CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Research methodology refers to the theory of how research should be undertaken (Saunders, et al., 2007). As Sekaran (2003) further clarifies, a research methodology may be defined as academia's established regulatory framework for the collection and evaluation of existent knowledge for the purpose of arriving at, and validating, new knowledge. Cooper and Schindler (1998) maintain that the determination of the research methodology is one of the more important challenges which that confronts the researcher, its importance emanates from the fact that it defines the activity of a specified research, its procedural methods, strategies, for progress measurement and criteria for research success (Sekaran, 2003).

The intention of this chapter is to present the research design and specific conducted manner of this study for investigating relationship between religiosity and hotel selection behavior of Muslim customers. The chapter includes eight main sections: 3.1 describes research philosophy, 3.2 outlines variables of this study; 3.3 explains the research framework and hypothesis; 3.4 highlights types and source of the data used for this study; 3.5 specifies used instrument and measurements for getting primary data; 3.6 discusses the participants of this research, sampling method used in this study and the sample size; 3.7 details data collection procedure; 3.8 overviews data analysis methods and process.

3.1 Research Philosophy

Research is defined as an "organized, systematic, data-based, critical, objective, scientific inquiry or investigation into a specific problem, undertaken with the purpose of finding answer or solution to it" (Sekaran, 2003). It is systematic inquiry that provides information to guide decision (Cooper & Schindler, 2001) which ultimately increasing our knowledge, and the word "systematic" suggests that research must be grounded on logical relationships and not mere beliefs.

Designing a study helps researchers to plan and implement the study in a way that will help them obtain the intended results (Burns & Grove, 2001). Polit and Hungler (1999) describe the research design as a blueprint, or outline, for conducting the study. Research can be conducted with qualitative or quantitative design. In quantitative research, data collection and analysis are developed within a scientific philosophy; it is used when researcher wishes to collect information in a numerical form as the results will be based on rigor, objectivity and control (Burns & Grove, 2001) whereas qualitative research means any kind of research that produces findings which not arrived at by means of statistical procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This study embraces quantitative research approach to obtain the following objectives of the study:

1) To investigate the relationship between religiosity and hotel selection behavior of Muslim travelers.

2) To examine differences between highly religious and less religious customers' hotel selection behavior.

3.2 Variables

A variable is any entity that can take on different values. There are four main types of variable:

- Dependent variable. It is the primary interest to the researcher. The researcher's goal is to understand and describe the dependent variable.

- Independent variable. It is the one that influence the dependent variable, the predictor.

- Moderating variable. The presence of a third variable modifies the original relationship between independent and Dependent variable. Answer the issue of 'when' or 'who'.

- Mediating variable. It is the one that surface between the time independent variable start operating to influence the dependent variable. It helps us to understand 'how'.

The main concentration of this research to explore Islamic religiosity effects Muslim consumer behavior. To investigate the relationship, two variables are studied which are religiosity of Muslim consumers as the independent variable and their hotel selection behavior, the dependent variable.

3.3 Research Framework and Hypotheses

Conceptual framework contains the key factors, the variables and presumed relationships amongst them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To describe the relationship

between the two variables, religiosity and hotel selection, research framework is developed for this research as in **Figure 3.1**.

Figure 3.1 Research Framework

Religiosity ⟶ Hotel Selection
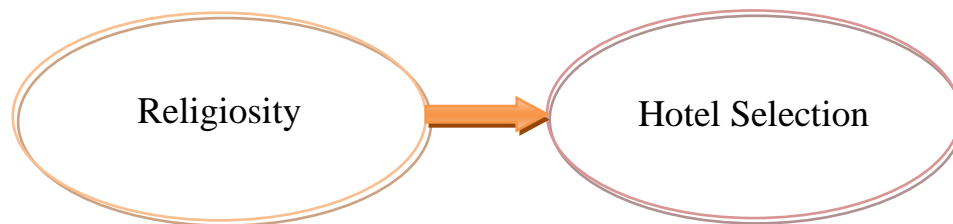
Hypothesis is defined as a logically conjectured relationship between two or more variables expressed in the form of a testable statement (Sekaran, 2003). Based on the discussions in chapter 2, literature review, hypotheses involved in this framework are developed as following:

H1: There is relationship between Muslims' religiosity level and hotel selection behavior.

H2: There is difference between highly religious and less religious Muslims' hotel selection behavior.

3.4 Instrumentation and Measures

The data collection instrument chosen for this study is questionnaire. Questionnaire is a timesaving method to collect data for a large sample size, it is more efficient compare to other data collecting methods in terms of time and resources required (Wisker, 2001). The advantages of using questionnaire method:

- Quick and easy to administer.

- Can get a large amount of information in a short time.

- Does not require trained interviewer.

- Relatively less expensive.

The questionnaire of this study is divided into three sections.

First section is about demographic information of participant. This section includes ten questions. The first four questions about gender, marital status, age, education level. There are two questions about nationality of the participant, an open-ended question "What is your monthly income?", a question about purpose of trip, a question "Which of the following categories of hotel do you usually stay?" with the two options "international hotel" and "local (Malaysian) hotel" and a question about categories of lodging properties to look at price preference of the Muslim travelers.

