

## Marketing Strategy of Umrah Travel Agent and Religious Attitude in Indonesia

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### Abstract

Religious tourism has become a trend nowadays. In Indonesia, religious tourism is dominated by Hajj and Umrah departures. Every year, the increasing demand for Hajj and Umrah services makes Hajj and Umrah travel agents emerge, both legal and illegal, and compete. Several strategies are implemented to capture this huge market opportunity. This has implications for the blurring of the spiritual dimension of worship itself. This paper reveals how the religious travel industry influences society and its impact on people's religious attitude. This study explores data through in-depth interviews with travel agency managers, KBIHU (Hajj & Umrah Guidance Group), and pilgrims and conducting document studies from these institutions in direct written form or through electronic media. This study finds that the travel agents' ways of business in attracting the pilgrims are through internal strategies such as package and price variations, and also by external methods to establish partnerships with KBIHU, individual agents, and public figures. Practical implications and Originality/value-These ways of business impact the religious attitude of Muslims, which are consumptive and profane. This research results can be used as material for evaluating the implementation of Hajj and Umrah trips, both by the government, travel agencies, and prospective pilgrims. This is a pioneer empirical study that focuses on religious tourism and religious attitude of Indonesian muslims.

### Introduction

The number of Muslims who want to go on hajj pilgrimage each year has constantly increased. This can be seen from the waiting list, which the Ministry of Religion officially publishes. In 2020, the list of queues reached 4,225,698. In contrast, the quota for the departure of the hajj is around 200 thousand every year. Long lines are in Bantaeng Regency of South Sulawesi for 46 years. Based on data from the Ministry of Religion website, in East Java in 2013, the pilgrims who registered that year will be lifted in 2026. The pilgrims must wait for 13 years. In 2020, the waiting period would be 26 years. This long queue is expected to continue to increase along with the increasing number of pilgrim registrants. Likewise, with the umrah pilgrimage, whereas in 2018, the number of Indonesian umrah pilgrims reached 1,050,000. In 2019 April, it reached 849,000; from August to December (after the hajj), it increased by around 443,000. Indonesia occupies second place after Pakistan and sends umrah pilgrims to Saudi Arabia. CNN Indonesia reported that the development of the number of umrah pilgrims would undoubtedly continue to increase along with the length of the hajj pilgrim waiting list (CNNIndonesia, 2020).

This umrah phenomenon is a profitable business niche for the travel industry. In the past ten years, the associated institution has encountered hajj and umrah travel agents such as ASPHURINDO (Association of Hajj Organizing Umrah and In-Bound of Indonesia), HIMPUIH (Association of Organizing Umrah and Special Hajj), AMPHURI (Muslim Association of Hajj and Umrah Organizers of the Republic of Indonesia), KESTHURI (Hajj and Umrah Travel Unit of the Republic of Indonesia), PRATAMA (Hajj and Umrah Travel Agency Association), and SAPUHI (Umrah and Hajj Indonesia Organizing Unity) (Arif, 2019). Each of these associations has a travel agent that numbered hundreds of scattered in entire Indonesia. Based on the records of the Directorate of Bina Umrah and Special Hajj, the number of travel agents has reached 1,436 agents, and 40% of them are unofficial status (Mukhtar, 2020). The number of these travel agents, both officially and

unofficially, shows umrah has become a contested business field. Many agents do not meet the standards yet participate in the competition. The tight competition requires travel agents to perform the right ways in marketing the product. Vulgar ways, opened, out of rules, and put aside the dimensions of pilgrimage become difficult parts to avoid.

