by its commitment to religious teachings, within what is known as halal tourism. To ensure that the desires and requests of this category of customers are satisfied, an appropriate statistical technique, the conjoint analysis, was used, to determine the optimal combination of hotel service based on the customers' suggestions. This method uses two questionnaires, an initial questionnaire aimed at identifying the most important components of hotel services for halal tourism, and a second questionnaire aimed at determining the optimal combination according to different levels. The study sample included a group of Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan tourists. Results showed the presence of varying importance for the components of hotel service, some came with high importance, others were of low importance, foremost of which comes halal food and prayer facilities.

Keywords: Halal tourism; hotel; service; Islamic; conjoint analysis.

Jel Classification Codes : C12 ; L83 ; M31

ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى اقتراح تصميم توليفة لخدمة فندقية ترتقي إلى تطلعات فئة خاصة من الزبائن، والتي تتميز بالثأما بالتعاليم الدينية وبحثها عن خدمات فندقية لا تخرج عن هذا الإطار، ضمن ما يعرف بالسياحة الحلال، ولا يمكن تحقيق ذلك دون الإصغاء لأراء الزبائن وأخذها بعين الاعتبار في تصميم وتقديم الخدمة لضمان ولائهم للمؤسسة الفندقية، وللتأكد من إرضاء رغبات وطلبات هذه الفئة من الزبائن تم اللجوء إلى تقنية إحصائية مناسبة وهي التحليل المشترك، ذلك لتحديد التوليفة المثلى للخدمة الفندقية انطلاقا من اقتراحات الزبائن وتطلعاتهم، ويعتمد هذا الأسلوب على توزيع استبيانيين، استبيان أولي غرضه تحديد أهم العناصر المكونة للخدمات الفندقية للسياحة الحلال واستبيان ثان يهدف إلى تحديد التوليفة المثلى وفق مستويات مختلفة، شملت عينة الدراسة مجموعة من السياح التونسيين والجزائريين والمغربيين. أظهرت النتائج وجود أهميات متفاوتة لمكونات الخدمة الفندقية للفنادق الملتزمة فأنت بعضها بأهمية عالية والبعض الآخر بأهمية منخفضة، يأتي في مقدمتها الأكل الحلال ومرافق الصلاة.

الكلمات المفتاح : سياحة حلال؛ فندق؛ خدمة؛ اسلامي؛ تحليل مشترك.

تصنيف JEL : C12 ; L83 ; M31

I. Introduction:

The hotel industry is one of the most important industries in the tourism sector and is one of the basic and necessary pillars for its establishment, as this industry provides the necessary and complementary services that the tourist needs and desires during his stay. The success of the hotel establishment, like other service establishments, depends on the implementation of a balanced strategy that simultaneously achieves the goals of the hotel establishment, the tourist and the society as a whole. Its marketing activity begins with identifying the needs and desires of the target market by listening to the customer, understanding his needs and desires, and identifying his expectations about the benefits packages that he wants to obtain while he is in the hotel.

Islamic hotels, like other hotels, face the same challenge of providing services that comply with international standards for hotel services, in addition to respecting the rules of Sharia, which the hotel determines the method of providing and which must meet the aspirations of customers. However, listening to the customer's aspirations and desires is one of the difficult matters due to the large number of customers and the multiplicity of their desires, which calls for the use of statistical techniques and computer programs in preparing market studies.

The importance of this study lies first through the issue of Islamic hotels, which is a recent topic that has not met its share of studies in its economic aspect, which is at the heart of the interests of many Muslim tourists on the one hand and businessmen on the other, considering it a fast-growing industry. It is also of great scientific importance as it deals with the **conjoint analysis technique**, which is characterized by being a statistical technique whose variables are determined by the customer, not the researcher, and thus this technique determines the most important elements of customers' interest. It also enables us to determine the service structure that meets the desires of the largest number of customers and thus provides solutions to one of the most important and difficult marketing issues, which is listening to the customer.

From this standpoint, the following problem emerged:

What are the features of the hotel service that customers prefer within the framework of halal tourism?