Section two is Muslim's attitude towards hotel choice criteria. To confirm items in this section, a pilot study is done with ten responses around GSB among lecturers, PhD and MBA students. The pilot study questionnaire has included two main questions, the first one is about their purpose of trip, four options are given as "Working Related Trip (e.g. for conference, seminar, meeting)", "Business Trip", "Holiday Trip", "Other". For second question, 28 hotel attributions are listed for the participants to tick important attribution; 18 of the 28 items are adopted from Lee (1993), "Internet Connection" and other nine Islamic hotel attributions are added from literature review. Lastly, an open-ended question "What other hotel attributes would you like?" is asked to get their suggestions. The pilot study result showed that all the 28 items can be used to test

Muslims' preferences in hotel selection. Several suggested hotel attributes are received from the pilot study responses, two repeated suggestions, "Convenient - free Parking" and "Efficient - Quick Service", are selected and added in the questionnaire.

Table 3.1 Summary for Section "Muslim Attitude towards Hotel Choice Criteria"

	Items	Source
1	Comfortable Mattress & Pillow	**Adopted from Lee (1993)**
2	Well-maintained Furnishings	
3	Friendly Service by the Hotel Staff	
4	Cleanliness of the Hotel	
5	Good Reputation of the Hotel	
6	Safety and Security of the Hotel	
7	Hotel Frequent Travel Program	
8	Travel Agent's Recommendation	
9	Convenient to Business	
10	Convenient to Downtown	
11	Copy Machine in the Hotel	
12	Hair Dryer in the Room	
13	In-room Minibar in the Room	
14	Laundry Services in the Hotel	
15	Room Services	
16	Free Local Telephone	
17	Family Restaurants (mid-price menu items, no liquors)	
18	No Smoking Rooms	
19	Internet Connection	**Pilot study**
20	Convenient - free Parking	
21	Efficient - Quick Service	
22	Halal Certification on the Food Serve	
23	Quran in the Room	
24	Qibla Direction Sign in the Room	
25	Prayer Mat in the Room	
26	Prayer Timetable in the Room	
27	Prayer Room in the Hotel	
28	Mosque Near to the Hotel	
29	Muslim Staffs	
30	Men and Women Separated Swimming Pool	

Overall, the section two of the questionnaire is completed with 30 items; importance is measured with 5-point Likert scale from "not important" to "very important" to observe the Muslim's preference on the hotel attributes.

Section three of the questionnaire measures Islamic religiosity of travelers. The section is adopted from Muhamad (2006) included 25 items with 5-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" to examine participants' religiosity level.

3.5   Types and Sources of Data

Data is classified primary and secondary data (Sekaran, 2003). Primary data refers to information obtained firsthand by the researcher for the purpose of the study. The sources of the primary data are individuals, focus groups, panels and unobtrusive methods. On the other hand, secondary data refers to information gathered from sources that already exist.

In this research, the primary data is obtained from individuals to examine the research objectives.

3.6   Sampling

Sampling is the selection of population of the research. There are two types of sampling methods,

- Probability sampling. In this sampling scheme, one in which every unit in the population has a chance of being selected in the sample, and this probability can be accurately determined.

- Non-probability sampling. It is any sampling method where some elements of the population have no chance of selection

For this research, two types of non-probability sampling methods, convenience sampling and snowball sampling, are used to distribute the questionnaires. Welman and Kruger (1999) point out the following characteristics of non-probability sampling:

- Every person who meets the criteria is asked to participate.

- It is a less complicated and more economical procedure than random sampling.

- The researcher's judgment is used to select individual subjects.

Norman and Streiner (1994) suggested a simple determining sample size method that sample size should be minimum 100 or five times of the items in the questionnaire. In this research 55 items are used, according to Norman and Streiner (1994), sample size of this study is calculated as below:

$$\text{Sample Size} = 5 * 55 = 275$$

Therefore, minimum simple size for this study is determined 275.

3.7 Data Collection

Total 350 questionnaires were distributed as printed hard copy, and via email as online questionnaire form. Snowball sampling and convenience sampling techniques

were used for sample selection. 200 of the 350 questionnaires were distributed among both international and local lecturers, PhD and Master Muslim students in UM, at the same time, they were asked to distribute the questionnaire among their friends, as snowball sampling process. 150 of the 350 questionnaires distributed to Muslim tourists with convenience sampling method in the KLCC, KL Sentral shopping areas, around the Legend hotel, the Seri Pacific hotel and in the lobby area of Putra World Trade Center.

Total 304 responses are collected, 93 from online questionnaire and 211 from printed hard copy of the questionnaire. 2 respondents selected "Strongly Disagree" to the question "I believe beyond a shadow of doubt that Islam is God's religion and that Prophet Muhammad is His Messenger." This question is declaration of Islamic belief; according to Islam, whoever does not believe in it is not considered as a Muslim or Muslimah, therefore, the 2 questionnaires are excluded. 6 questionnaires are found incomplete. To sum up, 8 answered questionnaires are considered invalid to analysis. 296 completed questionnaires, approximately 85 per cent of the 350, will be used for data analysis.

3.8 Data Analysis

In this study, the collected data from primary sources are analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 16. Descriptive analysis, Factor Analysis, Normality test, Reliability, Chi-square, Pearson Correlation and T-test are conducted for testing hypotheses and other analyses. The outcomes are given in the chapter four.

3.9   Conclusion

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted to conduct the study by explaining the philosophical assumptions underlying the research, variables, research framework, hypothesis, sampling design and data analysis techniques which are used in this study. Generally, the data was collected from primary source through questionnaire survey.

In the next chapter, the discussion on the data analysis is presented.