

Islamic Hotel from Concept to Design, Operation, and Management; an Operational Hotel Model Through the Exploratory Analysis of Faiths-Base Needs

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Abstract

The demand for Islamic hotel services is increasing as a result of current trends in the global halal trends. Islamic tourism is a propensity in Muslim countries due to induced consciousness, islamophobia, and religiosity among Muslim tourists. It is essential to provide an operational model for potential suppliers and investors to build up an Islamic hotel for the target community. While analyzing the supply side's awareness and acceptance level, this study will address the operating model of the Islamic hotel. The hotelier and entrepreneur are constantly introducing new concepts and ideas into the hotel business to attract new customers or boost customer retention, as well as to successfully operate, sell, and generate profit. The Islamic hotels bring an additional spiritual lead to other commercial business models. The operational model presented in this manuscript shows several features and attributes from the demand and supply side, which filtered through the sharia law acceptability for the focused group.

Keywords: *Islamic hotel, Dhiyafa, Faith-based needs, guestology, pull-push theory*

1. Introduction

One of the most relevant industries helping the tourism industry is the lodging sector or vice versa. The share of the global lodging industry was US\$771 billion in 2018 amid 0.2 million hotels and 15 million guestrooms, while the Global Food and Beverage industry contribute US\$2.2 trillion (Research,2020). The Statistica (2019) reported the trade value of the global hotel industry in 2018 was US\$ 600.49 bn. The International tourist arrivals touched with a 5% increase to 1.4billion and earned US\$ 1.7 trillion as 10% of the global GDP (UNWTO, 2019). The core of Islamic economy segments is anticipated to generate a total consumer spending of \$3.2 trillion in 2024 (Dinarstandard, 2019). Because of positive economic impacts such as

foreign-exchange earnings, jobs generation, and domestic investments, the developing countries have used tourism as a tool for quick growth (Majid et al 2015). In recent years new types of tourism such as Islamic tourism was recognized and practiced in several Muslim countries (Samori&Sabtu,2014). The demography of the Muslim population was estimated an increase to 2.2 billion by 2030 as 35% of the world population by 2030 (Pew Research Centre, 2011). The Muslim under the age of 30 years will be one billion, equal to 60% of the population (GMTI, 2017). The development of Muslim tourism stands an innovative and emerging segment for the last 20 years. The Islamic lifestyle market is on the rise (e.g., *halal* food, Islamic tourism, and finance) and turns to be an important segment of the world economy. Islamic hotel as a segment of Islamic tourism has many names considering the religious needs of the focused customers, i.e., Islamic hotel, Muslim friendly hotel, halal hotel, Sharia-compliant hotel. Islamic hotel can be defined as a hotel that provides services by Sharia law and guidelines (Shamim, 2009). Hotel in the religious evaluation is a new addition to the Muslim lifestyle (Jurattanasan, & Jaroenwisan, 2014).

In contrast, Halallicity or Islamicity in hotel services is a cultural norm but it is a new hotel concept in Pakistan for the majority of our hoteliers while most hoteliers are unknown to the certified products and services. However, the majority of hotels are dry hotels and mixed hotels, these hotels serve few basic tangible facilities related to Muslim products and services. The main goal of the new hotel development model is to successfully operate, sell it and draw demand for development and investment. In a broad view, a hotel is a facility that offers both accommodation and food to its potential guest. A new operational hotel model as a new strategy applies to determine the suitability and development of the hotel facility structure in locations such as new entrants. The establishment of a new business assessment is obtained through the conceptual and experiential models but operational models help practitioners to shift information from “academic and conceptual” models to functional utility.

1.1 Objectives of the study

This study will focus on;

- To explore “Islamic Hotel” concepts initiatives and practices
- To assess the attributes of Islamic hotels through faith-based needs.
- To devise an operational model for Islamic hotels.

