



Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism and Its Effects on Customer Attitude: A Study of Three 3 Star Hotels in Hatyai, Thailand

Vinita Ruengpan^{1*} and John Barnes²

¹ A master student, Department of Master of Business Administration, Faculty of Tourism management program, Assumption University

² Dr., Advisor, Faculty of Tourism Management program, Assumption University

*Corresponding author, E-mail: Kwangvi95@gmail.com

Abstract

Religious participation has undeniably affected the movement of tourism. To illustrate the importance of Halal food service standard regulations for tourism and Halal certification in Thailand. Both of which adhere to Halal food practices. This research considers to explain Halal food service standard for tourism and its effects on the attitude of customer in three 3 star hotels in Southern Thailand as the sample. By based on the document of Limitations of Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism issue number TTS-S-305i-RR02 which contain 11 elements, 22 criterions, and 106 indicators. Produced by: Service Standard Development Section, Bureau of Tourism Service Development, Department of Tourism.

The place of study is Hatyai. Hatyai is located in Southern Thailand close to the border of Malaysia and Indonesia whose majority of the populations are Muslim. The Thai government has promoted “Muslim-friendly tourism” concept in which they follow and develop the Halal standard for service in tourism to serve Muslims well according to the requirements of Islam.

To solve the problem of foods preparation consumption and create a good image for tourism in Thailand, to promote Halal food service standard agreement to entrepreneurs to see the importance of standard and to be certified by Halal logo.

This research shows how Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism Effects Customer Attitude by focusing on Three 3 Star Hotels in Hatyai, Thailand; (1) Hatyai Rama Hotel, (2) Hatyai Holiday Hotel, and (3) Daiichi Hotel. The topics used in studying the effects of halal food standards on customer attitudes by used a model of five factors, The ACSI model provides a basis for the construct of consumer satisfaction towards food products with Halal food service standard for tourism to serve as a mediator which links its antecedents to customer attitude; (1) Customer expectations, (2) Religiosity, (3) Information trust, (4) Institutional trust, (5) Brand trust.



This thesis was taken by face to face questionnaire from 381 Halal tourists who has experience in Halal restaurant in three 3 star hotels in Hatyai, Thailand as mention before. The statistical analysis used in this research are Descriptive analysis, Mean & Standard, and Multivariate Analysis.

The results indicate that most of participants are strongly agree that Customer expectation ($\bar{x} = 4.27$), Religiosity ($\bar{x} = 4.25$), Brand trust ($\bar{x} = 4.28$), Information trust ($\bar{x} = 4.24$), and Institutional trust ($\bar{x} = 4.27$) has effect with their satisfaction when perceive Halal food service standard for tourism. The most factors effect to customer attitude are Customer satisfaction, Brand trust, Religiosity, and Customer expectation. The most positive effect to customer attitude toward Halal food service standard for tourism is Customer satisfaction and Customer expectation is the lowest one which is effect to customer attitude. In this conclusion, the negative and positive of satisfaction behavior is directly effect customer attitude toward Halal food service standard for tourism.

Keywords: Halal, Halal hotel, Halal food service standard for tourism, Halal food service standard, Thai Halal standard

Introduction

“Halal”, a symbol of Halal which is used to guarantee Halal standards. The concept of Halal originated from Arabic language which means allowable, acceptable, permitted, and/or permissible. Another word is Haram; it is an Arabic word which means opposite to Halal, these are any products that do not follow with Islamic Shari’ah law (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015). Apart from the concern with religious values, a core concern of Islam is to balance between material and spiritual needs, this will lead to a well-being with a good life (Mohsin, Ramli & Alkhulayfi, 2016). Halal food is food taken by Muslims which doesn’t contain pork, animals that were dead prior to slaughtering; animals not slaughtered properly in the name of Allah, blood and blood by-products; land animals without external ears, carnivorous animals and on top of that, Halal food must be alcohol-free.

The purpose of this study is to provide guidance and understand Muslim consumers towards Halal food service standard for tourism by focusing on three 3star hotels at Hatyai, Thailand; (1) Hatyai Rama Hotel, (2) Hatyai Holiday Hotel, and (3) Daiichi Hotel. This research study only three 3 star hotels in Hatyai, Thailand. This research is study and collect information about restaurants within the hotel. Not related to rooms or other in selected hotels. “Muslim friendly” is a concept that will bring more unique value for the hotel sector, this is an important factor that effects Muslim and Non-Muslim people worldwide.



