

## Excellent Service Strategy to Increase Congregation Satisfaction and Readiness at Sahibuna Sabila Salam Travel in Bukittinggi City

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<p><b>Abstract:</b> This study aims to analyze the excellent service strategy implemented by Travel Shahibuna Sabila Salam Bukittinggi City in increasing the satisfaction and readiness of Umrah pilgrims, as well as identifying the obstacles faced in its implementation. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research was conducted at the Shahibuna Sabila Salam office in Bukittinggi City through interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The results showed that the excellent service strategy implemented includes the five main dimensions of SERVQUAL: responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, which are also supported by sharia values such as amanah, shiddiq, fathanah, and tabligh. Nevertheless, there are obstacles in terms of communication, officer responsiveness, and facilities. Overall, the strategy implemented is proven to significantly increase the satisfaction and readiness of Umrah pilgrims.</p>	<p><b>Abstrak:</b> Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi pelayanan prima yang diterapkan oleh Travel Shahibuna Sabila Salam Kota Bukittinggi dalam meningkatkan kepuasan dan kesiapan jamaah umrah, serta mengidentifikasi kendala yang dihadapi dalam pelaksanaannya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini dilaksanakan di kantor Shahibuna Sabila Salam Kota Bukittinggi melalui teknik wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi pelayanan prima yang diterapkan mencakup lima dimensi utama SERVQUAL, yang juga ditunjang oleh nilai-nilai syariah seperti amanah, shiddiq, fathanah, dan tabligh. Meskipun demikian, terdapat kendala dalam hal komunikasi, ketanggapan petugas, dan fasilitas. Secara keseluruhan, strategi yang diterapkan terbukti meningkatkan kepuasan dan kesiapan jamaah umrah secara signifikan.</p>
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**Keywords:** Strategy; Excellent Service; Pilgrims' Satisfaction; Pilgrims' Readiness; SERVQUAL.

**Kata Kunci:** Strategi; Pelayanan Prima; Kepuasan Jamaah; Kesiapan Jamaah, SERVQUAL.

## A. Introduction

Consistently contributing significantly to the number of Hajj and Umrah pilgrims each year, this phenomenon not only reflects the high enthusiasm of Indonesian Muslims for worship in the Holy Land but also drives the rapid growth of the domestic Hajj and Umrah travel industry. With waiting lists for regular Hajj pilgrimages that can last for more than a decade, the Umrah pilgrimage has become a highly sought-after alternative for many who wish to perform the pilgrimage in Mecca and Medina. The Indonesian government, in Law No. 13 of 2008 concerning the Organization of the Hajj Pilgrimage, has affirmed its role in regulating and overseeing the implementation of this pilgrimage, appointing the Ministry of Religious Affairs as the primary entity responsible, supported by various registered Hajj and Umrah travel agencies.

Umrah, a recommended pilgrimage that can be performed at any time of the year (except on forbidden days), holds profound spiritual significance for Muslims. Performing it in Mecca and Medina serves as a means of drawing closer to Allah SWT, perfecting the pillars of Islam, and responding to the divine call. The importance of this worship is also emphasized in the Quran, as Allah SWT states in Surah Al-Baqarah: 196: "And complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allah." This verse serves as a spiritual foundation for every Muslim who desires to perform this worship to the fullest.

In the context of organizing the Umrah pilgrimage, the role of the Umrah Travel Organizer (PPIU) is vital. PPIUs are not only responsible for the logistical aspects of the trip, but also play a crucial role in ensuring the comfort, safety, and smooth running of pilgrims' pilgrimages. Article 45, paragraph 1 of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2008 specifically regulates the obligations of PPIUs, including providing competent pilgrim guides and health personnel, departing and returning pilgrims within their visa validity, providing services in accordance with written agreements, and

reporting to the Indonesian representative in Saudi Arabia. Compliance with these regulations is a key indicator of a travel agency's professionalism and trustworthiness.

A prime service strategy is an integral element of the success of an Umrah travel agency. This is even more crucial considering the diverse characteristics of pilgrims, ranging from young to elderly, and their socio-economic backgrounds. This is especially true for elderly pilgrims, whose numbers tend to be high (data shows that the majority of Shahibuna Sabila Salam pilgrims are over 60 years old), requiring special treatment and extra attention.

Shahibuna Sabila Salam Travel in Bukittinggi City is one entity that strives to implement this principle of prime service. Operating since October 1, 2022, this travel agency was founded with a strong commitment to providing the best service to "the guests of Allah" based on Sharia values. Under the leadership of Ustadz Andy Saputra as President Director, the company is committed to continuously improving service quality and establishing close synergy with all stakeholders to optimally serve pilgrims. The company's legal standing is supported by PPIU permit No. 20102200117440002 (effective November 20, 2024) demonstrates their commitment to regulatory compliance and professional operational standards.