2. Literature Review

Islam is a way of life for Muslims (Hakim, 2001) while Muslims are intended to carry religious obligations (Haque, Sarwar, Yasmin, Tarofder, & Hossain, (2015) anywhere, everywhere as a core component of *Eman* and Islamic teachings (Zaman, 2015). The company's religious affiliation has a significant influence on purchase intentions (Amin, Safdar, & Ali, 2021). Religion affiliation is also a significant cultural element; it has a powerful effect on people's opinions, and habits, and upon their buying and spending patterns (Khandai, Bajpai & Agarwal, 2014). Muslims' product and service reflect their Islamic beliefs, Islamic image as Allah commands a Muslim demeanor that enables them to purchase or use halal goods (Razalli, Abdullah, & Hassan, 2012). Hospitality generally means an act of kindness and welcoming guests, strangers, or customers to satisfy their needs with food, drink, or accommodation for those away from home (King, 1995; Telfer, 1996). The art of recognizing and comprehending guests is referred to as guestology

(Solnet, & Kandampully, 2008). Disney executive first coined the term “guestology” to identify guests’ needs, wants, stereotypes, and emotions (Brown, nil).

According to Omer, (2018) during the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم period, Masjid Nabvi was used to host dignitaries, when the tent was put in place in which some of the Prophet's visitors to get hospitality. The visiting delegates, and even non-Muslims or recent converts, use to stay from time to time while some visitors would also reside in the suffah; a lodging section for the poorest (Omer, 2018:51-60). Most visitors were lodged in spacious houses that belonged to most of the associates. i.e., during the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم time, the home of Ramlahbt. al-Harith al Najjariyyah served as one of the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم guests' lodgings (Omer, 2018). The idea of hospitality is further instigated; during the reign of Caliph Umar al-Khattab, Dar al-Dhiyafah (guesthouses) was founded to provide travelers with good accessibility (Saffinee et al.,2017). The commercial notation of Islamic hospitality is focusing on the revival of the traditions and virtues of Islam (Alam, 2020). The expansion of commerce in different empires necessitated the introduction of such buildings to accommodate traders and travelers. The caravanserais are an eastern correspond to the Inns in the west built along the main routes, in addition, the Arabic term *rebāt*, meaning a fortified rest house on a land route. Herodotus mentioned Caravanserais as lodging built along the road, and Al-Muqaddasi, the Arab geographer in 985 CE, mentioned caravansary (Chanrasekhar,2013).

In the period of Sher Shah, Suri's saris were safe and comfortable lodgings to accommodate Hindus and Muslims separately, while mosques with an imam were also employed (Chanrasekhar,2013:1-13). The new era hotel concept was introduced to Muslims during the colonial period (Alam, 2019). Although hospitality is commonly connected with the economic provision of lodging, food, and beverage, it also includes features of sociability, rewarding people, and the social and commercial dimensions of Islam (Stephenson, 2014). Muslim tourists, vacationers, holiday visitors, and business personnel are looking for a family-friendly, peaceful, relaxing, culturally sensitive, and experience-enhancing hotel that should consider Islamic hospitality (Alserhan, et al.,2018). For Most researchers, hospitality as a mixture of tangible and intangible components such as food, beverages, beds, ambience and environment, and the behavior of staff (Cassie, 1983). The law of hospitality in Islam is receiving and serving guest(s) doing in good intention, generosity, the act of charity, and kindness (Alam, 2019). The hoteliers need to meet and ensure Muslim travelers' religious needs, i.e., Halal food, salah or prayers, orientation to Mecca, and Halal supplies and information on pure (Hashim, et al 2006). Implementing the Islamic hotel concept necessitates reengineering and established business processes or SOP to adhere to Islamic principles. Muslim Friendly Hotels are all hotels with services and amenities that adhere to or at least some of the faith-based demands of Muslim tourists (Alam, 2020).

Therefore, these hotels are expected to serve halal food and beverages, but they must also conduct their operations according to Shariah principles. Several Muslim countries, including Pakistan, have been banned by law anything with any interest, haram food and drinks sales, and all activities against Islamic Sharia. Yet, there seem to be no formal requirements for the Islamic hotel category, just an analysis. Rosenberg and Choufany (2009) Focus on operations, architecture, interiors design, and finances (Hashim et al.,2006). Many researchers considering the onion diagram adopted from Solomon et al. (2008: 1-608) provides a valuable framework to display the different levels of Islamic services in hotels; each layer adds more Islamic values in terms of services (Henderson, 2010; Nor ZafirMdSalleh et al, 2014). Solomon's (2018) onion