The excitement of travel business institutions with various business strategies has succeeded in increasing the number of umrah pilgrims each year quantitatively. The Travel Industry also successfully expands market segmentation qualitatively. The umrah pilgrims are no longer dominated by city residents. Many rural communities also begin to go for umrah. In fact, not a few of them are old and newly traveled abroad. Umrah pilgrimage, which used to be done mainly by older people, is now a lot of millennial youngsters. Even for certain circles, umrah pilgrimage becomes a lifestyle that makes it not only a tour, but a religious value (Jawapos, 2018). Nowadays, the existence of umrah pilgrimage has become a travel trend of traveling in filling the holidays of the community. Umrah pilgrimage is also included in the environment of politicians, entrepreneurs, and celebrities as a power tool, boosting their popularity, and imagery justification of obedience. Umrah pilgrimage also becomes an outlet disappointment for facts that cannot face life problems (Sucipto, 2013).

The fact above shows that the religious tourism travel industry, especially the umrah pilgrimage, has succeeded in making this pilgrimage essential for some Muslim communities in all circles. It also indicates that the business ways carried out by travel agents managed to affect the community.

Research related to the travel industry's ways of business has been done a lot. In general, such research is orienting its studies at the industry's level of service and facilities as a business institution engaged in the service sector (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008). Trauer and Ryan, in their research, stated that the travel industry offering a unique trip with particular goals must design a business strategy by understanding the specificity in the trip (Trauer & Ryan, 2005). Some research related to the business ways developed by the travel industry can be classified into two domains: internal and external strategies.

The internal strategy is carried out by positioning consumers as the center for business development. Consumers are considered as a community with value. The company understands this value as the basis for fulfilling customer satisfaction (Dev et al., 2009; Widayati, 2020). In their research, Trauer and Ryan also found the importance of the intimacy dimension, involving consumer emotions in tourism activities. The emotional involvement is done in two ways: through a menu of activities and the process of sharing with others from home to tourist destinations (Trauer & Ryan, 2005). The internal strategy also boils down to the product aspect. Dewi found that products in religious travel packages could be the right strategy if the company succeeded in linking the religious travel packages with recreation, and branding them as a different way of worship (Dewi, 2017). According to Kavaratzis, products must be positioned appropriately in the minds of consumers by considering four things: the tourist's emotional state at the place or destination, previous expectations of the place, learning elements, and satisfaction of the trip to the place (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008).

Meanwhile, the external strategy is carried out by the travel industry by embracing external forces. This strategy is carried out in the form of celebrity endorsement. In his writing, Sucipto stated that a marketing strategy by using artists as marketing interpreters is the right way to improve the company's reputation (Sucipto, 2013). This celebrity endorsement can be in the form of public figures in the field of religion such as ulama (scholars) or *ustadz* (clerics). In a research in Aceh, it was found that Acehnese people who adhere to Islamic sharia had a high level of fanaticism towards a public figure; companies use the influence of these figures to increase the trust and loyalty of the pilgrims (Ricky & Pratiwi, 2017). The external forces are also in the form of religious institutions or organizations in the community. Farooq Haq, in his research, provides recommendations that the travel business industry can cooperate with religious organizations. Pilgrimages, associations, and festivals in religious organizations can be a way to market religion through religious or spiritual tourism (Haq & Yin Wong, 2010).

This paper aims to reveal how the travel industry organizes hajj and umrah pilgrimages in Indonesia, both internally and externally, in marketing its travel products. As a travel industry that manages memorable religious trips with specific purposes, it would be interesting to see how the businesses have been developed,

focusing on the products offered, the facilities provided, and the collaboration with outside parties in growing the business. This paper also connects the way of doing business with Muslim religious attitude. Therefore, this research specifically focuses on how hajj and umrah travel agents carry out their business ways to attract public interest, and how they impact the Muslims' religious attitude.

## **Literature Review**

This research collects some literatures from books and articles. It describes as follows.

### **Religious Tourism**

Religious tourism is simply defined as pilgrimage. Religious means religion from the material side, and its nature is the same as the meaning of religion (Prent et al., 2001). In comparison, tourism is generally understood as traveling to a place. There are three elements in tourism, namely; there is a move, there is a break, and there is a destination other than officials (Results of the conference on international tourism, The United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism in Rome on August 21 to September 5, 1963).

