



Does quality of service, atmospheric factor influenced satisfaction pilgrim? A study on the muslim pilgrimage to Mecca

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Abstract

In a world more and more interested in religious and spiritual tourism we will present. This article deals with an original theme. This is about marketing. Spiritual and its impact on Muslim pilgrims, We discuss the impact of atmospheric factors and the quality of services on the satisfaction of Pilgrims

Keywords: pilgrim; satisfaction, quality of service; atmospheric factors

Introduction

With the development of marketing techniques, the role of quality of service has become paramount in the process of consumer satisfaction; companies are looking for more and more customer loyalty in order to make more profits. In a religious and spiritual context like the context of Muslim pilgrimage atmospheric factors are important in the process of consumer behavior analysis.

In this research work we will present the relationship between satisfaction as a phenomenon worthy of analysis in a context of religious tourism; and the variables that may explain this phenomenon are the explanatory variables (quality of service and atmospheric factors).

We will first present the literature review of the concepts studied, then we will present our research method and our research model adopted, and finally we will present the discussion of the results of our quantitative study

The religious tourism sector is a promising sector; according to data published by the Minister of HAJJ in Saudi Arabia; more than two million pilgrims visit Mecca during the Hajj Season; and 800,000 visitors during the small pilgrimage (the holy month of Ramadan) and according to the vision of 2030 the authorities in the country have the objective of arriving at a number of 5 million pilgrims during the Hajj period in 2030.

The objective of our research is to answer the following main question:

To what extent can the quality of services and atmospheric factors influence the satisfaction of Muslim pilgrims?

To answer this question, we will present the different variables that make up our research model.

2. quality of service

The quality of service is an important factor and a main strategy for creating lasting relationships between the company and its customers. According to (. Parasuraman and alii, 1985) « The quality of the service represents an abstract

and diffuse construct whose conceptualization and measurement do not seem to be obvious ». In the absence of objective measures, it seems appropriate to assess the quality of service by measuring consumers' perceptions of this quality. The perceived quality of a service can be defined as "a global judgment concerning the superiority of the service" »

Based on literature we can present several conceptual models explaining the assessment made by the consumer of the quality of the service.

These models can be divided into two types: the first model which is concerned with the characteristics of the service; and, a second, which analyzes the structure of the service

2.1 Service quality approaches

We can distinguish the following approaches:

- the first approach, the approach of W. Sasser and Alii (1978) we can classify services into three elements:
- the tangible elements of the service (equipment, food, etc.);
- the explicit intangible products that the consumer can perceive thanks to his five senses (light, background music, etc.);
- implicit intangibles that provide psychological benefits to the customer (being seen in a trendy restaurant, etc.);
- The second approach of C. Grönroos (1984) allows three dimensions of perceived quality to be distilled:
- technical quality, called "Technical quality of the outcome": it refers to what is delivered to the customer or the content of the service offer.
- functional quality, called "functional quality of the process": it constitutes the way in which the service was provided.
- the image of the company: This is the brand image and service as it is evaluated by the consumer.
- the third approach proposed by P. d'Eiglier and E. Langedard (1987) indicates that "the quality of service

must be perceived by focusing on three factors, namely:

- basic quality of service (ability to meet customer needs)
- mentions of servuction (elements associated with personal support and physical contact)
- the process itself (variables associated with the interactions between the provider and its client) "

2.2 The characteristics of the service

We can present the quality of service by a set of service characteristics and appreciation criteria relevant to the client. In this perspective, we can distinguish, essentially, the research of A. Parasuraman, L. Berry and V. Zeithaml (1985) who proposed a model presenting the quality of service as the difference between expectations and perceptions in service.

We find that, the scale suggested by (P. Asubonteng *et alii*, 1996).

was made up of ten attributes of service quality: "tangible elements, reliability, helpfulness, communication, credibility, security, competence, courtesy, understanding / knowledge of the consumer and accessibility"

In the 1990s, the authors (P. Asubonteng *et alii*, 1996). have successfully developed the SERVQUAL model (V. Zeithaml *et alii*, 1990). This model is based on five dimensions, namely: tangible elements, reliability, helpfulness, confidence and empathy.

Indeed, nowadays online and offline shopping environments represent new experiences.

The foundations of the quality of service provided by A. Parasuraman *et alii* (1985) were developed according to a traditional theory of service experience.

They do not take into account the role played by technology and mainly emphasize the importance of the interpersonal relationship between the consumer and the producer.

We note that with the development of online sales techniques the exchange has come, particularly automated, and has more legal uncertainties and opportunities for mystification or excess according to (G. Bressolles, 2004).

Researchers have distinguished between the perception of the quality of a traditional service for offline products and services and that relating to the consumption of an electronic service.

In this perspective, the authors. Zeithaml, A. Parasuraman and A. Malhotra (2002) have tried to define electronic service quality by presenting it as "the degree to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivery of products or services".