diagram represents the service levels from basic to more improved., core; essential that bring the guests., Actual; tangible products., Augmented; enhanced or added).Saffnee (2019) identified 12 elements of Muslim-friendly hotels, representing the frequency that each aspect was discussed in the literature. Praying mate, Qiblah signage, Minibar, halal toiletries, Quran with translation. Thisresearchmakes significant sense for “Halal” service and product in tourism. Moreover, prayer rooms, prayer mat, Qibla direction, call for prayers, providing Quran copies, Islamic television channels, Ramadan meals, interpreter, gender-separated entertainment and Spas facilities, and cultural understanding, etc., promote “Halal” tourism (TTG Asia, 2014). Even provided soap, shampoo, and toothpaste in the hotel room are “Halal” certified .Studies indicate that hotel guest pleasure is based on lodging, foodservice, leisure activities, and other value-added services.If avoiding halal requirements from the Islamic hotel concept, it is believed that the focused Muslim customers may not be comfortable with accommodation services (Alam, 2020). Consequently, the providers may miss the prospect of penetratingthe Muslim market, either local or global. The study confirmed that Muslim tourists would not like to jeopardize their faith-based needs when travelling in under-served areas(Saffinee, S. S., Jamaludin, M. A., & Halim, S. A. 2021; WARC, 2019).

3. Theoretical Framework

The law of supply and demand as economic theory is one of the basic concepts of regulating an economy(Foster, 1981). The law of supply and demand is an economic theory that explains a basic principle of economics and lays the foundation for the market system. Theeconomic theory explains how supply and demand are related to each other and how that relationship influences the price of goods and services (Klein, 1983). The pull factors are the motivations factor affecting a person to visit a particular destination (Buhalis, 2003; Chan & Baum, 2007). Tourism is ‘the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities were undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their need (Dimitriou,2018). The above definitions can be linked to the “travel behavior” in tourism including the “movement of people either Muslim or non-Muslim tourists,” which represents the demand side and activities/facilities to cater to tourists’ needs (in destination), which represent the supply side. Islamic Hotel is creating a durable demand in many countries because the overall utility and practicality is not exhausted in the short run and will be available for a longer time. The market demand of the Islamic Hotel’s products includes all possible individual demand for every services type in all possible prices. The demand for Islamic or halal services is analyzed by faith-based services 2.0 in the category of “need to have,” “good to have,” and “nice to have” (Oktadina, et al., 2020). From the economic point of view, supply means (Islamic Hotel products and services) that producers are willing to provide at a particular price over a given period. Halal is known today as a universal concept(Baharuddin, et al., 2015). Therefore, *Halal* is now considered a guide related to food consumption and is developing entrepreneurship comprised of an ecosystem of producers, consumers, and certifying authorities, which now extends beyond the Muslim population. The Muslim market is comprised of 1.5 billion Muslims (Charles, 2011), whichwill be 2.8 billion in 2050(Oktadina, et al., 2020). Therefore, *Halal* is now considered a guide related to food consumption and is developing entrepreneurship comprised of an ecosystem of producers, consumers, and certifying authorities, which now extends beyond the Muslim population. To understand Muslim tourists’ behavior, marketers need to understand the demand side; the needs of Muslim travelers in the context of

Islamic tourism as explained through economic theory see Figure: 1. Battour and Ismail (2016) explained that the customer's intentions in destination about the product and service offered. The increasing number of Muslim tourists creates the requisite to understand their needs and requirements when traveling (Musa, Mohezar Ali, & Moghavvemi, 2016). The growing Muslim population has resulted in demand for *Islamic* hotels. Most hotels need to take an inclusive approach in attaining the *Halal* certification for their service operations practices (Razalli, Yusoff, & Roslan, 2013).

