



e-ISSN: 2319-8753 | p-ISSN: 2320-6710

IJRSET

International Journal of Innovative Research in
SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

IN SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

Volume 10, Issue 3, March 2021

ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

Impact Factor: 7.512

9940 572 462

6381 907 438

ijirset@gmail.com

www.ijirset.com



Model Designing of Big Data for Gradation of Hajj Private Tour Operators (PTOs) (A case study of Hajj Pilgrims traveling from India and South Africa)

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ABSTRACT: Private tour organizations (PTOs) for Hajj are the Billion dollar Business industry all over world and hundreds of thousand pilgrims are performing Hajj through these private tours. Pilgrims in India are performing Hajj by two ways i) Through Hajj Committee of India and ii) Through Private Tours. In South Africa pilgrim perform Hajj through Privates Tours only.

There are over 330 packages for Hajj from operators in South Africa and total number of registered Hajj Private Tour Operators are 18 as compare to 725 operators registered with "All India Hajj Umrah Tour Organizers Association (AIHUTOA)" and Ministry of Minority Affairs(MOMA), India. The number changes every year as per the criteria of the Indian Government.

Customer fulfillment (CF) is one of the most important criteria for business performance. CF contributes to the customer loyalty, which in turn helps improving performance of the organization. In order to survive in the operation and business with intense competition between enterprises, the focus of CF is important to ensure business excellence. Our study is to find out the performance of each PTO, based on their performance the gradation has to be accredited. Based on gradation the operators should charge Money from the pilgrims.

KEYWORDS:- Customer Fulfillment, Hajj, Private Tour Operators(PTOs), Gradation, Accreditation,

I. INTRODUCTION

“Customer perception toward all dimensions of services have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. The present study enables the understanding of consumer behavioral features, especially in term of customer fulfillment in Hajj services, particularly in India and South Africa and the overall Hajj industry”. “The private sector plays a pivotal role in a country’s economy specifically in India and South Africa and part of this sector services is the Hajj services it is important for commercial activities and contributes to the quality of life. In short, it implies that the role of Hajj services is regarded as a basic need of life”.

Thus, it is imperative to fulfill the requirements and expectations of customers in multifarious backgrounds. This study is an initial effort in investigating the satisfaction of Hajj customers in India and South Africa.

Hajj is the oldest Muslim pilgrimage. It is the fifth pillar in Islam and it is compulsory for all Muslims who are financially wealthy people. Recently, the experience of Hajj has changed from a purely religious focus to providing one emphasising comfort and satisfaction. In the past, Hajj travelling having limited transportation, infrastructure, and accommodation and it took months travel to Mecca. However, today’s technology makes travelling for Hajj from anywhere in the world simple and easy. In India, there are two Hajj travel packages being offered to pilgrims: Hajj committee of India and Private Tour Operators(PTOs). The difference between these is the cost and services provided. Both packages, however, seek to provide satisfactory experiences including travelling by premium airlines and staying in five-star hotels. This change in focus is reflected in the literature where Hajj fulfillment is the key focus of attention rather than the outcome of the pilgrimage itself. The aim of this paper is to highlight areas for research in the modern Hajj by providing a framework for examining the differences of psychological outcome between regular Hajj and Hajj plus.

As far as the South Africa PTO are concerned the cheapest Hajj package starts at R34900, and the most expensive is R109000. Where as for Indian pilgrims the hajj package depends on the category and number of day stay. Total number of pilgrims through private tour operators is 3500.

Indian Government allowed increased quota of pilgrims from 45000(2018) to 50000(2019-2023). There are three categories of services.

The first category ECONOMY – SHIFTING. A pocket friendly option Rs 395,000 onwards per Person. 40-45 Days. Aziziya Stay [14 Nights shifting]. Second category DELUXE - SHIFTING. A comfortable option Rs 525,000 onwards per Person. 33-35 Days. Third Category - SHIFTING - 30 Days. Special Tents Included Rs 600,000 onwards per Person. 30 Days.