For Bressolles (2004). Identifies four dimensions of quality of service in an e-commerce context; to know:

- the first dimension, quantity and quality of information available on a merchant site; the quality of services for electronic services is important for tourists and visitors to holy places as is the case with our work. this is confirmed by the authors (C. Boulaire and A. Mathieu, 2000, J. Eighmey, 1997, N. Donthu and A. Garcia, 1999, S. Muylle *et alii*, 1999)
- _ the second dimension, ease of use: this is the ability to facilitate access to electronic services according to (N. Donthu and A. Garcia, 1999, S. Muylle *et alii*, 1999);
- _ the third reliability and respect of commitments: it is the

capacity of the sellers of electronic services to keep their promises, and to respect their commitments and to fulfill the terms of trade (C. Boulaire, 2004);

- the fourth dimension is the security and confidentiality of personal and financial data Quality of service is a fundamental element in explaining consumer satisfaction in a spiritual and religious environment.

2.3 Atmospheric factors

Atmospheric factors constitute our second explanatory variable before explaining the link between satisfaction and atmospheric factors we define atmospheric factors. atmospheric factors are the set of environmental factors that can impact consumer behavior.

Indeed, we first try to find an integrative framework to conceptualize the concept of atmospheric factors.

The conceptual framework of atmospheric and environmental factors have two types:

- the physical environment
- the virtual environment

Will bring us to highlight their constituents, their typologies and to specify the elements that compose them

2.4 physical environmental factors

To better define environmental factors Specialists in consumer behavior have used different concepts in this context, namely: 'atmosphere, sensory factors' which indicates the vagueness and ambiguity that reign in this theme. The notion of atmospheric factors in French-speaking literature uses other terms such as "atmosphere", "sensory factors", "environmental design", "physical support" or even "serviscene".

While in Anglo-Saxon literature we use the following concepts "atmospherics", "physical surroundings", "physical settings", "designed space", "servicescape".

This profusion of terminology leads us to wonder about the exact delimitation of the term atmospheric factor and to put a reservation as to its confusion with the notion of "atmosphere".`

The concept "environment" is a polemical concept one can define it like being the whole of the tangible factors or tangible name which surrounds the person; indeed it is the consequence of the interaction of the individual with those around him.

The environmental factors influence consumer behavior in all situations and mainly in a religious and spiritual environment like our case. For the authors Aubert-Gamet and Cova approve that the atmospheric and environmental factors influence the consumer's competence. It expresses this impact by the fact of the "personal construct" and "socio-spatial" where the consumer is co-actor. all these effects have an impact on consumer behavior.

2.5 The virtual environmental factors

The virtual environment and defined by Dailey (1999) "as the environment of the online virtual store; comparable to the physical environment of real stores "for the authors Gharbi *et al.*, specify that "the atmosphere of the site designates all the

elements of the virtual purchasing environment affecting the perceptual field of the individual and capable of stimulating and stimulating their senses". For Dailey (2004) indicates that "the atmosphere of a website for the development of virtual environments intended to generate positive effects on Internet users, both cognitively and emotionally, in order to produce favorable reactions to site regard "

we can deduce that environmental factors impact consumer behavior on three levels:

_cognitive _emotional _conative

the first level allows the consumer to become aware of the existence of a service, the second level is likely to give him the desire or not to try it, and finally, the third conative level is intended to facilitate the passage of the consumer to product.

2.6 the typologies of environmental factors

we note the existence of several environmental factors which have an impact on consumer behavior in different situations; according to Baker The classification is based on the level of perception of. It is composed of the following elements:

The ambient factors

- Psychogeographic qualities
- The qualities of architecture The different theories that we have evoked in this research work, do not constitute an exhaustive overview of the different studies that have been developed in this perspective.

atmospheric and environmental factors is not limited to physical places, it adapts to virtual places as well.

Atmospheric factors occupy an important place in the pyramid of pilgrim needs.

3. satisfaction

Satisfaction we can define stisfaction as "an emotional state resulting from the positive or negative non-confirmation of initial expectations during the experience of possession or consumption" according to (R. Oliver, 1980).

On the other hand, Comptemporaine studies indicate that this transactional, cognitive conception is based on a single characteristic (initial expectations) is far from sufficient to define the process of satisfaction. We note that all current research goes in the direction for a dual model considering satisfaction as the consequence of two parallel processes, one is cognitive and the other is emotional according to (Y. Évrard, 1989) According to the literature, the authors have defined this concept from two different perspectives: a transactional approach and a relational approach. The transactional perspective defines satisfaction as a subsequent situation resulting from the confirmation or denial of initial needs during a specific transaction. On the other hand, this punctual assessment may be considered by other authors as insufficient to assess the satisfaction experienced by the consumer throughout these experiences with the brand or the company.