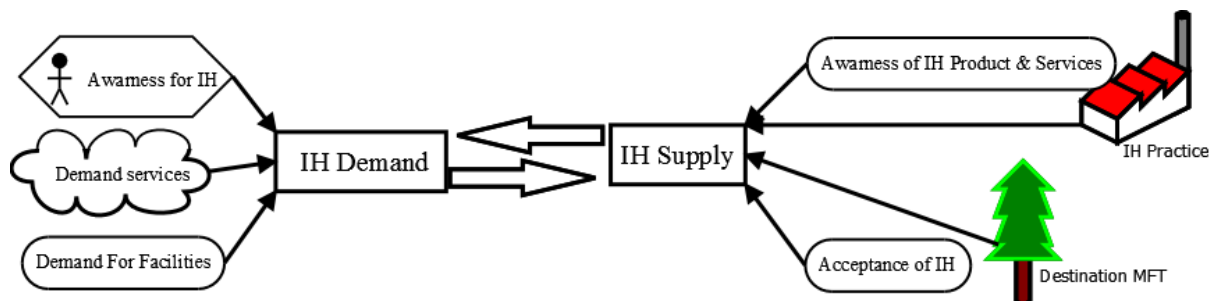


Figure 1: Demand and supply in hospitality

4. Methodology

The mixed-method is applied as a methodological approach across a systematic questionnaire survey and interviews from the industry stakeholders (primary data) and supported by secondary data, including the MFT accommodations and related previous research records. We also employed comparative methodologies to assess the practice of Islamic hotels in other countries, for example, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, and Turkey. An average 20-30-minute interview was conducted with 50 tourism & hospitality experts to imply their consent about Islamic tourism products. We collected 202 completed questionnaires for group TT&H and 52 questionnaires from hoteliers.

Analysis of data is done through descriptive analysis on SPSS. The three studies were conducted based on the expert's views to analyze the fundamental attributes for Islamic hotels to quantify the features and acceptability to the market demand by keeping the sharia aspects in consideration. Table 1; gives the matrix of Experts' perception about Islamic hotel, Table 2; gives the views of experts in the hotel practice area, and Table 3; provide the classification of primary products & services type for Islamic hotel.

5. Justification

It is suggested that the name *Islamic Hotel* is the most acceptable term to be used because it shows some degree of adherence to the socio-cultural life of Muslims. *Sharia* is the Islamic moral code outlined in both the *Quran*, the *hadith*, and the *Sharia* focuses on how you follow Islamic principles in daily life. Therefore, the focus is how the believers will utilize the true spirit of Islamic culture and values in routine life, including travel and hospitality businesses. Commercial accommodation compliance with Islamic norms as Islamic Hotel will be a new experience and new Islamic Hotel business model for Pakistani hoteliers. When discussing the modalities and requirements of the Islamic Hotel, the respondents were agreed to develop and provide services to this segment after getting a capacity building. The experts of studies expressed generally show

their adherence towards Islamic hotels and are reflected in Table 1. The respondents also itemized that the standards of products and services represented in Table 3 for Islamic Hotel to be established comply with sharia law in Pakistan and take the initiative as directed by OIC, COMCEC, SERIC. The best practices are present in many Muslim countries, where the relevant law and standards are established and matured, i.e., Malaysia, UAE, KSA, Qatar, etc. According to COMCEC (2017) and Al-Musa et al. (2017) concluded that 30% want *halal*-friendly facilities and services, 50% use *halal*-friendly facilities if such choice exists, 20% do not look for *halal*-friendly facilities and services.