I.1. Study hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: The Muslim hotel customer focuses on the nature of food and drink provided in the hotel, on the places of prayer, on the services related to the Qur'an, on the services related to determining the direction of the Qiblah, on the dress of female workers, on the quality of cosmetics, on the nature of the medical services provided in the hotel, on the quality of the entertainment programs provided, on information brochures on the areas of committed tourism, on the nature of the hotel's sports halls, on the nature of the hotel's financial transactions and on the excursion services provided by the hotel.

- Hypothesis 2: There is no benefit to customers for every level of service provided by the hotel.

I.2. Previous studies :

- Nuraeni, S., Arru, A. P., & Novani, S. (2015). "Understanding Consumer Decision-making in Tourism Sector: Conjoint Analysis"

This study attempted to identify the decision-making process of young people, and how their tourist destination is selected using the combined analysis and the result showed that most young people choose the tourist destination with attributes such as international trip, the kindness of local people, and expenses, focusing on the enjoyment of sightseeing.

- Huertas-Garcia, R., Laguna García, M., & Consolación, C., (2012), "Conjoint analysis of tourist choice of hotel attributes presented in travel agent brochures"

Through this study, the researcher explained how it is possible to identify the most important features in the final choices of tourists who use the travel agent's brochure as a source of information, where, through the application of the joint analysis technique, the researcher showed how to choose the characteristics of the hotel to attract tourists.

II. Theoretical Background :

II.1. Halal tourism :

Idiomatically, tourism refers to moving around the country for hiking, relaxing, research, exploring... not for earning, working, or living. As for halal tourism, it is suitable for the religiously observant, who do not drink alcoholic beverages and do not go to nightclubs and other mixed facilities that contradict their religious beliefs. Tourism is legitimate in Islam, whether it is internal or external tourism. The Holy Qur'an called for it and the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, urged it. As God Almighty said: "Fa-seehoo fil ardi" which translates to "So travel the land..." (Surat al-Tawbah, verse 2) where Imam Ibn al-Arabi says in the interpretation of this verse: "i.e., travel, which is tourism", Imam Al-Qurtubi says: "Seeho means to walk the earth, coming and going, securely..." The rapid growth of halal tourism in many countries reflects the return to the self that Islamic societies are witnessing, what clearly confirms this fact is the success of Islamic banks and the amazing growth of halal products in their various fields (Thabeti & Ben Abdou, 2012, p. 42).

II.2. Tourism typology in Islam:

Tourism in Islam has several types according to the purpose including:

-Tourism for recreation: In reference to the words of God Almighty "to familiarize the Quraish, to familiarize them with the journey of winter and summer" (Surat Quraish, verses 1, 2)

-Spiritual and contemplative tourism: where God Almighty says: "Say: "Travel through the earth, then see how the back began, then God creates the next generation. Indeed, God has power over all things" (Surat Al-Ankabut, verse 20). And the Almighty said: "Did they not travel through the earth so that they would have hearts with which to reason, or ears with which to hear, for it is not blindness of sight, but of the hearts that are in the chests blind" (Surat Al-Hajj, verse 46).

Tourism to seek sustenance: for the Almighty's saying: "It is He who has made the earth subservient to you, so walk in its paths and eat of His provision and to Him is the resurrection" (Surat Al-Mulk, verse 15).

- Cultural tourism: The Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: "He who goes out in search of knowledge is in the path of God until he returns." He also said: "Whoever follows a path in search of knowledge, God will make easy for him a path to Paradise."

-Religious tourism: This is like traveling to perform the Hajj, as God Almighty says: "nd announce the pilgrimage to humanity. They will come to you on foot, and on every transport. They will come from every distant point" (Surat Al-Hajj, Verse 27). (Zidan, 1998, pp. 6-10)

II.3. Islamic hotels:

The most important elements of tourism of all kinds are the places where the tourist will stay during his visit, especially the hotels, since we are talking about halal tourism, the issue is directly related to hotels that provide services in line with Islamic law (Shariah), which are called shariah compliant hotels or even Islamic hotels, which are frequented by tourists who want to relax within Shariah regulations, it has even become appealing to some businessmen and non-religious people who want places to rest away from the hustle and bustle. Islamic hotels depend on specifications and standards known as Islamic hospitality, the general orientation of the hotel management is based on the principles and jurisprudence of Islamic law, in addition to respecting the conservative local customs and traditions. those hotels can be considered a safe destination for families, providing them with privacy and international hospitality standards within the controls of Sharia. The idea of Islamic hotels was launched from Malaysia, which began to be applied within a narrow framework of providing halal food to develop into providing integrated services in accordance with international standards and within the framework of Sharia controls.

