# EXPLORING THE DIMENSIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY IN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS MUSLIM FRIENDLY HOTELS IN MALAYSIA

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**ABSTRACT**

*The rising demand for Muslim-friendly hospitality, mainly in hotel services has a substantial impact on our tourism industry. Most Muslim guests prefer to stay at Muslim-friendly hotels because they provide the services and facilities for Muslim guests to practice their religion as well as enjoy their stay. A highly satisfied customer with excellent service quality provided by the hotel will be influenced to choose the same hotel for their next visit. Given the limited studies of the service quality in Muslim-friendly hotels, the present study was carried out to explore the dimensions of service quality in customer satisfaction towards the hotels that provide Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. A quantitative study in this research utilized a convenience sampling method. The respondents were among 461 Muslims in Klang Valley area that had stayed at hotels offering Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. To address the*

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*research objective, the data was analyzed using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Based on the EFA, the finding revealed five dimensions of service quality, namely: tangibles reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy that have a positive influence on customer satisfaction.*

**Keywords:** *Service quality, customer satisfaction and Muslim-friendly hotel.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the main contributors to Malaysian economy. This industry has shown a substantial and sustained growth in terms of both, the number of tourists and tourism receipts for Malaysia. Tourist arrivals in Malaysia have reached almost 26.1 billion in 2019, which contributed to RM86.1 billion in the tourism receipts. According to the Tourism Malaysia website (https://www.tourism.gov.my/statistics), most tourists spend an average of 7.4 nights with per capita expenditure of RM3300.44 during their visits in Malaysia.

As the global Muslim population grows, Muslim-friendly hospitality services like hotels have the potential to become a big business. The Muslim tourists may not choose a particular destination if Islamic attributes are absent. This is because they consider Islamic attributes to be very important when they decide to travel abroad (Battour et al., 2011). Islamic attributes signify the availability of Islamic norms and practices that follow Islamic teaching. Malaysia as a Muslim majority country takes

this opportunity to attract more Muslim tourists to visit this country since it offers halal products especially halal cuisines and services, as well as facilities that ease Muslim tourists to perform their religious duties while enjoying their holidays here.

In January 2015, Malaysia had developed Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services Requirements (Department of Standards Malaysia, 2015) to set out criteria and specifications in terms of managing tourism, facilities, products and services for Muslim tourists in accommodation premises, tour packages and tourist guides. The standards are made to accommodate Muslim travelers and provide services and facilities that suit Muslim needs according to Islam. These standards also emphasize hotel accommodations that consist of rooms, food and beverages, muṣallās, prayer time, prayer mats, ablution facilities, qibla direction, segregated prayer rooms for different gender, as well as recreational and wellness facilities in the hotel accommodations.

However, each hotel has adopted its own standards for daily operations, management and business, without having a clear picture about what Muslim-friendly hotels are all about (Junainah & Norazla, 2015). Some of the hotels only provide halal food and cuisines without concerns about their finances that may have interest (*riba)* and uncertainty (*gharar)* because they think that halal food alone is enough to be considered as a Muslim-friendly hotel, since there is 'halal' in the name. Therefore, hotel management should understand that Shariah compliance and practice are the basis of Muslim-friendly hotels, and this can enable better service quality while avoiding misunderstandings in the matter. This study aimed to explore

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the dimensions of service quality in customer satisfaction towards hotels providing Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. It further aims to highlight the importance and need of service quality towards customer satisfaction in Muslim-friendly hotel services.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE
### 2.1 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is not a new term in marketing and finance. Every industry tries its best to provide excellent services to satisfy their customers. The service provider should provide its customers with high-quality services to remain competent in the industry. Customer satisfaction is the ultimate goal for any business, and this can only be achieved by providing good quality products and services to the customers. Satisfied customers will bring long term benefits to the service providers in terms of customer loyalty, positive words of mouth, customer retention, profit (Yi & Nataraajan, 2018) and they are willing to pay premium prices if the products or services satisfy their needs (Sert, 2017).