The relational perspective considers satisfaction to be "an abstract and cumulative construct which describes the total (cumulative) experience of consumption of a product or service" according to (M. Johnson *et alii*, 1995). Finally satisfaction can be represented as an effective state resulting from a global assessment of the relationship between consumers and the services or products

4. Research Methodology and Model

In this research we have resorted to quantitative study and we have adopted a hypothetico-deductive logic; the study lasted 6 months and targeted 320 pilgrims; are classified as follows:

- 180 man
- 140 woman

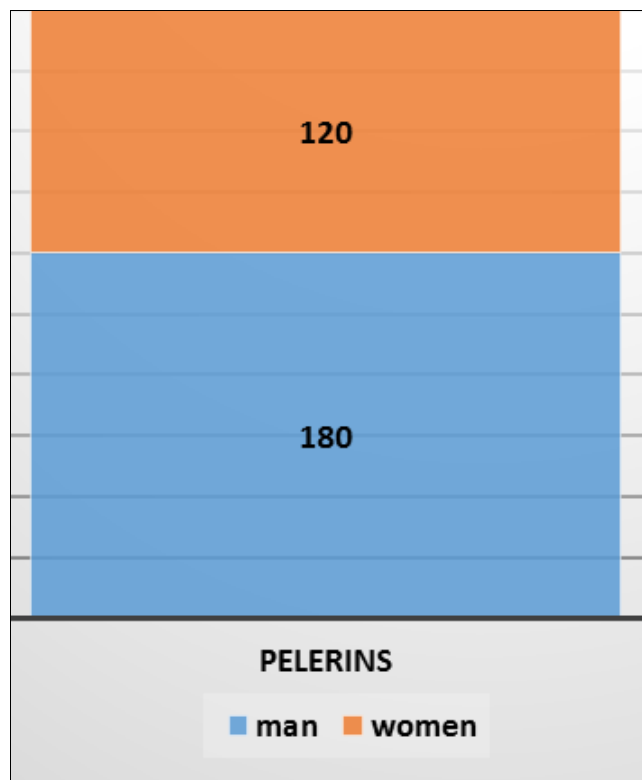


Fig 1

4.1 Research model

Our research model is made up of three variables; two explanatory variables and one variable to explain

- the explanatory variables are (quality of service; atmospheric factors)
- the variable to explain (satisfaction)

The hypotheses of our research model are:

H1: atmospheric factors positively influence the satisfaction of Muslim pilgrims

H2: the quality of service positively influences the satisfaction of visitors to holy places