Objectives

1. To study the customer attitude toward three 3 star hotels in a context of Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism which focuses in three 3 star hotels at Hatyai, Thailand; (1) Hatyai Rama Hotel, (2) Hatyai Holiday Hotel, and (3) Daiichi Hotel.

2. To investigate the factors effective of customer attitude toward three 3 star hotels in a context of Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism which focuses in three 3 star hotels at Hatyai, Thailand; (1) Hatyai Rama Hotel, (2) Hatyai Holiday Hotel, and (3) Daiichi Hotel.

Literature review/ Conceptual framework

a conceptual framework model adapted from Fornell (1996) American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) model with five constructs as follows: Consumer expectations, information, institutional trust, brand trust and religiosity as the independent variables, and customer satisfaction towards Halal foods and Products. The independent variable in this conceptual framework describes the relationship with satisfaction as follows:

Customer Expectations: Consumer expectations are the perceived consumer awareness before consuming products. Customer expectation defined as the total perceived value of customer receive before consuming the product or service The expectations before consumption effect customer satisfaction behavior (Fornell , Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Everitt, 1996).

Religiosity: The role of religiosity influences Muslim consumer behavior towards foods and service. Muslims concern about food prepared by following the Sharia law. From the research of Ambali & Bakar (2013) there is a finding that the relationship of religion and the perceptions of Muslim consumers about halal food with the standard of Islam is related. And pre-consumption awareness was affects to customer satisfaction.

Information trust: Trust refers to the trustworthy information and its quality that believed to be true. And if consumers perceive the negative information, the consumers will be not satisfied with the foods because they have the negative attitudes even before the period of consumption.

If consumers receive negative information from Halal food communication and that is true, consumers may not be satisfied with the consumption of the product before being consumed (Kamarulzaman, Madun, & Abdullah , 2017).

Institutional trust: It includes the social trust and the individual personal willingness. To make the decision, individual needs to have the knowledge of related matters from the institutions.



Brand trust: The consumer perception of the brand based on the belief that the brand is credible and responsible for their well-being. A brand that provide details for consumers and build credibility in fulfilling contracts to meet the needs of Muslim consumers and guarantee that their products meet Halal standards will create high level of consumer satisfaction.

Research methodology

This research used qualitative research method by collect questionnaire from Halal tourist in three 3 star hotels in Hatyai, Thailand at the selected hotels; (1) Hatyai Rama Hotel, (2) Hatyai Holiday Hotel, and (3) Daiichi Hotel. The sample size was determined by using the table of Krejcie & Morgan (1970) was 381 and calculate to 127 respondents from each hotel by using Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table for determining the sample size.

The questionnaire is divided into 2 parts;

Part 1: Seven questions regarding the respondent's general information; Gender, Age, Marital Status, Education Level, and Employment Status.

Part 2: 21 open-ended questions to measure the independent variables, mediating and dependent variables of the attitudes towards Halal food service standard for tourism.

The statistical analysis in this research: (1) Descriptive analysis is use to explore the pattern of respondents' demographics. (2) Mean and Standard deviation is use to find the average and error of all respondents answer I part 2, and (3) Multivariate Analysis is use to see the effective between one variable and several variables.

Findings

There were male (45.7%) and female (54.3%) respondents. Most of the respondents were in the age ranges of 35- 44 (27.8%), 25-34 (23.1%) and the rest are lower than 25 (21.8), 45-54 (16.3%), 55-64 (8.1%) and the lowest is upper than 65 (2.9%).

The result of respondents has shown as follows; Together (56.4%), Single (38.3), Divorce (2.9%), and the lowest is Separate (2.4). The level of respondents' education are Bachelor Degree (30.2%), Senior high school (26.8%), Master Degree (14.2%), Diploma (10.5%), Primary School (9.4%), and the lowest is Junior high school (8.9) From total 381 residents, most of them is the government officer (28.6%), Employed (27.6%) , Student (17.8%) Business owner (10.2), Agriculturist (7.9), State enterprise officer (4.2), Retire (2.1), and the lowest is Unemployed (1.6%).



The total result of the customer expectations has effect to Customer Satisfaction (4.27%). The highest result is I have an expectation that food and drinks with Halal logo will be satisfactory (4.33%). Second is I have an expectation that all food and drinks with Halal logo are of high quality and not have anything wrong (4.28%). The lowest is I have an expectation that food and drinks with Halal logo will be worthy of the price I have to pay for (4.21%).

The total result of Religiosity has effects with Customer Satisfaction (4.25%). The highest result is I enjoy attending the activities of Islam ex: Fasting in Ramadan, Pray (4.29%). Second is knowing the ingredients of Halal food is importance for me (4.26%) and the lowest is I usually spend time trying to understand the requirements of Sharia law (4.21%).