However, in practice, the implementation of excellent service often faces various challenges. Based on an initial interview with Ms. Yosi Murnika, S.E. (Head of Finance Division of Shahibuna Sabila Salam), several identified obstacles include a lack of optimal service during manasik (prayer rituals), information on schedule changes that is sometimes not provided quickly and clearly, facilities that may not be fully adequate, and a perceived slow response to some congregational complaints.

From a sharia business perspective, the goal of excellent service is not limited to achieving worldly profits but is also oriented towards obtaining the blessings and pleasure of Allah SWT. Service must be provided with the intention of worship, upholding consumer rights, and avoiding harmful or manipulative practices. This principle aligns with the word of Allah SWT in Q.S. Al-Qashash:77

Internal data from Shahibuna Sabila Salam shows a positive trend in the number of pilgrims, from 228 in 2023 to 312 in 2024. The majority of pilgrims in both years were over 60 years old (66.2% in 2023 and 61.6% in 2024). This increase in pilgrims indirectly indicates that the service strategies implemented by the travel agency have had a positive impact on pilgrim satisfaction and readiness, although the aforementioned challenges still need to be addressed to achieve a more optimal level of service.

## **B. Methods**

This research adopted a field study method with a qualitative descriptive approach. The purpose of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of the experiences of the research subjects, including factors such as behavior, motivation, attitudes, perceptions, and actions. This approach emphasizes in-depth data collection from selected informants to compile or build a clear picture of the various strategies for delivering superior service at Sahibuna Sabila Salam Travel.

Primary data was collected directly by the researcher from original sources through direct interviews with travel agency personnel (the president director, division heads, and other employees) and pilgrims who had registered and departed for Umrah at Sahibuna Sabila Salam Travel in Bukittinggi City. Secondary data, or supporting data, included documents, literature from the internet, newspapers, journals, and photographic documentation relevant to the research. The primary informants were all human resources at Sahibuna Sabila Salam Travel (the president director, division heads, and other employees). Additional informants came from consumers or pilgrims at Sahibuna Sabila Salam Travel, as well as local people who contributed to Sahibuna Sabila Salam Travel in Bukittinggi City. Data collection techniques included observation and interviews.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

### **1. Company Profile**

PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam / Shahibuna Mihrab Haramain is a Sharia-compliant Umrah pilgrimage and tourism services company established on October

1, 2022. Led by Ustadz Andy Saputra as owner and President Director, the company is committed to improving service quality to ensure pilgrim satisfaction and readiness, while also fostering synergy with stakeholders. The company's legality is supported by PPIU permit No. 20102200117440002, obtained on November 20, 2024.

Excellent service plays a crucial role in increasing pilgrim satisfaction, comfort, security, and loyalty, as well as building a positive company image. This study focuses on the implementation of excellent service strategies at Shahibuna Sabila Salam in Bukittinggi City based on the SERVQUAL indicators: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy.

## 2. Physical Evidence

The tangible aspect includes tangible elements that congregants assess to shape their perceptions of service quality. Rian Pesona Arsi Isrami (President Director) stated that Shahibuna Sabila Salam provides complete and high-quality prayer equipment, maintains office cleanliness, trains staff to maintain a professional appearance, and manages information media (brochures, social media, website) to be informative and attractive. Hotel and restaurant selection is carried out to a high standard through direct surveys and congregation feedback. Erni Syam A.Md (Head of Digital Marketing) added that tangible evidence is important for building congregation trust. Standard equipment is designed to be practical, the office is clean and organized, information media is updated with attractive visuals, and hotel/restaurant selection takes into account the quality, cleanliness, accessibility, and halal food. Ms. Sriyetti (congregant) confirmed that Shahibuna Sabila Salam staff are neat, friendly, and polite. The office is clean and comfortable, the equipment is of good quality, the office location is easily accessible, and service information is conveyed clearly.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنفِقُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا  
الْحَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِءَاخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغِضُوا فِيهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

Physical Evidence Conclusion: Tangibles are PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam's main strength. The company provides complete equipment, maintains a clean office, and ensures the professional appearance of its staff. Information media is well-managed, and facilities (hotels and restaurants) are carefully selected. All of this builds trust and comfort, demonstrating the company's credibility.

### 3. Reliability

The challenges were reflected in the company's consistency in fulfilling its service promises. Yosi Murnika, S.E. (Head of Administration and Finance) explained that the departure schedule was detailed, document processing was carried out from the beginning of registration, and prompt solutions were provided for any schedule changes or issues. The prayer guides (mutawwif) were chosen for their knowledge and experience, and honest and open communication built the congregation's trust. Ms. Harmilen (a congregant) stated that all services ran as promised, including the punctuality of the schedule and proper document processing. Schedule changes were clearly communicated and provided with solutions. Guidance for the rituals was provided well. Ms. Wisnimar (a congregant) was also satisfied because the schedule was as informed, documents were well prepared, and agenda changes were delivered on time. The consistency of service was evident from communication to prompt field service. This is in accordance with the hadith narrated by Ahmad: "

لَا إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لَا أَمَانَةَ لَهُ، وَلَا دِينَ لِمَنْ لَا عَهْدَ لَهُ

Reliability Conclusion: PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam's service reliability is excellent, demonstrated by consistent fulfillment of promises, orderly document

management, and clear and timely delivery of information. Departure and return schedules run according to plan, and worship guidance is provided in a structured manner by experienced mutawwif. This builds trust among the congregation and demonstrates the company's commitment to professional service.