Quality Improvement programme (QMP) is one of the most important programme in ensuring an organisation continuously improves their business performance. In order to continuously improve in the service and operation, the adoption of QMP is necessary to ensure business excellence. Most previous works have given less emphasis on mediator effect of customer fulfillment (CF) between QMP and communication behavior (CB) amongst Indian and South Africa Hajj pilgrims.

PTO gradation system is used to examine the performance of PTO to promote the efficient use of resources. Pilgrim-perceived service quality may differ for differing grades of PTO under gradation system, which has been rarely reported. The aim of the my study is to explore the relation between the PTO gradation system and pilgrims perceptions.

We design a gradation system that integrates classification with accreditation to promote efficient PTO services. PTOs are classified and divided into four grades based on the level of services provision and size of care providers: medical centers, regional hospitals, area hospitals, and basic-level institutions. PTOs other than government organization are required accreditation to provide quality service to obtain customer fulfillment. There are many fraud cases found in India.

South Africa

11 Hajj tour operators probed in scam

Up to 1 000 Cape Muslims have lost around R33 million in the Mecca rip-off.

Imam Pandey – from Al Anwar operators – flew to Mecca on Thursday, leaving behind a trail of angry pilgrims and unanswered questions. It is alleged Al Anwar wrongfully obtained visas from a neighbouring state and sold them off at R3 000 each to unsuspecting South African pilgrims. (New24 Oct 14, 2011).

Beware Hajj, Umrah fraud 29 Aug 2017

“Our money was not stolen. It was our dreams that were stolen.”

These are the emotional words of elderly guests attending a discussion on Hajj and Umrah fraud. The event which took place at the Lounge on Kromboom in Rondebosch East on Monday saw locals from across the Mother City speak out during a pre-recording session set to air on DeenTV this week. A fraud victim from Crawford, Anwar Mohan, says his family was set and ready to leave for their annual Umrah pilgrimage in December 2014, but were left in shock and disappointment on the day of departure. (News24, 29 Aug 2017)

Hajj, Umrah fraud continues

Hajj and Umrah fraud continues to increase among Muslim pilgrims in Cape Town. People’s Post touched on the issue last year when locals took to the media to expose fraudulent travel operators (“Beware Hajj, Umrah fraud”, People’s Post, 29 August).

Pilgrims expressed their anger towards a travel operator from Gaironisaa Foundation, during a panel discussion recorded for Deen Channel. This travel operator has been making headlines in the media for Hajj and Umrah fraud since 2013. (News24, 16 Jan 2018)

India

Mumbai: Tour operator dupes 500 Haj pilgrims of Rs 15 crore (Jul 26, 2019)

Over 500 Haj pilgrims have collectively lost around Rs 15 crore to a fraud executed by a tour operator in the city. Proprietors of Shuklaji Steet-based travel agency Alfa Enterprises have not been traceable since July 8. Several victims filed complaints at DB Marg and Nagpada police station.



Travel agency accused of duping Haj pilgrims: (Feb 11, 2020)

A 41-year-old businessman from R.T. Nagar has filed a cheating complaint against a Mumbai-based travel agency for allegedly duping him and 50 of his relatives of ₹1.2 crore after promising them a Haj trip in January last year(2019).(Times of India Jul 26, 2019).

Haj fraud: Travel firm owner held for duping aspirants

The J&K Police has arrested the owner of Al-Hajeej Tour and Travels - the main accused of swindling crore of rupees by duping Haj aspirants in 2011 and 2012. . (The Tribune Srinagar, May 6 2016)

Wanted Hajj tour operator (Person Name) in fraud case

A reward of Rs 50 lacks has been announced by a victim of alleged cheating and fraud by Shahnawaz Shah. Shahnawaz Shah used to act as a Hajj and Umrah tour operator and used to work from Nizamuddin Basti in Delhi. A reward of Rs 50 lacks has been announced by a victim of alleged cheating and fraud by (Person Name). He used to act as a Hajj and Umrah tour operator and used to work from Nizamuddin Basti in Delhi. He reportedly belonged to Kashmir.(The Milli Gazette Online 14 Apr 2015)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Star Rating is a system that provides an assessment of the standards of quality, provision of facilities and hospitality. The star system is the most universally recognised method of grading and reporting the attained quality level of a hotel (Callen, 1993; Cser & Ohuchi, 2008). According to Qi and Qiang (2013), star rating has similar effects on pricing as electronic word-of-mouth because it is an indicator of quality and a measurement of the level of facilities and service standards. However, star rating is different from brand recognition and reputation. Hotels with higher star ranking are usually higher priced, and consumers have to evaluate the trade-off between benefits and costs. Besides this, there are hotels with lower star ratings that have a good reputation and brand recognition. Furthermore, Qi and Qiang (2013) suggested that since consumers have less information about hotels with lower star ratings, electronic word-of-mouth is more influential.