Tourism is a very complex and multidimensional term. Tourism not only talks about how one releases weariness by visiting beautiful and historical places, but it involves many people from various regions with various backgrounds of different traditions and cultures who interact with each other in one place, and it also involves private and government sectors in the management to increase economic incentives. Even in specific contexts, tourism is closely related to religious reasons. Therefore, tourism involves the social, cultural, economic, and religious sectors (Vukonić, 1998).

Thus, the term religious tourism relates to trips outside the region, lodging, and fulfilling religious orders. Another term for religious tourism is pilgrimage. Pilgrimage activities meet the elements in tourism. Therefore, pilgrimage is a part of tourism and thus also requires professional management (Hitrect, 1990).

### ***Umrah Pilgrimage Travel Agent***

The umrah pilgrimage travel agencies in the Regulation of the Ministry of Religion No.15 about Organizing Umrah Pilgrimage Trip in 2015 is referred to as the Umrah Pilgrimage Travel Organizers (PPIU). It is stated in Article 1 that PPIU are travel agencies that have received permission from the Minister to organize umrah pilgrimages. The establishment of this PMA aims to provide the best possible guidance, service, and protection to the pilgrims to perform their pilgrimages according to the rules of Islamic law.

Although the PPIU aims to assist pilgrims for pilgrimages to the holy land, these institutions are business entities that rely on business continuity to have adequate income. The business in the form of travel, then recreational elements will dominate other dimensions, including worship (B. Kim et al., 2020). As an industry that relies on services, the dimension of satisfaction becomes very important. The more they give pleasure, the more people are interested in joining this travel industry. Industrial methods are carried out in service products such as travel packages, excellent service, facilities, and all things that can be pampered to create comfort for the pilgrims (Santini et al., 2015). Comfort will create satisfaction. Satisfaction will have an impact on pilgrim loyalty (Jiang & Zhang, 2016). Loyalty will make consumers repurchase and recommend it to others (Engel et al., 1978).

### ***Marketing Strategy***

Marketing is vital in a business. Marketing will affect the profits earned by the company. The more sales, the more profit a company gets. Therefore, a company must develop steps to market the product appropriately. Marketing strategy is a method taken by a company that includes several main things, namely the target market, product placement in the market, marketing mix, and the level of marketing costs (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

There are many ways that a company can take to improve marketing. These ways include product innovation, rewarding, and multilevel marketing (MLM). Product innovation is usually done by adjusting the product to customer needs or providing discounts (Chen, 2006). In addition, product development that gives product variations according to customer needs and adjusted prices is also a strategic choice that can be applied to increase marketing (Iwu, 2010).

Giving rewards or gifts to customers is also a strategy that has proven successful in increasing customer satisfaction (K. Kim & Ahn, 2017). If customers are satisfied, they tend to become loyal customers and help promote the products they buy (Hallowell, 1996). In other words, if customers can become loyal customers, sales will increase, and thus profits also increase (Evanschitzky et al., 2012).

Likewise, through MLM, the public will recognise the product more quickly because marketing is carried out by many people, even the customers themselves who are members of the network. MLM is proven to increase product sales (Rezvani et al., 2017). The strength of MLM lies in the motivation, bonuses, and utilization of the network so that products can be sold door to door (Zemanian, 1986).

Utilizing the public figures' influence power is the right way to invite people to buy products. The way companies market their products by inviting idols, celebrities, religious figures, political figures, artists, and so on for advertising activities can make a company more quickly recognized by potential customers, especially by fans of the public figure (De Villiers, 2017). This celebrity endorsement method can also create imagination for fans. The involvement of public figures and artists will make the impression of a product being expensive and classy, and usually, the fans of the public figure will imitate their idols (Zipporah & Mberia, 2014). In tourism, this method is prevalent for travel companies and is a strategy that always invites success. People's imagination of the same lifestyle, meeting, and having fun with the idols is a highly expected dream. Therefore, imagination is vital in making travel decisions (Gallarza et al., 2002).

