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FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS' CHOICE OF UMRAH SERVICE PROVIDER

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ABSTRACT

Hajj and Umrah are both Islamic pilgrimages. Performing Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is obligatory for every Muslim once in their lifetime and performed over specific days during a designated Islamic month. However, Umrah can be performed at any time. Although they share common rites, Umrah can be performed in less than a few hours while Hajj is more time consuming and involves more rituals. It is Sunnah al-Mu`akkadah (emphasised Sunnah) to perform Umrah at least once in a person's life. Due to the long queue to get a place to perform hajj, more Muslims choose to perform Umrah. This phenomenon has increased the number of Umrah service providers and packages. This study examined whether service quality, company, image and price influence customers' purchase intention of Umrah service package. Owing to the highly competitive environment, it is essential for the Umrah service operators to obtain information concerning customers' patronage factors towards a specific travel and tours agency. Umrah service providers must also know the degree to which various product or service characteristics are important and how these factors influence customers' choice of their Umrah travel agent. In this study, the sample comprised of 100 customers of Suffah Travel & Tours Sdn Bhd. Data were obtained through self-administered questionnaire distributed to the respondents. The findings indicated a significant positive relationship between all the independent variables with purchase intention. The findings in this study provided some useful and pertinent information for Umrah service providers in formulating their marketing strategies

Keywords :Umrah, Purchase intention, Service quality, Price, Company image