The total result of Information trust has effects with Customer Satisfaction (4.24%). The highest result is I believe that the Halal food service standard information published through the channels that I have received has proven to be true (4.26%). Second is I believe that the information on Halal food service standard is credible (4.24%). The lowest result is I believe that the authors and those who disseminate Halal food service standard information has knowledge about Halal (4.23%)

The total result of Institutional trust has effects with Customer Satisfaction (4.27%). The highest result is I feel confident when I see Halal certification endorsed by The Halal Standard Institute of Thailand (4.30%). Second is The Halal Standard Institute of Thailand can justify the Halal certification (4.27%). The lowest is The Halal Standard Institute of Thailand pays attention to customer concerns (4.24%).

The total result of Brand trust has effects with Customer Satisfaction (4.28%). The highest result is I trust the Halal brand (4.31%). Second is The Halal brand would be an acceptable compensation for me if there is a problem with the product or service (4.30%). The lowest is Halal brand is important (4.24%).

The total result of Customer Satisfaction has effects with Customer Satisfaction (4.25%). The highest result is I am satisfied with the restaurant in a hotel that has Thailand's Halal certification (4.30%). Second is I am satisfied with my decision to select a restaurant that is guaranteed by Thailand's Halal certification (4.23%). The lowest is I will choose a restaurant in a hotel that is guaranteed by the Thailand's Halal food service standard. Food and service in the restaurant must meet or exceed expectations (4.21%).

The total result of Customer Attitude was almost strongly agree ($\bar{x}=4.24$). The highest result is I will continue to select the restaurant in a hotel that has Thailand's Halal food service standard certification (4.28%). Second is I will present the positive information about the restaurant in a hotel that has Thailand's Halal food service



standard certification (4.24%). The lowest is I would still choose the brand of the hotel that has Thailand's Halal food service standard certification, although there are other cheaper choices (4.22%).

Multiple regression analysis used to find the effect of Halal food service standard toward customer attitude by used the summary result of independent variables. The factors effective of customer attitude toward three 3 star hotels in a context of Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism by used stepwise regression are Customer satisfaction (0.383), Brand trust (0.279), Religiosity (0.151), and Customer expectation (0.138).

Discussion/Recommendation

The Customer Expectation has positive effects to Customer Satisfaction. Therefore, the result of this research has consistent with Fornell (1996). The research stated if food or service contain Halal logo has better quality than consumer expectations, this will create a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

The Religiosity has positive effects to Customer Satisfaction. The result is consistent with the study of Duman (2011), Consumer behavior towards a certain product varies depending on the levels of religiosity. The research attempt to find the relationship of religiosity and Muslim concern in terms of customer satisfaction, the level of religiosity will effect to customer satisfaction.

The Information trust has positive effects to Customer Satisfaction. This is consistent with the study of Kamarulzaman, Madun, & Abdullah (2017), If the customer receive the halal regulation which is true and credible, they will be satisfied with product or/and service.

The Institution trust has positive effects to Customer Satisfaction. The positive effects toward Institutional trust and Consumer Satisfaction is consistent of the study of Mahiranissa & Hudrasyah (2015).

The researcher has stated that then customer has more confident and trust when they perceived the certification from the reliable institutional, this will increase more satisfaction level. But if they not trust in Institutional who provide the certificate, they will check the ingredients before receive products or service.

The Brand trust has positive effects to Customer Satisfaction. This result is consistent with the study of Chanin, Sriprasert, Rahman, & Don (2015). Customer are trust and increase more satisfaction if the brand with halal logo can reliable in accomplishing its promise. To understand and support their needs, this could lead to customer's satisfaction behavior.



The Customer Satisfaction has positive effects to Customer Attitude. The result is consistent the study of Khalek & Ismail (2015), Customer has positive attitude when they satisfied with quality and accuracy by follow Sharia Law.

The study of Halal Food Service Standard for Tourism and Its Effect on Customer Attitude: A Study of Three 3 Star Hotels in Hatyai, Thailand is a study of Customer attitude toward Halal logo and reaction of customer when they know that the guarantee of Halal food service standard is from Thai government. This confirm the important of Logo and promote to the restaurant in hotel or any other related to follow and check with the Thai government to satisfied customer and made them feel positive with your brand by under Halal food service standard for tourism. This can help the operator see how important of Halal logo. To make a customer have positive attitude with your brand is one of the most important to make them become your loyalty.

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