### ***Religious attitude***

People's religious attitude is social action, born from the encouragement of religious values (Weber, 2001). Religious values are absolute, which requires adherents to merge into these absolutes (Bagus, 2005). This dimension of religious absolutism at the practical level often becomes relative when religious attitude comes into contact with the sense of comfort produced by the business industry. The large variety of products and pampering facilities make people consumptive (Enrico, A., Aron, R., & Oktavia, 2014). According to Veblen, this consumerism behavior shifts consumption goals, that is, from needs and functions to social status, lifestyle, and prestige (Deliarnov, 2003).

The dimension of religious absolutism reflected in implementing the umrah pilgrimage can become profane when industrial trinkets cover the religious attitude. This condition can permanently have implications for the depletion of the dimension of religious absolutism. The dimension of religious relativism will be the paramount consideration in carrying out religious orders. The substance of a ritual is understood based on the performer's subjectivity, with worldly goals pursued in pragmatic ways (Jehani, 2005).

Today's postmodern era positions society under the pressure of the forces of production that lead society to a so-called consumption society (Baudrillard, 2011). Industrial powers have polished the implementation of religious tourism into a commercial commodity (B. Kim et al., 2020).

### **Materials and Methods**

This is qualitative-typed field research, and it explored the data through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies, both in written and electronic forms. The interviews were conducted with four managers of PPIU or hajj and umrah travel agents, two KBIHU managers, two individual marketing agents, and four pilgrims. The observations were made by visiting the office and observing the situation and condition of the subject. Meanwhile, the documentation was through collecting written data from the research sites, and tracing information through the websites of each institution.

The researcher analyzed the field data using an interactive model as recommended (Miles & Huberman, 1994), including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The data reduction was a process of summarizing data completely, coding, and grouping it into concept units and categories. The data presentation was organizing the reduced data into the forms of sketch, synopsis, or matrix to enjoy it. The conclusion drawing stage was the researcher's interpretation of the previously processed data. Furthermore, a comprehensive analysis was built by these three processes.

This study also used verification techniques to ensure the data validity. The verification technique used the Cresswell's proposal, with a triangulation of data strategy, which collects data from various sources, such as

interviews, observations, and document analysis to confirm each other. The verification was also carried out with the member checking strategy, where the informant was functioned as a checker of the entire analysis process (Creswell, 2009).

## Results and Discussion

### Result

The increasing number of PPIUs in Indonesia has created unhealthy competition in the hajj and umrah travel industry. Several PPIUs such as Abu Tours, First Travel, Solusi Balad Lumampah, and so on are the travel agents that have used illegal business strategies. According to Becker, illegal business is most likely to occur when demand far exceeds the availability of a product or service. This condition is difficult to avoid because the high number of prospective pilgrims is not balanced with the availability of the existing quota (Becker et al., 2006). Their mistake was due to an error in financial management, which resulted in some pilgrims' inability to depart. However, both legal and illegal PPIUs generally have the same ways of doing business: designing products into several varied packages, setting prices and facilities according to the ability of prospective pilgrims, and collaborating with outside parties as distribution channels with the MLM system along with giving bonuses.

They design the product in several packages; the hajj pilgrimage package is divided into regular hajj and hajj+ (hajj plus). The Haji Plus is designed exclusively with excellent service, which equipped with the shorter time, the closer hotel to the Grand Mosque, and free access for activities and praying. The fare is two to three times the rate of the Regular Hajj. Meanwhile, umrah pilgrimage products are designed to be more varied. Umrah packages are classified into three: cheap, medium, and expensive. Each PPIU makes a different term for the classification. Some term it Super Efficient, Thrifty, and Gold; some also call it Bronze, Silver, and Gold. The level shows the price and facilities provided, the length of the trip, the distance from the hotel, the type of aircraft, additional locations, and so on.