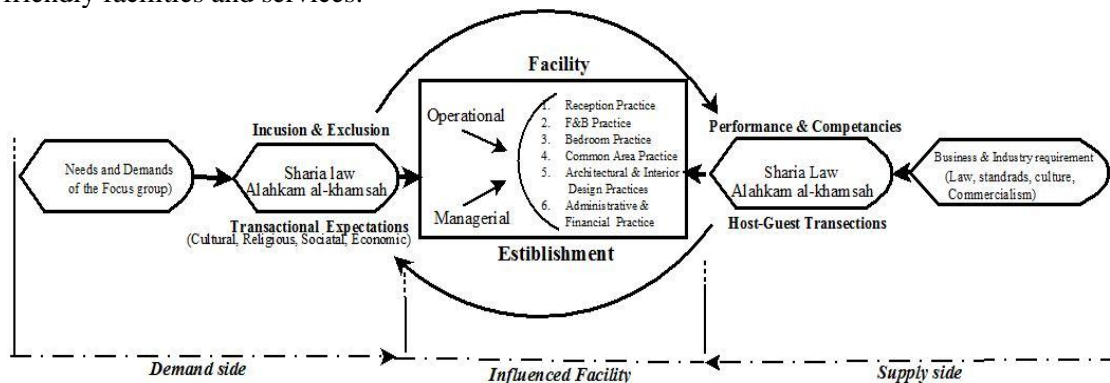


Figure 2: Islamic Hotel operational model

6. Discussion

The Sawerschel (2020) seven components that are significant for managing and operating a hotel are applied to Islamic Hotel concept as follows; i) Storytelling; Islamic hospitality a new story, reality & virtuality of Products ii) People; trained HR for provision of Islamic Hotel services iii) Space; Hotel designing exterior, interior and incorporating new ideas iv) Identity; a niche market concept of Islamic Hotel for target group v) Services; certified services with the level of technology for a Focus group vi) Content; the contents of printing / digital plate form to encourage guests and improve the brand reputation and vii) Channels; by using multiple ways to hear your message of uniqueness as USP).

The attributes of Islamic hotels as products and services are to be implemented in the Islamic hotel concept by describing them into Fard, Wajib, Mustahab, Makruh, and Haram activities. Because all the human acts in sharia law must be according to the Al Ahkamul Khams, the proposed working model of Islamic hotels is given in Figure: 2, based on the descriptions of a working model of Islamic hotel, it is based on the operation, management and technical dimension include the product and services offered to the guest by filtering and sorting through the sharia rules of AlkamulKhamas. The working model Islamic hotel is expressed through the expert's perception of awareness, attitude, and acceptance expressed in table 1. From the supply side, the experts of the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan showed an optimistic approval of the Islamic hotel with the 25 customized products and services mentioned in table 3.

The basic elements of the model are;

- a. **Business & Industry requirement:** subject to legal control, industry standards, norms, and rules associated with the hotel industry, duties, and the behaviors of both host and guest as law and regulations, certifications, and registrations.
- b. **Performance and competencies:** The management of the facility and skills and performance of the employees for quality standards.

- c. **Host/guest transaction:** The degree to which a host assumes responsibility for a guest's comfort and safety whether the guest respects or denies the host's responsibility represents as guestology.
- d. **Inclusion/ exclusion:** Representation of the host welcoming the Muslim guest while considering as part of sunnah with signifying inclusion; the opposite is the exclusion of leaving 'OTHERS who is not fulfilling the rules of inclusion' unwelcome as technical elements.
- e. **The facility or establishment** refers to an Islamic commercial accommodation specialty designed for Muslim guests with tangible elements, architectural and structural requirements. The products and services are customized through the sharia laws by filtering through the AhkamulKhams.
- f. **Transactional expectations:** The term encompasses the commercial transaction expectations as intangible elements also include the guest expectation and benefits of spirituality, cultural supports, Islamic societal benefits during the process of creation, consumption, and communication.

6.1 Demand side

The guest demand faith-based needs/demand, which was explained through many research studies, is the demand of the Muslim travelers by the purpose of their trips. Leisure topped the list (62%), followed by visits to family and friends (54%), religious (32%), business (21%), education (16%), and medical purposes (5%) (COMCEC: 2016). The COMCEC (2016) further investigated that 53% of the respondents stayed in hotels (13% in 5-star hotels, 23% in 4-star hotels, and 17% in less than 4-star hotels), while 30% stayed with family and friends, 12% rented houses/apartments and 5% stayed in hostels. The Muslim traveler is motivated to select a destination for religiosity due to their faith-based needs.

6.2 Supply side

The supply side may include designing or redesigning the hotel, and the most critical part is to make sure the service transaction strictly complies with Islamic principles. Gnoth (1997) defines push factors as internal motivations or conditions that lead visitors to pursue experiences that will satisfy their needs. Pull factors are destination attractions, tourists' experience that is explained in the faith-based need 2.0. Most push factors are intrinsic motivators, including the desire for escape, relaxation, prestige, health, fitness, adventure, and social interaction, as mentioned by COMCEC studies. Pull factors emerge due to the attractiveness of a destination, including cultural, natural attractions, religiosity, Muslim Friendly facilities in the destinations.