 Many researchers have discussed the definition of 'customer satisfaction' and some researchers have tried to enhance its definition from time to time. However, most researchers considered customer satisfaction to be a particular circumstance for the interpretation of customer opinion in regard to the level of satisfaction of the products or services that they had used (Izogo & Ogba, 2015; Yi & Nataraajan, 2018).

According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), customer satisfaction results from the application of quality services, while Swies et

al. (2017) indicated that customer satisfaction refers to the ability of the provider to provide products or services as needed by the customer. Satisfaction is a condition that happens over a period of time because of customer interactions with the company (Izogo & Ogba, 2015). Satisfaction is the customer evaluation of a product or service, whether their needs for these particular products or services have been satisfied and met their requirements (Maria Stock et al., 2017). Oliver (1997) defined customer satisfaction as an overall emotional response that the customer received and experienced after they purchased the transaction.

Customer satisfaction is the internal feeling that a customer feels when they use any service or product. The feeling will determine either that particular product or service will give satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Usually, the customer has their own expectation of any product and service. If their expectation matches or is above the performance, then they will be satisfied. If their expectation is below the performance, they will be dissatisfied. Yet, every customer has a different level of satisfaction because every person has his/her own preference, personal needs, demand, culture and experience. The good indicator of the performance of a business is its ability to continuously and consistently meet consumer needs. Results reveal that customers have become highly demanding in regard to the value for money, both in terms of price and quality of the product and service provided by the hotelier (Amin et al., 2013).

Taking the case of Muslim-friendly hotels in the hospitality industry, most hotels try their best to provide excellent services to their customers by creating memorable experiences to be enjoyed during their stay. High customer satisfaction will lead

to the success of the business and will build customer loyalty. Hoteliers should try their best to provide excellent services to their customers to maintain a good relationship with them. With regards to having excellent services, customers are willing to pay more, rather than take the risk of switching to another hotel that has lower price, but is unable to provide the need and the comfort that they want (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007). However, poor service quality will lead to customer dissatisfaction and will adversely impact the hotel's reputation. This can result in situations where customers will spread negative comments about the hotel's service quality, change their travel destinations, or change to other hotels that provide better service quality and fulfil their expectations.

## 2.2 Service Quality (SERVQUAL Model)

Providing halal products and services is an important element for most hoteliers to attract more Muslim guests to stay at their hotels (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019). The products and services must be able to cater the needs of Muslim guests in terms of halal food and drinks, prayer and equipment, water for ablution, bidet in the toilet, Ramadan services, facilities for guests in rooms, fitness tools and other suitable entertainment for Muslims (Zawawi & Ramli, 2016).

Customers or guests measure the level of service quality offered by the hotels according to their expectation and service performance (Lo et al., 2015; Wilkins et al., 2007). Alnawas & Hemsley-Brown (2019) and Cetin & Walls (2015) suggested among the crucial elements of a hotel attributes are physical environment, ambience, cleanliness, safety, facilities, amenities,

room maintenance, staff, location of the hotel and interior decorations as well as paintings.

Parasuraman et al., (1985) had developed SERVQUAL model that is mostly used in the service industry like banking, health care and hospitality to evaluate service quality. This model stresses comparative differentiation in service quality that emphasizes more on customer service preferences, experiences and perceptions as customers evaluate the actual performance of the service received within a specified time (Nasution & Mavondo, 2008; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1991, 1994).

According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), service quality is an overall evaluation of the service given by the service provider to the customers, and the customers will have their own discrepancy between their perceptions and expectations of the service quality that they had received from the service provider. In the SERVQUAL model, the difference between customer perceptions and customer expectations of service quality was applied to evaluate overall service quality that a customer received in service quality.