Some large PPIUs have special umrah packages such as Umrah Akbar, Umrah Ramadan, Umrah with Artists, and Umrah Plus Tour. This Umrah Plus Tour performs umrah and makes pilgrimages to historical cities such as Cairo, Turkey, Dubai, Spain, or Palestine. According to one owner of a Travel Agent, these packages are made to meet the needs of the people of praying and also Islamic traveling in all circles: the lower, middle, and upper economic classes, as well as millennial youth (Manager of Arofahmina, 2021, personal communication). One of the pilgrims who took the Umrah Plus Tour package said:

*“... This is a really efficient package! Not only we can go to Mecca and Medina (for pilgrimage), but we can also visit historical places in other countries, and we don't have to go home first yet directly flee to those Muslim countries, in only one round trip!”* (a pilgrimage alumnus of Arofahmina, 2021, personal communication).

Another pilgrim from a mediocre economy had to sold his land for umrah pilgrimage with his family, and he said, *“... For the sake of pilgrimage, I am not worried about running out of living expenses. Since by praying in front of the Kaaba and at the Prophet's (PBuH) tomb, and in God's will, everything will be replaced.”* (a pilgrimage alumnus of Arminareka, 2019, personal communication). Various packages allow them to choose according to their abilities.

Another way of doing business by PPIU is by cooperating with external parties in organizations, generally KBIHU, or individuals. This method is done to build distribution channels for product absorption. KBIHU is an organization that functions to guide people who will carry out hajj or umrah pilgrimages. KBIHU was founded by religious organizations in the community or Islamic boarding schools. In carrying out the pilgrimages of hajj and umrah, people usually choose KBIHU as their organization. Therefore, KBIHU is a strategic partner for PPIU. In every KBIHU activity, PPIU is present as a sponsor. PPIU in the forum was allowed to convey the existence of the institution and offer packages, service facilities in the implementation of hajj and umrah.

Some of the activity forums used to promote products are routine recitations held by KBIHU alumni for each generation which are usually monthly, halal-bihalal, etc. KBIHU members are not only prospective pilgrims who will perform hajj or umrah but also hajj alumni. Through these alumni, promotional activities become

very effective because they are easily influenced by imagining the longing to go back to the Baitullah through umrah or hajj. KBIHU managers, who have become partners in cooperation with PPIU, generally tell their pilgrims that: “Together, we have already gone for hajj; therefore, we want to gather, together in heaven; thus, if one of us wants to go for umrah, we try to do it together; otherwise, just send our best regards to Him (the God almighty).” (Tour guide of Satria Mandiri Persada, 2020, personal communication).

Apart from KBIHU, other parties who are invited to cooperate in distribution channels are individuals. Some PPIUs have generally made provisions regarding individuals who want to become marketing agents. They make it in the form of printed and non-printed brochures posted on the website. A travel agency website states that the cooperation model is in the form of a partnership business. The cooperation structure is to invite people, individuals and groups to buy Hajj Plus or umrah packages. Bonuses are given when they successfully invite them. Bonuses or commissions can be taken in direct or deposit form. Becoming a partner means getting business rights to develop this travel business under the auspices of the travel agent who supervises it (Arminareka, 2021).

The mechanisms established for marketing agencies in organizations and individuals are generally the same. They will be given a bonus for every target that several recruited pilgrims exceed. Bonuses are given in cash, umrah ticket price reduction, vouchers, and even free umrah. Bonuses are offered in ways as a reference result, passive result, and support system. The practice of giving this bonus to several travel agents is in Multilevel Marketing (MLM). However, this kind of bonus has now been replaced by a form of commission.