Historically, Islamic civilization was concerned with the social and symbiotic dimension and was unique in this from other civilizations. So, hotels and caravanserais have been known since their early days, citing the Qur'anic verse: "There is no sin on you if you enter uninhabited houses in which are your enjoyment" (Surat An-Nur, verse 29). Several scholars (Fuqaha') are of the view that what is meant by houses is caravanserais and inns built to receive for passers-by and commuters on isolated and uninhabited roads. The interest in building caravanserais indicates the civility of the Islamic religion and its care for the conditions of travelers and wayfarers, the latter is considered one of the recipients of zakat funds, which was paid to take care of him, his food, his drink, and his residence. After the spread of the caravanserais along the roads of the Islamic cities, it became known as the guest house, where students of knowledge and merchants were among its most important visitors. The Islamic State, as well as the wealthy people, have been interested in building these hotels, which developed into receiving the Caliphs during their travels. It was not only concentrated in major cities, but spread to the rest of the regions, where the number of them was counted in the city of Isfahan, 1600 hotels in the year 1084 AH (Al-Sergani, 2009, pp. 586-592).

It was also distinguished by the presence of special sections for the preservation of money and private property, and food was provided free of charge to Muslims and non-Muslims. Andalusia was famous for its many hotels during the Umayyad dynasty, due to its large number of visitors, knowing that the hotel which deviated from public morals was demolished. Also, during the era of the Mamluk state in Egypt, the establishment of hotels and inns spread widely, some of which were dedicated to specific communities or professions.

II.4. Features of Islamic hotels:

Islamic hotels are distinguished from others by several features, including:

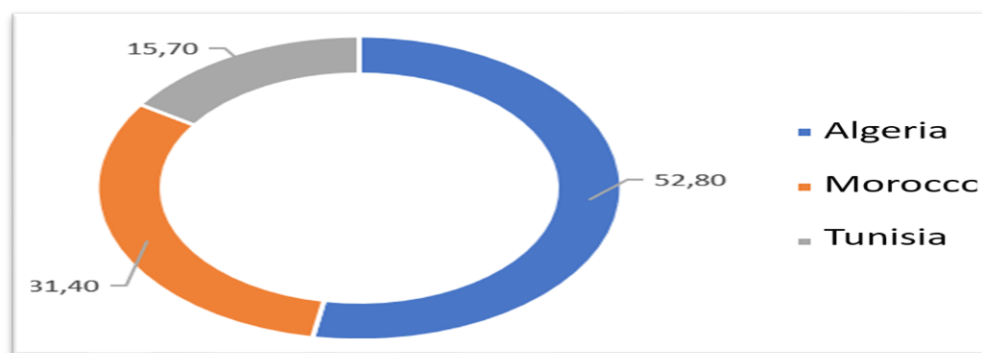
- Respect Muslim family customs and relationships
- Absence of alcoholic beverages and smoking.
- Providing halal food
- Existence of a Shariah Supervisory Committee.
- Financial transactions according to Islamic rules.
- Free from nightclubs and all aspects of promiscuity. (SESRIC, 2017, p. 30).

III. Research Method And Data Collection Setting:

III.1. Sample and procedures:

Data for this study were collected from individuals who have booked a hotel or wish to do so in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. Considering that most of the population of the three countries are Muslims and they have a demand for halal tourism in these countries. The sample of this exploratory study consisted of 1018 individuals who requested hotel services and who wished for halal tourism. The following figure shows the distribution of this sample by country:

Fig.1. Sample breakdown by country



The source: Prepared by authors

An online questionnaire was used to collect data from the study sample during the period from April to August 2019, in two phases as follows:

Phase 1: It included 210 individuals requesting tourism services in the three countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).191 questionnaires were retrieved, to identify the most important characteristics that are interested in hotel visitors. By answering the following question: As you are interested in halal tourism, what are the features that interest you most in hotel services?

