

# Chapter 15

## Meeting Customer Expectations in Islamic Tourism: Effects of Islamic Business Ethics

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### ABSTRACT

*Changing consumer behaviour and increasing consumer demands in many contemporary markets have affected the Muslim world as well. The ever-increasing Muslim population has become more affluent and more demanding with the rise of modernization, especially after the 1980s. Contemporary Muslims' increased demands for better recreation and vocation facilities necessitated the birth of a new sector is referred to as Islamic tourism in this chapter. Increase in the market penetration of Islamic tourism has brought about new anxieties regarding ethical issues in this newly emerging industry. In this chapter, Islamic tourism has been considered as an alternative tourism approach. It creates a niche market for Muslim tourist with religious sensitivities and Islamic tourism and ethics in this unique sector has been handled in detail.*

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism has a magical potential for generating revenue owing to the fact that it is a quick-growing sector and has broad economic, social, cultural and environmental consequences (Giaoutzi and Peter Nijkamp 2006). Worldwide, we can talk about an ever increasing geographic and psychological spread and diversification of touristic activities (Donyadide 2010). More and more people benefit from a widely diversified set of tourism products. Moreover, it has become a highly competitive industry making pressure on tourism professionals to differentiate their products in order to reach higher levels of profitability and increase their revenue (Donyadide 2010). That is why many countries display an inclination towards encouraging this unique industry wherein entrepreneurs can earn maximum output with the least possible R&D and technological investments.

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Nowadays, continuous innovation and the ability to improve existing products, services and business processes have become very important to catch up with the latest developments (Baykal, 2019b). In this context, innovation should be conceived as the competency of modern organizations in developing novel ideas and products, with the aim of gaining new and advantageous positions in the market or strengthening their existing positions in their current markets. In an organizational sense, innovation can be regarded as a useful and challenging production of organizations with an innovation that has never been done before (Baykal 2019). In this point, halal tourism or in other words Islamic tourism can be considered as a new product of Muslim market including myriad tangible products and services with increasing number of tourists. In fact, global halal tourism market can be viewed as one of the most growing industries (Albayrak and Özkul 2014). It is a tourism type that is in alignment with Islamic principles (Tekin 2014). In halal tourism a holistic approach is embraced encompassing halal food, halal recreation, and even halal finance.

Actually, tourism encompasses all kinds of visits including travelling leisure, business and other purposes. Similarly, Islamic tourism can be explained as all kind of activities of Muslims that can be observed while travelling and staying in places apart from their usual environment that are mostly originating from or shaped by Islamic motivations and sensitivities. Before the development of Islamic tourism, many sensitive Muslims had difficulty in meeting their holiday needs and had to give up their holiday demands. However, with the development of Islamic tourism, many people with a high level of Islamic sensitivity began to take a comfortable holiday, but the emergence of this form of tourism has brought with it many ethical issues that need to be addressed.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Islamic Tourism**

The increase in the welfare levels of Islamic countries and educational levels, and communication alternatives along with globalization increased the worldly expectations of Muslims. Among all these factors, actually, the most important factor affecting Muslims' changing demands is the increase in the income level of Muslims (Zulkharnain and Jamal 2012). Similarly, ascending religious sensitivity and the tendency to lead a more contemporary version of Islam paved the way for the demand for halal products and halal- concept hospitality. Halal-concept hospitality is another example of customer-oriented marketing in the tourism sector (Pamukçu and Armacı 2016). Since Islam is the second most believed religion in the world after Christianity (23% of the world's population) It is unthinkable that tourism enterprises ignore this market segment in their marketing activities. For this reason, most businesses design their existing businesses to serve such customers at the same time (Pamukçu and Armacı 2016). The enterprises that can serve in the concept of Islamic tourism are those which can be operated on the basis of Islamic principles from the above mentioned enterprises in terms of product-service content and presentation concepts. In other words, all businesses whose products, services and presentation concepts are in compliance with Islamic principles can be addressed to the tourist market (Pamukçu and Armacı 2016). Their target market are those people who wants to entertain and relax without committing any kind of sin that is prohibited in Islamic religion.

In Islamic tradition halal is a unique term that not only limited with the food but also affects many other aspects of Muslims' daily life (Alserhan 2010). The term halal refers to all kind of acts and objects

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