Commissions are given to partners between 750 thousand to 1.5 million IDR if they can bring one pilgrim and pay in advance of 7 million IDR. The commission will be added if the prospective pilgrim pays their debts. If partners can bring one group (1 bus with 45 people), the commission is given by multiplying it. If this group departs not because of the partner, then the commission is given to each pilgrim in the form of a discounted payment. Each pilgrim gets a discount of between 3 million and 4 million IDR. If the group brings their own guide, each pilgrim will get another discount, allowance, and other facilities. Commissions are also given to pilgrims alumni who can bring their relatives and take advantage of discounts on purchasing suitcases, uniforms, and other attributes. The discount ranges from 4 to 5 million IDR. Commissions or discounts can also be given to prospective partners or the pilgrims if they can mobilize the pilgrim with the Grand Umrah package. The commission can be given as much as 5.5 million IDR per pilgrim, with a down payment of 3 million IDR, with luxurious facilities and services (Arofahmina Manager, 2021, personal communication).

One individual marketing agent who had joined them for three years testified, “... *This job has given me enough income for my family, and at the same time, I can go for pilgrimage for free!*” (Mitra Elteyba, 2018, personal communication). The number of bonuses that marketing agents get in the area can indeed make their lives very fulfilled. Many people become marketing agents when they are not capable enough to go for hajj and umrah. By becoming an agent, they can get work income and get tickets for hajj and umrah for free.

Another business method used is celebrity endorsement. This method is done with the consideration that these celebrities have fanatical fans. PPIU understands that what celebrities do will be followed by their fans. By setting aside some of the capital to hire public figures, it is believed that the company will be able to be replaced by the participation of its fans in performing hajj or umrah. These celebrities can consist of famous artists or popular religious preachers. This method has been applied by several agencies such as the First Travel featuring Syahrini, the Rohmatan Lil Alamin Tour & Travel featuring Eddies Adelia, the Arofahmina featuring Via Vallen, the *Al-Mughtar Tour and Travel* featuring Irwansyah, Zaskiya Sungkar, and Laudia Cintya Bella, the Travel Alhijaz Indowisata featuring Mamah Dedeh, the Salma Tour Umrah & Hajj featuring AA Gym, the Travel Umrah Hajj Labbaika Tour featuring Ustadz Abdul Somad (UAS), and many others. Regarding this, the travel agency manager said, “... As public figures, celebrities must be allowed to invite their fans to something positive.” (Arofahmina Manager, 2021, personal communication).

## **Discussion**

PPIU is a travel industry that makes hajj and umrah a product and is developed with business strategies that generate profits by recruiting as many prospective pilgrims as possible. Based on the data above, the PPIU's business methods are classified in two directions: internal and external strategies.

### ***Internal Strategy***

This strategy is product- and price-oriented. Both reflect the facilities and quality of service. Product variations that are packaged in a variety of packages for regular hajj, hajj plus, regular umrah, Ramadan umrah, umrah with celebrities, and umrah plus tours, as well as variations in prices: bronze, silver, or gold, emerged because of the high competition in the broad market segmentation. The various product variations, fees, and facilities reflect PPIU's creativity and innovation. Creativity and innovation are the keys to a company's success (Anderson et al., 2014). Innovation as an effort to make updates to what the company does is an indication that the company can compete with market needs so that it can survive and develop sustainably (Fuentelsaz et al., 2018). Innovation can make an impression on consumers if the entrepreneur can give a lasting impression, and companies are easier to develop (Klaus & Maklan, 2013). Consumers who feel happy and satisfied with the products and services provided tend to become loyal customers and promote themselves to others. Customer satisfaction will significantly affect customer loyalty (Jiang & Zhang, 2016). Furthermore, customer loyalty embodied in providing recommendations to others affects the level of sales and the success of the company itself (El-Adly, 2019). If this condition is maintained, the company will achieve sustainable success (B. Kim et al., 2020).