We point out here that the proper identification of features and levels is undoubtedly the most important and decisive aspect in designing a good conjoint analysis survey tool conjoint analysis. A feature is a service characteristic consisting of various levels (there must be at least two for each attribute) (Orme, 2010, pp. 51-55). The features must be important and distinctive to the service (Guillot-Soulez & Soulez, 2022, p. 5). It is generally recommended that the number of levels be balanced for each feature, to avoid that individuals give more weight to feature with more levels than others. The allowed number of levels should not exceed 2 or 3, to be realistic and informative (Biesma, 2007, p. 238). Once the attributes and levels are selected, we can generate a default preference set for evaluation by respondents (Rao, 2014, p. 44).

Phase 2: It included 1018 individuals who are interested in halal tourism. A questionnaire built upon the characteristics collected in the first phase was distributed to the simple, where respondents select a set of scenarios according to their preferences. the Fractional factorial design was used with “Orthoplan” procedure on SPSS to reduce the number of possible formations to a controllable level, this method helps to ensure that there is no multicollinearity between the features, and it helped reduce the number of possible formations from 104976 to 27.

III.2. Data Analytic Strategies :

Using SPSS.V21, this research adopted an appropriate statistical technique to analyze the respondents' answers. The technique is called Conjoint Analysis, it is used to understand how customers Evaluate different features of the products or services. through a two-steps survey, the consumers are asked to rank the importance of the specific features in question. Analyzing the results allows to then assign a value to each one, as we shall see later.

IV. Results And Discussion :

IV.1. Conjoint analysis:

Conjoint analysis is one of the most celebrated research tools in marketing and consumer research. This methodology which enables understanding consumer preferences1 has been applied to help solve a wide variety of marketing problems including estimating product demand, designing a new product line and calibrating price sensitivity/elasticity (Agarwal, DeSarbo, Malhotra, & Rao, 2015, p. 19). As noted earlier, conjoint analysis is as a survey-based advanced market research analysis technique that tries to comprehend how individuals make complex choices. Since this technique requires the preparation of two questionnaires, we distributed an initial questionnaire, which included the following question: “As you are interested in halal tourism, what are the features that interest you most in hotel services?” this to determine the most important customers’ preferences in Islamic hotels. After collecting the respondents’ answers, we obtained the most important features preferred by potential customers of Islamic hotels, which numbered 12 variables that characterize the Islamic hotel. We recall here that the study focused on the variables of Islamic hotels only, without addressing the basic international hotels’ standards. The twelve variables are located at different levels according to the importance of the respondents, as shown in the following table:

Table 1: variables level

Variables	prayer places	food μμ & drinks	brochures	medical services	beauty services	female workers' uniforms	Trips organization	Financial transactions	broadcast programs	sports halls & swimming pools	Qiblah	prayer places
Level	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2

Source: Prepared by authors based on SPSS.21 outputs

The table above shows the possibilities of providing halal hotel services to the customer according to the compensating model that considers the service as a whole, that is, a decrease in the level of one or more variables can be compensated by a greater level with other variables. The respondents were asked to rank the Scenarios or combinations from most preferred (1) to least preferred (27) (see Appendice No. 01), the retrieved data were processed according to the SPSS.V21 program.

IV.2. Model validation requirements:

To ensure correct results, conditions must be met that confirm the validity of the model, which are the Pearson and Kendall tests, as shown in the following table:

Table 2: model validation requirements

	Value	sig
Pearson correlation	,966	,000
Kendall's correlation	,795	,000

Source: Prepared by authors based on SPSS.21 outputs

Both Pearson's coefficient and Kendall's coefficient indicate a strong and statistically significant correlation, with their values being 0.96 and 0.795, respectively. This confirms the validity of the study model, and it is possible to analyze the results through what is known as the total analysis.