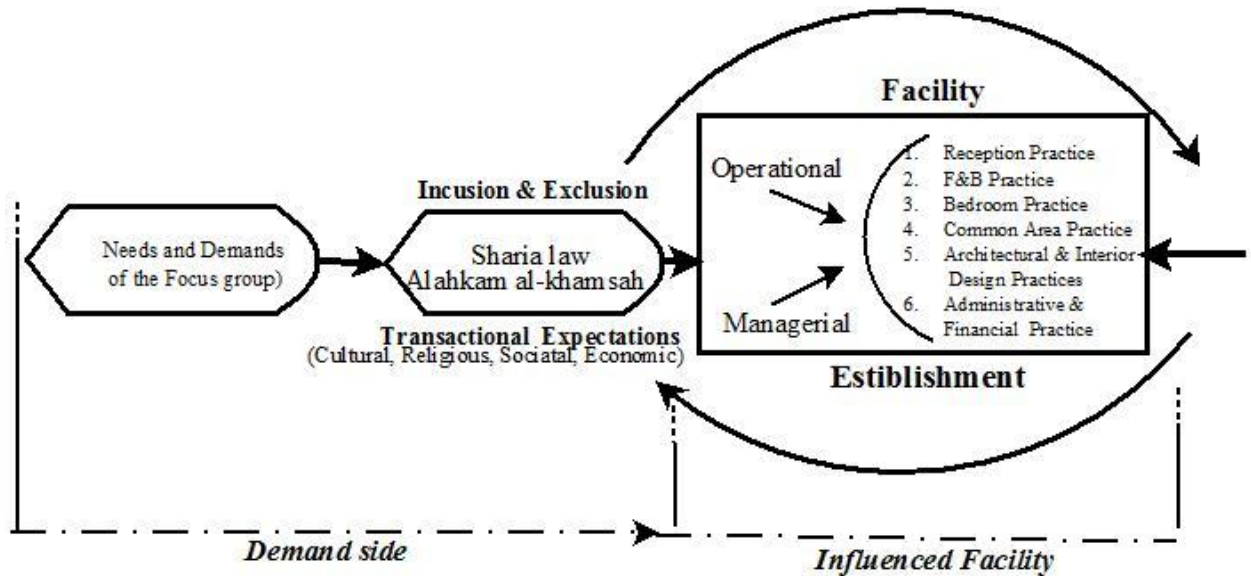


Figure 3: Demand side of the Islamic hotel

The MFT facilities include enhanced tourism services, such as new hotels, amusement parks, resort developments, and shopping complexes, as well as transport networks, such as modern roads and airports to promote regional mobility Uysal, M. 1998; Liu, 2018. All the faith-based needs in the form of products and services will be Sharia approved for consumption. It is worth mentioning that the hotel operators will follow the concept and practices in their operation, design, and administrative practices in a true spirit that will be evaluated. The operational and designing components are visible rather than the financial part as it involves more back-of-the-house administration, which requires thorough checking to ensure a transparent process. The Islam hotel will follow all the performance, competencies, standards, and rules of business in hospitality as per the state law see Figure 4.