An internal strategy like this is a natural thing and essential to increase sales (Fejza & Asllani, 2013). In many studies, this internal strategy has proven to be successful in increasing product marketing effectiveness (Kartawinata & Wardhana, 2013). Thus, implementing the right system will help the company succeed (Urbonavičius & Dikčius, 2008). In addition, based on the results of research conducted by Badi, it was also found that various marketing strategies in terms of products, services, and prices will increase companies' competitiveness (Al Badi, 2018).

### ***External Strategy***

PPIU carries out the external strategy by cooperating with external parties, namely KBIHU, individuals, and celebrities (public figures). Several parties are invited to collaborate in developing distribution channels as marketing agents and ambassadors. The mechanism used in this collaboration is the MLM system and the giving of bonuses (vouchers). The application of the MLM system is the right strategy in marketing. According to the results of Rezvani's research, the use of MLM as a marketing strategy has been shown to increase sales, reduce expenses, build networks, and create jobs (Rezvani et al., 2017). In fact, with the implementation of MLM, a company can sell its products in an international scope (Franco & Gonzalez-perez, 2016). However, MLM also has a weakness where downline income will decrease when the number of downlines is unable to grow, and at that time, the satisfaction of downlines in marketing products will decrease (Khare & Verma, 2017; Legara et al., 2008).

In addition to using MLM, hajj and umrah travel agents also provide bonuses as a marketing strategy. Giving gifts or prizes can be categorized as a customer loyalty program because it aims to make customers loyal or regular customers. KBIHU members will become regular customers but also provide recommendations to others. Several studies have shown that the implementation of customer loyalty programs is indeed successful in increasing customer loyalty. Magatef, in his writings, stated that giving awards or bonuses to customers can increase the possibility of these customers becoming regular customers (Magatef & Tomalieh, 2015). Likewise, in their research, Kumar and Brashear concluded that giving gifts, bonuses, or commissions to customers can make customers come and transact again and tell their friends or family (Brashear-Alejandro et al., 2016; Kumar & Shah, 2004).

Another business method applied by hajj and umrah travel agencies is to use the services of public figures to do endorsements. Endorsements carried out by involving public figures can help introduce products or services provided by a company more quickly recognized by potential customers, especially by fans of the public figure (De Villiers, 2017). Research conducted by Fink also found that using celebrities to endorse products will make the product easier to recognize by many people in a short time (Fink et al., 2020).

### ***Community's Religious Attitude***

Several variations of packages, prices, collaboration with outside parties and celebrities in a business context have succeeded in confirming the hajj and umrah travel industry as a professional business in meeting the needs of the Muslim community. The material profit-oriented way of business slowly impacts people's religious behavior and attitudes. Material-oriented businesses can reinforce a modern lifestyle and influence

the transformation of socio-religious behavior (Miftah, 2016). This can be seen from the perspective and behavior of travel agent managers, pilgrims, and cooperation partners.

The business practices carried out by the managers of hajj and umrah travel agents confirm equal treatment in non-religious commodities. The way of business in product variations, prices, and facilities is very clearly directed at market expansion that can touch all circles. Actually, it provides a choice of suitability for the community's ability, but market segmentation can also be expanded. Thus, all people from various circles are netted to buy these commodities. They understand that hajj and umrah are acts of worship. Still, they understand more that the public interest increase for pilgrimage is a business opportunity that generates a lot of profit. Their religious attitudes are dissolved in the glitter of modernization and changes in people's lifestyles. Thus, they do not open educational doors on how people think realistically when purchasing hajj or umrah packages.

In addition, collaborating with celebrities and famous *ustadz* emphasizes very clearly that the business target is not the celebrities themselves but their fanatical fans. This method is a surefire way to add a prestigious impression. Because the involvement of public figures and celebrities can make the impression of a product being expensive, classy, and usually the fans of the public figures will imitate their idols (Cuomo et al., 2019; Zipporah & Mberia, 2014). Moreover, several studies also prove that the use of celebrities for endorsement in the travel industry positively impacts the image of the destination and increases sales (Ambroise & Albert, 2020; Chan et al., 2018; Glover, 2009; Xu & Pratt, 2018).