IV.3. Total analysis and discussion:

The total preferences of the sample members are presented as shown in the table in appendice No. 2, which shows the benefit of each variable (attribute) for each level. These results enable us to determine the level that has the greatest benefit and therefore the most demanded by the respondents. The sample's preferences were as follows: providing the Qur'an in the prayer room or reception, that the hotel be close to the mosque, that the direction of the qiblah be announced at the reception, or that it be indicated in the room, but with a lower level of importance, Availability of halal food and drinks only in the hotel, the presence of information brochures in the hotel for all halal and non-halal tourist areas, the provision of medical services for both sexes, the provision of halal cosmetics in the hotel's beauty halls, the dress and appearance of female workers with a headscarf or a modest appearance to a similar degree, Providing a private driver to accompany instead of organizing trips by the hotel, the hotel deals with banks and Islamic financial institutions only, broadcasting committed programs, providing places designated for women, but it is preferable to provide more places for the family.

As is known, the joint analysis depends on the compensatory model, that is, the decrease in the level of one variable is compensated by the rise in the level of another variable, which suggests that there are varying levels of the variables' importance, which is shown in the following table:

Table 3: variables importance value

Variables	prayer places	food & drinks	brochures	medical services	beauty services	female workers' uniforms	Trips organization	Financial transactions	broadcast programs	sports halls & swimming pools	Qiblah	prayer places
Importance	3,68	12,2	17,59	11,14	9,324	2,38	11,596	7,222	7,161	4,397	7,42	5,889

Source: Prepared by authors based on SPSS.21 outputs

The model gives the medium importance of each variable. The variables of great importance must be taken into consideration when providing the hotel services, and we note that the study sample gives food and drinks the first importance to a far greater degree than the rest of the features, then in order: prayer places; brochures; female workers uniforms; medical services; trips organization; sports halls & swimming pools; financial transactions. Followed by variables of relatively weak importance: Qiblah; broadcast programs; Qur'an availability; and beauty services, these services can be provided without the need for hotel services, for example, the direction of the qiblah can be determined through mobile applications.

Overall, the results show the existence of varying importance for the components of hotel service for committed hotels, some of them of high importance and others of low importance, and therefore we accept the first hypothesis. As for the second hypothesis, it is acceptable for the positive values of utility for each level and rejected for the negative values.

V. CONCLUSION:

All indicators confirm that halal or committed tourism is one of the promising economic sectors that calls for attention to it economically and socially, and at the forefront of this interest is the design of hotel services in line with the desires and needs of seekers of halal tourism, represented in entertainment and luxury with a commitment to Sharia regulations, starting from the hotels site, the multiplicity of Room options and cleanliness up to modern international standards, foremost of which are smart rooms, with a focus on the distinguishing factors of these hotels, which are the legal controls of halal eating, providing the elements of worship such as places designated for that, the Qur'an and others. As the good design of any service, including the

hotel service, must be accepted by the target customer group to achieve their loyalty and to achieve the goals set by the hotel establishment, which can only be achieved by listening to the aspirations of the customer.

Considering the study results, we recommend the following:

- Taking good care of understanding the customer and his desires and working to meet them creatively.

Halal tourism is concerned with several economic aspects, as it is one of the fast-growing sectors and socially Islamic countries are more concerned than others with providing this service to their citizens.

- Forming committees to monitor the Shariah over the work of hotels of this type so that the profitable commercial aspect does not overshadow the legal aspect required for this service.

- Demanding that the standards of these hotel establishments be taken into international classifications and not be deprived of that as a result of not providing a set of service elements that do not comply with Islamic Sharia.

- Work to standardize halal products and services of all kinds.

- Intensifying efforts to promote Islamic hotels and expand their networks.

- Appendices:

Appendice 1. Study scenarios requirements

Features Scenarios	Qu' ran	Prayer Places	Food & Drinks	Brochures	Medical Services	Beauty Services	Female Workers Uniforms	Trips Organization	Financial Transactions	Broadcast Programs	Sports Halls & Swimming Pools	Qiblah
1	Q1	P1	F2	B1	M2	E1	U1	T1	R1	C1	S3	I3
2	Q2	P2	F2	B1	M1	E2	U3	T1	R1	C1	N	N
3	N	N	N	B1	M2	E1	U3	N	R1	C2	N	I3
4	Q2	P2	F1	B1	M2	E1	N	T2	N	C1	S2	I3
5	Q2	N	F1	N	M1	E1	U1	T1	R1	C1	S2	I2
6	Q1	P2	F1	N	M2	E1	N	T1	R1	C2	N	N
7	Q1	N	N	B2	M2	E2	U3	T1	N	C1	S2	I2
8	N	P2	F2	B2	M1	E1	U3	T2	R1	C1	S2	I3
9	Q1	P2	F2	N	M1	E1	U3	N	N	C2	S3	I2
10	Q1	P1	F1	B1	M2	E1	U3	T2	N	C1	N	I2
11	Q1	P1	N	B1	M1	E2	N	N	R1	C1	S2	N
12	N	P2	F1	B2	M2	E2	N	N	R1	C1	S3	I2
13	N	P2	N	B2	M2	E1	U1	T1	N	C1	N	N
14	Q2	N	N	N	M2	E1	U3	T2	R1	C1	S3	N
15	N	P1	F2	N	M2	E1	U1	N	N	C1	S2	N
16	Q2	P1	F1	B2	M2	E1	U3	N	R1	C2	S2	N
17	Q1	N	F2	B2	M2	E1	N	T2	R1	C1	S3	N
18	Q1	N	F1	B2	M1	E1	U1	N	R1	C1	N	I3
19	N	P1	F1	N	M2	E2	U3	T1	R1	C1	S3	I3
20	Q1	P2	N	N	M2	E2	U1	T2	R1	C2	S2	I3

21	Q2	N	F2	N	M2	E2	N	N	N	C1	N	I3
22	N	N	F2	B1	M2	E1	N	T1	R1	C2	S2	I2
23	Q2	P1	N	B2	M1	E1	N	T1	N	C2	S3	I3
24	N	N	F1	B1	M1	E2	U1	T2	N	C2	S3	N
25	Q2	P1	F2	B2	M2	E2	U1	T2	R1	C2	N	I2
26	Q2	P2	N	B1	M2	E1	U1	N	R1	C1	S3	I2
27	N	P1	N	N	M1	E1	N	T2	R1	C1	N	I2

Source: Prepared by authors based on SPSS.21 outputs

Appendice 2. Estimated utility for model variables

Features (Variables)	Code	Phrases	Estimated utility	standard error
Qu'ran	Q1	Availability of a Quran in the hotel room	,731	,892
	Q2	Availability of a Quran in the prayer hall or reception	1,098	,892
	N	Doesn't matter	-1,829	,892
prayer places	P1	The presence of a mosque near the hotel	2,745	,892
	P2	The presence of a prayer room in the hotel	-,289	,892
	N	Doesn't matter	-2,456	,892
food & drinks	F1	Providing all kinds of food and drink	2,064	,892
	F2	Provide halal food and drink only	3,024	,892
	N	Doesn't matter	-5,088	,892
brochures	B1	Information brochures for halal tourist areas	,962	,892
	B2	Information brochures for all tourist areas	1,538	,892
	N	Doesn't matter	-2,501	,892
medical services	M1	Just providing medical services	-,784	,669
	M2	Providing medical services for both sexes	,784	,669
beauty services	E1	Use only halal cosmetics	,291	,669
	E2	Use of all products	-,291	,669
female workers uniforms	U1	Decent	1,284	,892
	N	Doesn't matter	-3,163	,892
	U3	Veiled	1,879	,892
Trips organization	T1	Organize committed trips	-,840	,892
	T2	Provide a driver to accompany	,984	,892
	T3	Organize committed trips	-,144	,892
Financial transactions	R1	Islamic Finance only	1,701	,669
	N	Doesn't matter	-1,701	,669
broadcast programs	C1	Broadcasting committed programmes	,503	,669
	C2	Broadcast all programs	-,503	,669
sports halls & swimming pools	N	Doesn't matter	-1,610	,892
	S2	Allocate places for families	1,012	,892
	S3	Allocate places for women	,598	,892
Qiblah	N	Doesn't matter	-1,111	,892
	I2	Specify the direction of the qiblah in the room	,415	,892
	I3	Announcing the direction of the qiblah at the reception	,696	,892
constant			13,429	,773

Source: Prepared by authors based on SPSS.21 outputs

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