During the early stage, Parasuraman et al., (1985) developed ten dimensions of service quality and later, in 1988, they reduced the dimensions to five dimensions with 22 items included: tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Researchers can modify these dimensions according to the nature of their research. The SERVQUAL instruments were extensively used in tourism and hospitality industries, airlines, ski and restaurants (Fick & Brent Ritchie, 1991; Knutson et al., 1992; Tsang & Qu, 2000). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is still limited study on service quality that

focused on Muslim customer satisfaction that used SERVQUAL model in their research. Thus, the present study was carried out to explore the dimensions of service quality in customer satisfaction towards hotels that provide Muslim friendly services in Malaysia.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in this study was developed based on the SERVQUAL model by Parasuraman et al.(1985) to measure the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. In the hospitality industry, especially the hotel sector, these two elements, which are service quality and customer satisfaction are extremely important for the service provider. According to Ekinci et al. (2008), physical facilities, as well as service quality of the hotel, have a meaningful impact on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, Kandampully & Suhartanto (2000) also agreed that there is a significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. The proposed conceptual model of this study is illustrated as follows:
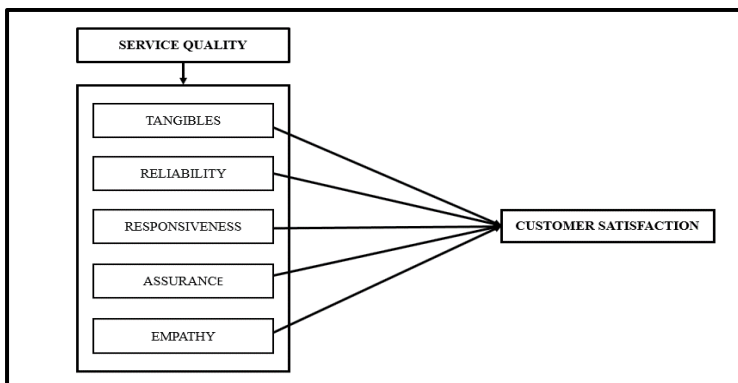
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Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

In this conceptual model, service quality is an independent variable and there are five dimensions namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Whereas, customer satisfaction is a dependent variable. These five dimensions are among the critical elements in evaluating service quality in Muslim-friendly hotels in Malaysia since the customers have high expectations in this regard. If the hotelier is able to fulfil above components in service quality, then the customer will be satisfied with the services provided by the hotelier. The explanation of each of the components in the service quality is provided in the next section.

### 2.3.1 Tangibles

Tangible is the physical facilities of a hotel. This also may include equipment as well as the appearance of personnel. In the hotels that offer Muslim-friendly services, the hoteliers should provide facilities and services that suit the need of Muslim guests. For

example, a hotelier should at least provide rooms/spaces for Muslim guests to pray, signage of qibla direction in the hotel's rooms, prayer rugs, prayer timetable, clean water and ablution space (Samori et al., 2015). Thus, these services and facilities may ease Muslim guests to perform their prayer while staying at the hotel. Furthermore, hotel management also should ensure the cleanliness of the hotel, comfort of rooms, the quality as well as the variety of the food and provide basic room facilities in the hotel's room (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007).

### 2.3.2  Reliability

Reliability is the ability of the service provider to provide the service accurately, on time and credibly (Parasuraman et al., 1985). The staff of the hotel should be professional in doing their job. They are expected to be able to perform their job well and deliver the services accurately and reliably. For example, staff should avoid making any mistakes in computing bills and giving accurate information and service when requested by the customers (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007).

### 2.3.3  Responsiveness

Responsiveness is the ability of the staff to solve any problem with fast action, capable in handling customers' complaints effectively, willing to help customers and fulfil their needs and requirements (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The hotel staff should be able to satisfy the customers for any request or problem that they faced during their stay at the hotel. Furthermore, providing prompt service to the customers is also important to improve the service quality of the hotel. The interaction between the

hotel's staff and the customers should be in a polite manner to make sure the hotel's image and reputation are well protected.

### 2.3.4 Assurance

Assurance is the ability of the staff to deliver the service with courtesy, good communication skill, credibility and competence when dealing with customers. The staff should be able to provide excellent service to the customers so that they are confident and believe in the quality of the hotel's services. The hotel management also should train their staff to improve their skills, knowledge and attitude so that their staff are skillful, competent and have excellent interpersonal skills in dealing with customers' needs and can solve any problem that occurs during their stay at the hotel.