Such business orientation shows the blurring of the spiritual dimension that exists in the hajj and umrah pilgrimages. They position their business like a general tourist trip that aims to have fun (leisure). This situation can ultimately change the pilgrims' spiritual experience in carrying out the pilgrimages into a touristic experience (Qurashi, 2017). Lukens-Bull, in his writings, alludes that the high public sentiment to visit the Baitullah can be a medium for the travel industry to commercialize religion (Lukens-Bull, 2008).

In fact, the pilgrims can see the impact. They do not see the substance of the purpose of the spiritual journey but are stuck on how and what conditions are acceptable to get to that sacred goal. Umrah plus tourism is an efficient way to travel, and you can worship and have recreation. This shows the spiritual journey to the holy land is not the only main goal. It also indicates consumptive behavior. The availability of various models of products and services in hajj and umrah trips makes pilgrims more consumptive. Based on Enrico's research results, consumptive behavior often occurs because of the element of comfort and prestige needs (Enrico, A., Aron, R., & Oktavia, 2014). In addition, the promotion also affects the consumptive behavior of prospective buyers (Santini et al., 2015).

The attitude of forcing oneself to sell land for pilgrimage to the holy land with family, and believing that it will be replaced, is also an excessive religious attitude. Land is an essential asset for the future of the family. They absolutize the relative and relativize the absolute. Likewise, the religious attitude of marketing agents who make hajj and umrah a means of earning a living and a way of performing hajj and umrah for free. It all shows that they lost their main goal in carrying out the holy journey. These research results are supported by Kim, who found that implementing religious tourism in the post-modern era has changed into a commodity and something commercial. They further explained that few of those who go on religious tourism trips focus not on worship but recreation (B. Kim et al., 2020).

The prevalence of hajj and umrah is found in consumptive community activities and spreads to various elements. Sucipto, in his writings, states that politicians, business people, and celebrities performing worship in the holy land are a tool of power, a popularity booster, and a tool to justify the image of obedience (Sucipto, 2013).

Based on this fact, it can be conveyed that some pilgrims who have gone on pilgrimages are now motivated by profane motivation. These research results are supported by the research by Duran, which found that many people are going on pilgrimages whose primary purpose is to travel as tourists (Durán-Sánchez et al., 2018). In addition, research conducted by Jamal also found that in religious tourism, such a profane destination is common (Jamal et al., 2018). Thus, according to Jirasek, based on the research results, it is concluded that it is not the place that makes a person carry out a pilgrimage, but the purpose of the trip (Jirásek, 2014).



## Conclusions

The Conclusions section should clearly explain the main findings and implications of the work, highlighting its importance and relevance. The study above shows that the tourism business industry works within business principles that mobilize all its strength so that the products they make can reach all elements of society in taking advantage of the momentum, either because of increasing public awareness to perform hajj, as well as the existence of a long waiting list. They make a variety of choices according to the abilities of the community. They also try their best to serve the community satisfactorily, both in terms of facilities and services. This responsibility becomes even more remarkable for hajj and umrah travel agents when empirically people's interest in going to the holy land increases sharply, on one side, and high competition with similar travel agents, on the other side. Various business strategies practiced by hajj and umrah travel agents become inevitable for profit, both internally such as variety of packages and prices, and externally such as collaboration with KBIHU, individual agents, and celebrities.

These various business methods of the hajj and umrah travel industry ultimately lead to a shift in the meaning and substance of religious pilgrimages to religious tourism, where the purpose of their pilgrimage is not in the essence of the intention of the pilgrimage but a situation of comfort, convenience, and pleasure in pilgrimage. This has an impact on the emergence of the community's consumptive religious attitude. Society cannot distinguish between sacred and profane, absolute and relative, worldly and afterlife. The strong dimension of materialism shrouds their religious attitude.

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