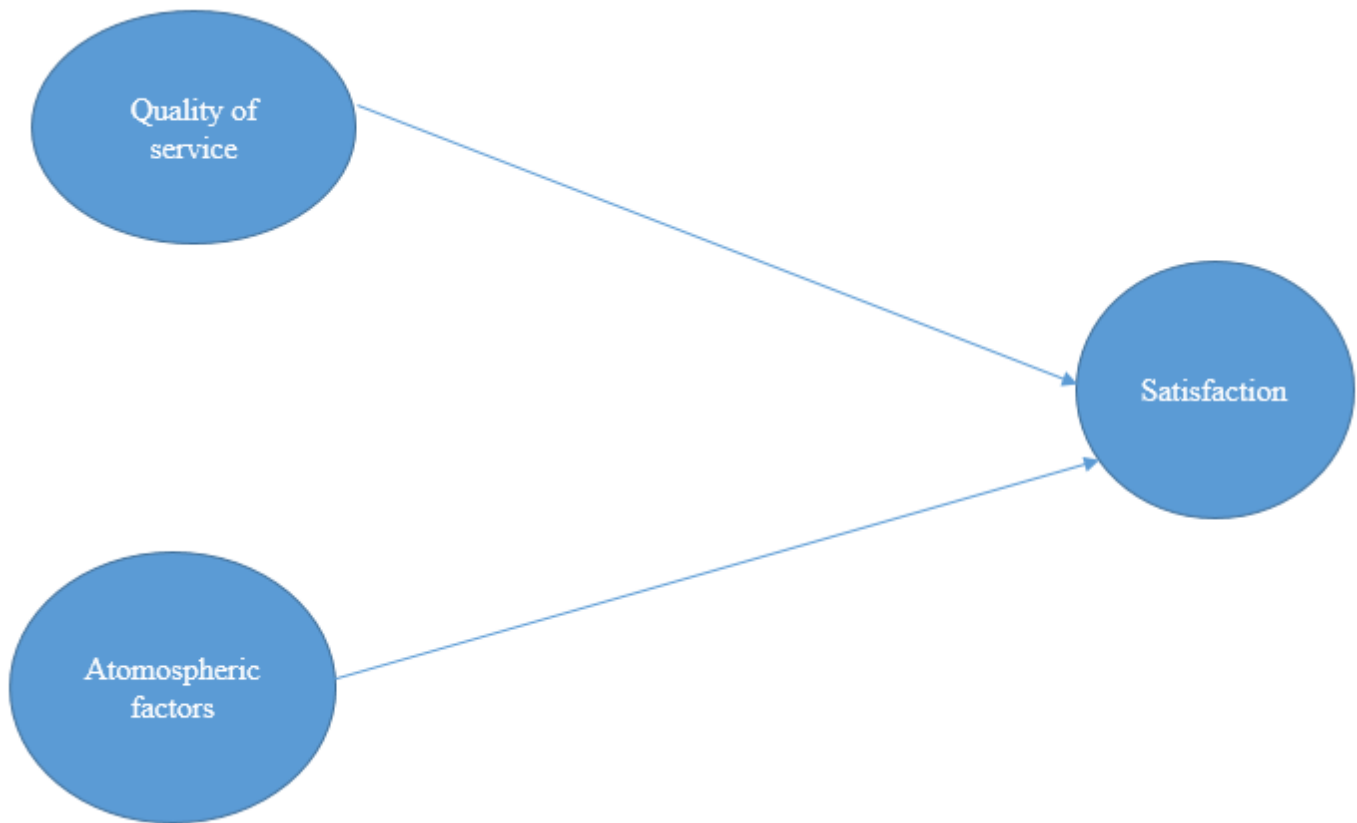


Fig 2

4.2 Discussion of The Results

Table 1: The table of Results: (source Pls)

Hypotheses	Initial sample (O)	Average of the sample (M)	Ecart-type (SD)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Decision
FAC -> SAT	0.128	0.134	0.083	1.76	0.04	Accepté
QU -> SAT	0.172	0.179	0.069	2.513	0.012	Accepté

The problematic treated throughout this modest work was the questioning on the explanatory factors of the satisfaction of the visitors of holy places mecca and medina during the season of HAJ and the oumra. After presenting the data collected from visitors to holy places, we will discuss the results and draw the conclusion for each proposition from our research model The first hypoyhesis of our research indicates that atmospheric factors positively influence the level of satisfaction of visitors to holy places; this proposition is retained by our sample; visitors to holy places seek to spend their days in Mecca and Medina in accommodation and hotels closer to Haram; this proximity makes visitors happier and more satisfied.

We note that in the ranking of visitors there are three types of ranking:

- VIP visitors; these are the most important visitors; they are generally the guests of the Saudian king “ the program of the khadim Alharamayn ” his guests are always satisfied they spend their stay next to the Elharam Almaqui; and Alharam Almadani; the atmospheric factors are very important for this type of visitors
- royal class visitors; they are visitors generally invited by

the Minister of Islamic Affairs; or Minister of Telecommunication; these visitors are classified after VIP visitors, this type of visitor is not completely satisfied because their accommodation is far from Haram.

- ordinary “average” visitors: these are visitors who travel to Mecca on a personal or group basis; for this type of visitor; the approximation does not represent an explanatory variable for their satisfaction... the majority and for economic reasons spend their days at the great mosque _Alharam _ because their hotels are far from the mosque

For all of our sample confirm that atmospheric factors have a positive impact on the level of satisfaction of pilgrims.

the second hypothesis indicates that the quality of service positively influences the satisfaction of visitors to holy places; this proposition is largely confirmed by our targeted target this indicates that visitors to holy places are more interested in the quality of service and services which have several components namely (the quality of reception; the quality of accommodation; the quality of catering, quality of electronic services;...)

the Saudi authorities have made removable skeins to make visitors more and more satisfying; based on a policy of improving the services provided by all actors involved in the Hajj and Umrah process.

Despite this, visitors still demand and demand high quality services; and precisely in the Hajj period; it is for this reason that government authorities in Sudan Arabia have created an authority to assess the quality of government services in all areas and among these areas, religious tourism; vision 2030 aims to increase the number of annual visitors in the Oumra period to 8 million visitors; and 5 million in the Hajj period with the occurrence of a very high and satisfactory quality of service; to achieve this strategic objective The Saudi state must invest more and more in the field of improving the qualities of service provided; and it must use new technologies to make the prescribed services faster and more accessible

Conclusion

We can conclude that the visitors of the holy places in spite of the degree of their spirituality and the level of their religiosity which interests it more in the process of the Hajj and the Oumra that the quality of service in first temp and second the atmospheric factors; ...

It is important to distinguish between the pilgrimage as a service and the pilgrimage as a religious duty what we have analyzed in this article is the explanatory factors of the satisfaction of the pilgrims; to make a satisfied and faithful pilgrim the actors working in the field of religious tourism must focus on the quality of services. Attendant during the Hajj season.

Finally we can confirm that the atmospheric factors and the quality of service are variables explaining the satisfaction of the pilgrims.

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