### 2.3.5 Empathy

Interaction between staff and customers is one of the essential factors in the hospitality industry. The staff should have empathy towards the customers. Empathy is a form of caring, consideration, understanding the customer and individualized attention towards the customers' needs. Good staff will give attention to their customers' needs so that they will feel welcome and comfortable staying at the hotel. Thus, hoteliers in a Muslim-friendly hotel should be able to manage and train their staff by following the principles of Islamic hospitality (Suci et al., 2020).

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, a quantitative method was used to explore the importance of service quality dimensions towards customer

satisfaction in the hotels that provide Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. The study population consists of Muslim respondents, both Malaysians and non-Malaysians that had experienced staying at the hotels that provide those services. All of the respondents were over 18 years old. This research used a convenient sampling technique due to the unidentified sample population. Non-random sampling approach was selected because of the non-existent list of all tourist populations staying at the hotels that offer Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. Convenient sampling is a process where each person in the population has an equal opportunity to be selected and includes only people who are agreed to participate.

### 3.1 Sample

Schumacker & Lomax (2010) recommended to use a sample size of 250 to 500 respondents, and Yong & Pearce (2013) advised at least 300 participants was an adequate sample size to proceed with the data analysis. Thus, in this study, 550 questionnaires were distributed around the Klang Valley area, and 461 respondents were deemed to be useable in this study. The reason for choosing the Klang Valley area was due to this area is a central geographical area in Malaysia.

The demographic for the respondents showed that 163 respondents (35.4%) were male, while 298 respondents (64.4%) were females. The respondents in this study came from various educational backgrounds. The majority of the respondents had Bachelor's degree, diploma and high school qualification that represented 307 respondents (66.6%), followed by Master's degree 132 respondents (28.6%) and PhD holders 22

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respondents (4.8%). Most of the respondents involved in this study were Malaysians, with a total number of 367 Muslim guests representing 79.6%. The rest of the 94 respondents or 20.4% involved were non-Malaysians.

The study used a set of questionnaire adapted and modified from the previous researches that used SERVQUAL model's items to test services quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007). The questionnaire about customer satisfaction was also adapted and modified based on El-Adly (2018).

### 3.2 Instrument

This study employed questionnaire as a method to get the needed information from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: the demographic profile of the respondents, service quality construct and customer satisfaction construct respectively. There were 33 items (excluding the demographic profile) in the questionnaire that involved Muslim guests that had experienced staying at hotels that provided Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. All the constructs were measured on a five-point Likert Scale that varied from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, four = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree).

## 4.   RESULTS
### 4.1  Factor Analysis

The data was analyzed quantitatively using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. To address the research questions, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was

performed using principal components analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation to determine the dimensions of the service quality and customer satisfaction towards the hotels that provide Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia. From this analysis, it indicated that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.938, which exceeded the recommended value of 0.6 for good factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Bartlett's test of sphericity also was significant (p = .000), which supporting factorability of the correlation matrix.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .938 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 8611.008 |
| | df | 496 |
| | Sig. | .000 |

Furthermore, PCA also employed to find the numbers of dimensions in service quality and customer satisfaction. The numbers of dimensions identified were based on the Kaiser Normalization criteria analysis, scree plots and conceptual framework related to the SERVQUAL model. From the reflected loaded items presented in Table 2, there are five dimensions found for service quality, namely responsiveness, reliability, empathy, tangible as well as assurance and one dimension for the customer.