#### 4. Responsiveness

Responsiveness refers to the speed and accuracy in responding to pilgrims' needs, questions, and complaints. Wahid (Operational Staff) stated that they responded quickly to urgent needs, handled complaints promptly, and ensured that prayer guides were always available. Flight schedule changes were promptly communicated and agendas adjusted. Information was delivered in simple language. Mrs. Wisnimar (a pilgrim) felt that Shahibuna Sabila Salam's service was excellent in responding to needs. Information was clear, prayer guides were always available, and staff provided quick solutions to document issues. Their service made the pilgrimage feel comfortable and peaceful. This aligns with the hadith narrated by Bukhari:"

مَنْ كَانَ فِي حَاجَةٍ أَخِيهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ

Responsiveness Conclusion: PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam has a high level of responsiveness. Staff are responsive and provide solutions, especially in urgent situations. Prayer guides are always available and information is conveyed clearly. Congregation experiences demonstrate high levels of satisfaction and comfort, strengthening confidence in the quality of service.

#### 5. Assurance

Assurance encompasses the knowledge, courtesy, competence, and trustworthiness demonstrated by the service provider. Yosi Murnika, S.E. (Head of Administration and Finance) stated that they maintain their reputation by improving service quality and open communication. Strict document retention procedures,

educating pilgrims about travel procedures, and the professionalism of staff foster a sense of security and trust. Ms. Harmilen (a pilgrim) felt confident with the responsive and patient information provided by the staff. The service during the trip was excellent, and the guidance during the rituals (manasik) increased her confidence in worship. The trip felt safe and comfortable, with competent pilgrim guides. Ms. Sriyetti (a pilgrim) also felt that the service was adequate, well-guided, and the guidance during the rituals (manasik) helped her understand the procedures of Umrah. This is in accordance with the word of Allah SWT in QS. Al-Isra': 34: "

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ  
الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا

Guarantee Conclusion: PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam demonstrates a strong commitment to providing guarantees through professional staff, clear information, and a friendly attitude. Effective manasik guidance enhances pilgrimage readiness, and a streamlined administration system ensures document security. Congregants feel satisfied, safe, comfortable, and confident, making this travel agency trustworthy and professional.

## 6. Empathy

Empathy is the foundation of meaningful and humane service. Erni Syam A.Md (Head of Digital Marketing) stated that they understand the needs of elderly congregants (physical assistance, wheelchairs, rest), provide additional explanations for beginners, and treat congregants with special needs with respect. They also create a family atmosphere. Wahid (Operational Staff) also observes the physical and psychological conditions of congregants, approaches them personally, and ensures a warm atmosphere. Mrs. Sriyetti (congregant) feels that the staff helps sincerely, responsively, and does not burden them. Physical and emotional needs are taken care

of, complaints are answered patiently, and directions are given gently. Mrs. Wisnimar (congregant) feels the service is full of empathy, the staff is quick to offer assistance (wheelchair), understands fatigue, and patiently re-explains the worship process. Mrs. Harmilen (congregant) feels the presence of responsive and caring staff, providing encouragement, and ensuring all congregants are in good condition.

Empathy Conclusion: Empathy is a core value in PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam's services. The staff provides both physical assistance and genuine emotional care, creating a safe, warm, and comfortable atmosphere. Congregants feel heard, appreciated, and wholeheartedly served, allowing them to perform their worship in peace and reverence.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Tangibles: PT. Shahibuna Sabila Salam demonstrates excellent service quality in terms of physical evidence, providing complete equipment, maintaining office cleanliness, and ensuring the professional appearance of staff. Information media is also managed visually and informatively. Reliability: Service reliability is reflected in the company's consistency in fulfilling promises, orderly document management, and thorough departure schedules. Information on changes is conveyed transparently and manasik guidance is structured. Responsiveness: High level of responsiveness to the needs and problems of pilgrims. Operational staff are responsive, provide quick solutions, and convey information clearly. Prayer guides are always available. Assurance: Fulfilled through staff competence and professionalism, an orderly administration system, and clear and open communication. Pilgrims feel confident and at ease because of transparent information and the assistance of experienced mutawwif. Empathy: A key strength in service. Staff show genuine concern for the condition of pilgrims (elderly, beginners, disabled), provide physical assistance, and create a family atmosphere.

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