In some earlier studies, the definition of service quality applies to the extent to which service fulfils the needs or expectations of the customer (Lewis & Mitchell, 1990). Service quality can be divided into three categories; interaction service quality, environmental service quality, and outcome service quality.

Interaction Service Quality Interaction service quality refers to the interpersonal interface between the service provider and customer that takes place during service delivery (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Interaction service quality is measured according to Expertise (Brady & Cronin, 2001) and Problem-solving ability (Dabholkar, Thorpe, & Rentz, 1996).

Expertise - Expertise can be referred to as the degree to which the interaction is affected by the employees' task-oriented skills (Crosby, Evans & Cowles, 1990; Leblanc, 1992). As long as somebody has the academic certificate of high school, or above and is of good health, he or she can become a tour guide. There exists both trained and untrained personnel engaged in the tour guide business with varying levels of travel knowledge, professional skills and self-control (Hu & Ren, 2011).

Problem Solving - Problem-solving ability focuses on the ability of the employee to handle patrons' problems and complaints (Dabholkar et al., 1996; Mohi, 1994). It is important for a pilgrimage travel guide or Mutawwif to have problem-solving skills, especially when providing Umrah services. Wu and Mohi, (2015) stated that customers are quite sensitive to how service providers deal with their problems and complaints. Travel agencies should strengthen communication with tourists, correctly treat complaints and adopt a positive especially for first-time pilgrims performing Umrah.

attitude when solving disputes, where they should not blindly shirk responsibility (Hu & Ren, 2011).

Environmental Service Quality Analysis of Environmental Service Quality has specifically examined a range of influences on customer behaviour since the early 1970s (Kotler, 1973). In this study, environmental service quality is measured by examining factors such as: Websites, Airlines, Atmosphere, Food, Location, Hotel and Transportation (Chan & Wong, 2006; Gavilan, Avello & Martinez-Navarro, 2018; Wu & Ko, 2013; Wu & Cheng, 2013).

Websites - One of the main ways in which a booking website differs from a brochure is that a website can provide evaluative and descriptive information from peers' experiences (Gavilan et al., 2018). Consequently, numerous managers believe that a website needs to provide community content and thereby, firms can proactively induce their consumers to rate and spread word about their products or service experiences online (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004).



Location - Location is consistently identified as the primary criterion in initial hotel selection (Chan & Wong, 2006). The location chosen for this study was Mecca, Saudi Arabia, as this is where Muslims perform their pilgrimage. Chou, Hsu & Chen (2008) state that the selection of a facility's location is important because it is a decision that normally involves a long-term commitment of resources.

Airlines - Park, Robertson & Wu, (2004) suggest that delivering high-quality service to passengers is essential for an airline's survival. Umrah operators are expected to have good business relationships with airline companies. When Umrah operators and airline companies provide satisfactory service to their customers, they will receive positive feedback. According to Park et al. (2004), understanding what consumers expect from a service organisation is important because expectations provide a standard of comparison against which consumers judge an organisation's performance.

Hotel - According to Rauch, Collins, Nale & Barr, (2015), clean rooms, comfortable beds, a quiet stay, safety and security, and location are the most important attributes when utilising a measurement tool that influences customers to rate the quality of a hotel. When consumers are satisfied with the hotel, they will rate the hotel well for its high quality. According to the findings of the Amran Harun, Aini Khalida Muslim, Dzunnur Dzail, Bestoon Abdulmaged Othman (2020) the study confirmed that the top five star rating factors identified by the Umrah operators and Umrah consumers were the mutawwif's expertise, the hotel, problem-solving, valence, and airlines.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This paper aims to answer the following research questions:

Benefit to the Government

They can perform extensive analysis of stored data to provide Gradation to the PTOs and answers to the exhaustive queries to the Pilgrims performing through PTOs. This helps them to formulate more effective strategies and policies for Pilgrims facilitation.