Table 2. Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 11.941 | 37.316 | 37.316 | 11.941 | 37.316 | 37.316 | 5.287 | 16.522 | 16.522 |
| 2 | 3.292 | 10.288 | 47.604 | 3.292 | 10.288 | 47.604 | 4.211 | 13.159 | 29.680 |
| 3 | 1.591 | 4.971 | 52.575 | 1.591 | 4.971 | 52.575 | 3.615 | 11.297 | 40.977 |
| 4 | 1.443 | 4.509 | 57.084 | 1.443 | 4.509 | 57.084 | 2.878 | 8.994 | 49.971 |
| 5 | 1.179 | 3.684 | 60.767 | 1.179 | 3.684 | 60.767 | 2.443 | 7.634 | 57.605 |
| 6 | 1.061 | 3.317 | 64.084 | 1.061 | 3.317 | 64.084 | 2.073 | 6.479 | 64.084 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Based on the total variance explained, the eigenvalue is greater than 1.0, and the value of cumulative explained is 64.084% which achieved the required level of 60% of total variance explained (Hair et al., 2010). In the factor analysis, only factors with eigenvalue more than one were retained. In assurance dimension, item number five has a cross-loading issue. Hence, the researcher decided to remove this item from the rotated component matrix. In addition, the correlations among the items were significant. The communalities value is between 0.453 and 0.762, and no item had communalities value less than 0.4. The following Table 3 exhibits principal component analysis

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(PCA) result for items, factor loading, eigenvalue, total variance explained as well as communalities.

Table 3. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) result

| Items | Factor Loading | Eigenvalue | Variance Explained (%) | Communalities |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION** | | | | |
| Overall, I feel satisfied staying at this hotel. | .819 | | | .761 |
| My choice to stay at this hotel was a wise decision. | .802 | | | .742 |
| I will continue to stay at this hotel in the future. | .798 | | | .740 |
| I will recommend this hotel to my friends and relatives. | .795 | | | .762 |
| My feeling towards the hotel's services and facilities can be categorized as great! | .766 | 11.941 | 37.316 | .659 |
| My experience after staying at this hotel increased my delight. | .745 | | | .681 |
| The services and facilities provided at the hotel exceeded my expectation. | .729 | | | .645 |
| The services and facilities provided at the hotel meet my needs as a Muslim. | .665 | | | .555 |
| **SERVICE QUALITY** | | | | |
| **RESPONSIVENESS** | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The staff show sincere interest in solving customer's issue. | .734 | | | .657 |
| Quick check-in and check-out. | .657 | | | .554 |
| The staff are professional in performing their job. | .650 | | | .672 |
| The staff are consistently courteous. | .638 | 3.292 | 47.604 | .557 |
| The staff are always willing to help customers. | .625 | | | .655 |
| The staff resolve the problems that I encounter promptly. | .610 | | | .597 |
| The staff are able to instil confidence in customers. | .606 | | | .587 |
| Prompt breakfast service. | .454 | | | .454 |
| **RELIABILITY** | | | | |
| The staff are competent. | .720 | | | .688 |
| The staff deliver services at the time promised. | .695 | | | .651 |
| The staff perform the services right the first time. | .687 | | | .584 |
| The staff have good communication skills. | .619 | 1.591 | 52.575 | .609 |
| The staff give prompt service to the customers. | .593 | | | .543 |
| The staff provide accurate information about hotel services, prices and billing. | .570 | | | .647 |
| **EMPATHY** | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The staff have abilities to handle customers' problems professionally. | .746 | | | .759 |
| The staff listen to customers' complaints. | .737 | 1.443 | 57.084 | .742 |
| The staff understand customers' needs. | .729 | | | .740 |
| The staff give individual attention to the customers. | .654 | | | .635 |
| **TANGIBLES** | | | | |
| Toilets and bathrooms are clean. | .719 | | | .714 |
| Hotel rooms are clean and comfortable. | .717 | 1.179 | 60.767 | .735 |
| Hotel facilities are in good conditions. | .534 | | | .578 |
| **ASSURANCE** | | | | |
| Availability of facilities like swimming pool, gymnasium, etc. | .768 | | | .635 |
| The staff dressed neatly. | .660 | 1.061 | 64.084 | .512 |
| Pleasant hotel decoration and ambience. | .596 | | | .453 |

Based on the Rotated Component Matrix table in SPSS, the customer satisfaction factor is classified as the highest factor loading of 0.819 represented with eight items. The second factor is the responsiveness that consists of eight items with 0.744 factor loading, followed by reliability factor with five items and 0.720 factor loading. Furthermore, there are four items assigned for empathy factor, and it has indicated factor loading of 0.746 and tangible construct have three items where the factor loading is 0.719. The final factor, which is empathy, shown factor loading of 0.768 with three items.