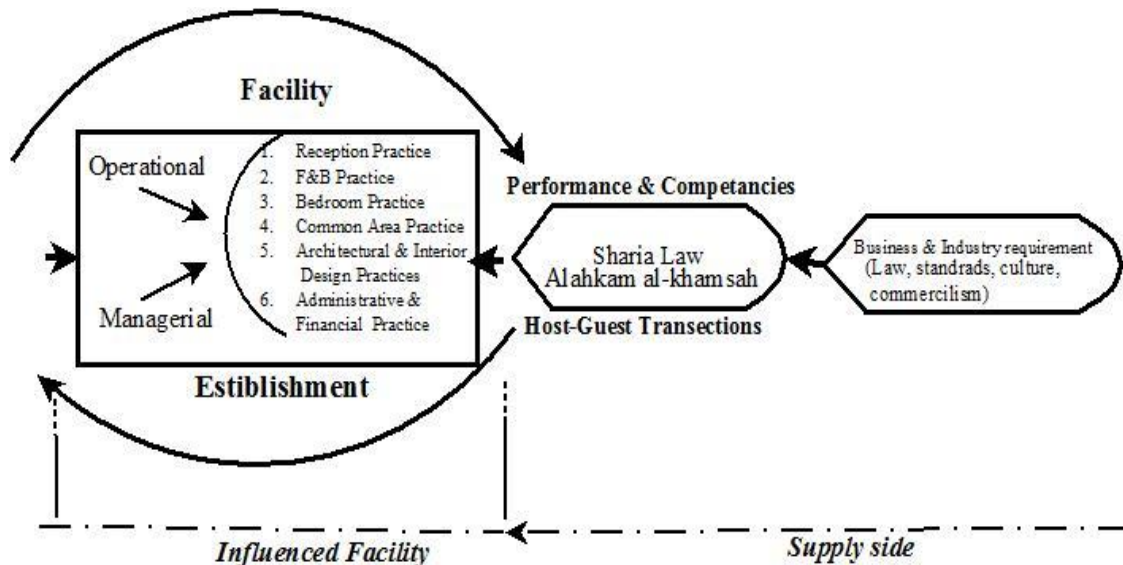


Figure 4: Supply-side of the Islamic hotel

6.3 Islamic Hotel Facility

The Islamic Hotel will satisfy the demand by providing a system based on professional ethics under Islamic principles for the operation and management of the hotel. The perception about the Islamic hotel was identified and listed in table 1 about the three As; awareness, attitude, acceptance, The Islamic Hotel operational model is represented in Figure 2 with an average value in six areas. The classification of Islamic Products and services is given in Table 2, which consists of six main categories; Common Area Practice, Reception practice F&B Practice comprises 02 areas and 25 criteria statements, Bedroom Practice, Administrative Practice. In each category, various statements and services were evaluated for Islamic credentials. The prioritized twenty-five items are modeled the mandatory items consist of 4 items as mandatory/needed services, optional services include 07 items as good services, and the nice services include 14 items as Add-on being the foundation of the level of products and services.

Conclusion

In Islamic hospitality guestology, tangible, intangible, operational, managerial, financial, and technical elements are very important segments while Islamic Hotel is a new niche product, an Islamic hospitality brand as a new ethnic and spiritual version of the lodging. The standardization of Islamic hotels based on “Halal attributes” Serving halal food and drink may not be the only option to comply with Sharia law, but ancillary services, operations, and administrations in the hotel will also be invested based on Sharia values. Some Pakistani hotels comprise the basic elements of Islamic hotels, but they compromise on many Islamic hotel attributes. This study suggests that the idea is practically valid in Pakistan because of the 97% Muslim population, and some real demand for faith-based services. The Islamic hotel already possesses a strong market and motivated customers; therefore, Islamic hotel is proposed as a new competitive brand of services for focused group customers. The Islamic practical model presented in this study is designed after taking a multi-layer study on the supplier side.

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Table 1: Expert's perception for Islamic hotel

Perception about Islamic Hotel concept	Nos of Statements asked in each category	Mean value
Awareness	16	3.19
Attitude	22	3.87
Acceptance	7	3.59

Table 2: Practice areas of Islamic hotel

Practice's areas	Nos of Statements asked in each category	Mean value
1. Reception Practice	9	4.18
2. F&B Practice	6	4.47
3. Bedroom Practice	13	4.32
4. Common Area Practice	7	4.45
5. Architectural & Interior Design Practices	6	4.49
6. Administrative Practice	7	4.66

Table 1: Priority Services for Islamic hotel

Priority products		FAITH BASE NEEDS
1	Halal Menu	MANDATORY GROUP 1
2	Halal Kitchen	
3	No Alcohol Permitted	
4	Prayer mattes/Quran, Qiblah direction	
1	Prayer time	Optional Group 2
2	Ramadan service Iftar	
3	Ramadan service Sehar	
4	Code of conduct for employee	
5	Finance & Operations on Sharia	
6	Architectural orientation of toilet	
7	Bidet & Muslim hand shower	

1	Congregational Prayer prayers	Add-On Group 3
2	Separate spa, gym pool or separate time	
3	Separate floor male & female or families	
4	Male & Female dress code	
5	Non-halal activities, no disco, No dance party	
6	No Music	
7	No Human figures, painting etc	
8	All staff to be Muslim	
9	All amenities must be halal	
10	The currency exchange rate is the same	
11	Free internet or only pay for usage	
12	Babysitting Facility	
13	Hotel near to the proximity of Islamic activity area	
14	Islamic Financial Management system	

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