Benefit to the pilgrims

They are the ultimate beneficiaries of the new policies formulated by the Government. They can view frequently asked queries whose results will already be there in the database and will be immediately exhibited to the user saving the time required for processing. They can see the gradation of PTOs and accordingly registered their names based on performance from anywhere.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The respondents for this study were professionals private operators and users of their services who have performed Hajj at least once. The marketing department was selected since it is regarded as a reliable group to measure the effectiveness of a star rating.

The demographic profiles of the private operator respondents were collected from interviews and online questionnaires. The demographic profile consisted of several items such as gender, marital status, age, level of education, position and monthly income.

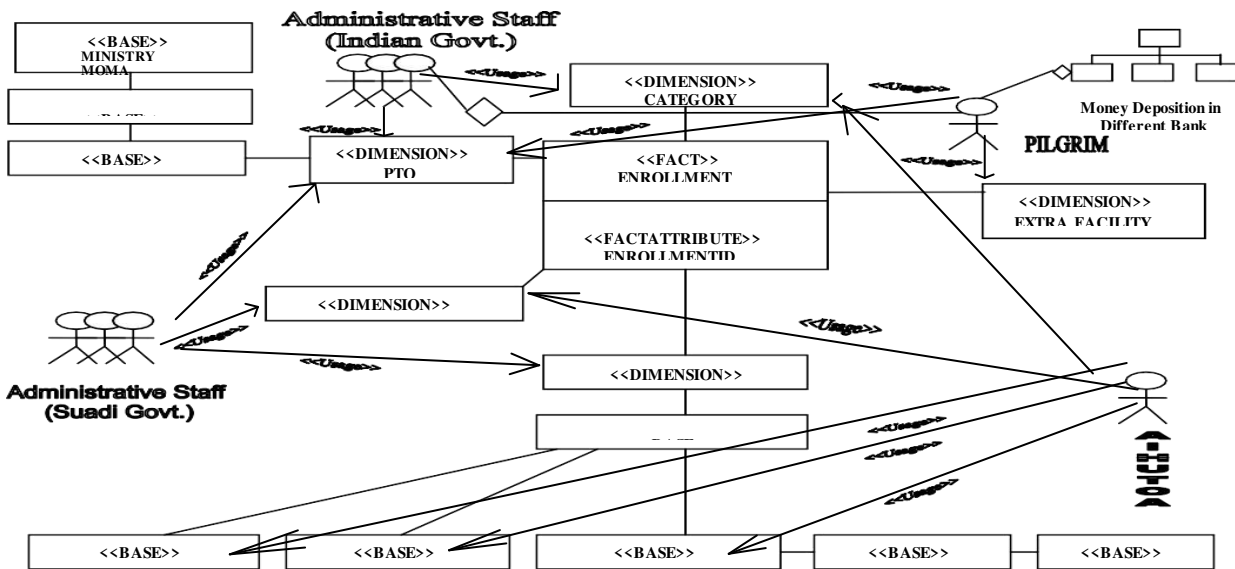


Fig.1 Model Design for Big data of Hajj pilgrims.

We illustrate the use of the UML Profile for Modeling Big Data with an example (Fig.1) It also useful in a later stage of the Big Data design process may serve as rough input. Diagrams like this make it possible to identify preliminary groups of users, based on their data needs.

V. CONCLUSION

Views of PTO Operators

Implementation of a Gradation System

Gradation was measured in three ways:

- 1) Implementation of the gradation system,
- 2) Gradation factors and
- 3) Weighing the gradation factors

Views of Pilgrims

The demographic profiles of pilgrims were obtained from the hard copy and online questionnaires given to the targeted respondents. The profile for this study consists of several items, including the following: gender, marital status, age, highest education level, monthly income, factors influencing selection of travel agency, number of times Hajj has been performed, most recent year Hajj was performed.

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