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The result in this study is consistent with the previous studies that all components of service quality had a positive and significant direct effect on customer satisfaction (Batista et al., 2014; Prameka et al., 2016; Saleem & Raja, 2014; Sukaisih et al., 2015; Tefera & Govender, 2016). However, the current study was contrasted with Mena et al., (2020) finding who revealed that three components of service quality such as reliability, responsiveness and tangibility had a significant impact on customer satisfaction in star-rated hotels of Shashemene town in Ethiopia. Furthermore, Ali et al., (2021) found that only reliability had negative relation with customer satisfaction while the rest of service quality dimensions for example empathy, responsiveness, assurance and tangible have positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Therefore, the researcher can conclude that, in this study, all five components of service quality, specifically tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance have a positive as well as significant effect in customer satisfaction towards the hotels that provide Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia.

### 4.2 Reliability (Cronbach alpha)

Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of the items and to measure the consistency as well as the accuracy of the measured items. An instrument with a Cronbach's alpha value closer to 1 means the instruments are more reliable and have high internal consistency reliability compared to an instrument with Cronbach's alpha value closer to 0. As suggested by Sekaran & Bougie (2009), the acceptable value for Cronbach alpha is 0.70 and above. Table 4 presented the result of the Cronbach's Alpha test for each construct in the questionnaires.

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Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha Result

| Construct | Number of Items | Cronbach Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| Tangibles | 6 | 0.746 |
| Reliability | 5 | 0.855 |
| Responsiveness | 5 | 0.817 |
| Assurance | 5 | 0.850 |
| Empathy | 4 | 0.847 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 8 | 0.919 |

In the service quality and customer satisfaction section, all of the constructs have Cronbach's alpha value above 0.7. Cronbach's alpha or coefficient alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the instrument. The highest Cronbach alpha was construct customer satisfaction (0.919), followed by reliability (0.855), assurance (0.850), empathy (0.847), responsiveness (0.817) and the smallest value of Cronbach's alpha was tangible (0.746). This indicates that all of the constructs in the service quality section, as well as customer satisfaction, were reliable since all values were greater than 0.7.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to explore the service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction towards the hotel that provides Muslim-

friendly services in Malaysia. The data were collected from a sample of 461 Muslim respondents through a structured questionnaire. Based on the result, there are five dimensions in service quality, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, empathy besides assurance that influence customer satisfaction towards the hotels that provide Muslim friendly services in Malaysia.

High service quality will give a positive impact on customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers tend to be loyal, making it easier for hotels to excel in the market, sustain their business and gain more profit. Furthermore, in the long term this will build a relationship commitment between the guest and the hotel. Besides, a highly satisfied customer will tend to spread positive word of mouth to their family members and friends and thus will lowering the cost of the businesses to attract new customers to visit their hotel.

The hoteliers also should invest some portion of their money towards training and career development for their staff to enhance their competency in their work. The training provided by the hoteliers should be able to improve the staff's knowledge, skills, abilities as well as attitude to serve better customer service to the hotel's guests. Staff play a vital role in delivering services to the hotel guests, especially front-line staff, because they have direct contact with the guests. The friendly, professional, and helpful staff along with the pleasant environment and other facilities will contribute to the quality of the services and products (Malik et al., 2018). Therefore, hotel managers should emphasize enhancing hotel guests' emotions and be committed to maintaining an excellent relationship with their guests. This can be done by providing suitable training to

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upgrade the skills of their staff, in order to develop their capabilities for better customer service in facing the global market.

The limitation in this study is that it is only limited in Klang Valley area due to the time constraint and budget limitation. Hence, to improve the horizon of the study, more respondents in all states in Malaysia should be considered to enhance the generalizability of the results.

Finally, it is recommended that future research should include the perception of the non-Muslim customers that stay at the hotels that provide Muslim friendly services in Malaysia. Their perceptions, opinions and comments are important to the hoteliers so that the hoteliers can meet their expectation and at the same time satisfying their needs and demand of non-Muslim customer as well.

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