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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES ON QUALIFICATION OF UMRAH MUTAWWIF IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Career as umrah mutawif has gained an admirable place in society, recently. Nevertheless, from the legal and administrative perspective, there is no specific entity that regulates, monitors, and coordinates the management of umrah mutawif in Malaysia. Therefore, this article will analyze the need to establish proper qualifications guideline that can be used to qualify a person before venturing into the profession of umrah mutawif. This is a qualitative study, adopting data collection process through library research methods, semi-structured interviews, and the involvement of researcher himself as umrah mutawif. The study has established that there is critical need to develop qualifications guideline for umrah mutawif that could serve as a reference and assessment tools for the travel agents as umrah package operators, in selecting their umrah mutawif that operates under their company and will principally be guiding their pilgrims. Umrah mutawifs need to have performed umrah themselves, obtain teaching credentials from the respective states of which they will be teaching and guide, enrich their fiqh of umrah and the basics of fardhuain, have a good level of health and possess the ability to lead, are among the critical qualifications that must be in place. Finally, this study suggests that, through the enactment or amendment of relevant acts, a regulatory body need to be established to oversee the regulation and management aspects, among others, of the umrah mutawif. This will ensure the quality and professionalism of umrah mutawif as a respected career in the future could be achieved.

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Introduction:-

Mutawif is a profession that has gained society's interest. Mutawif is an Arabic word derived from Tawaf (طواف). Mutawif refers to a person who provides guidance on Islamic Law relating act of worship (fiqah-ibadat) of umrah/hajj to the hajj and umrah's pilgrims (Ibrahim Mustafa, 1989). According to the Kamus Dewan, mutawif guides the pilgrims to perform tawaf and it is commonly referred to as those who provide assistance to the hajj (Kamus Dewan, 2010).

In the context of profession in Malaysia, umrah mutawif refers to person(s) who is responsible to assist the guests of Allah to visit the Holy Land of Mecca and Medina to perform umrah and visit. The responsibility of umrah mutawif is not limited only to provide guidance of worship aspects but covers all aspects related to the pilgrims in Saudi Arabia including becoming the congregation group leader, mediator and facilitator between the congregation and the management of hotel and accommodation as well as the with the airport and transportation services provider.

The tradition of treating and honoring the guests of Allah SWT occurred way before the advent of Islam as this common and noble practice was highly regarded by the community at that time. The Meccan polytheists, at that time, considered this practice was far more noble than jihad and believing in Allah SWT and were rebuked by Allah SWT in the Holy Quran (Ibn Kathir 2002, al-Tabari 2001):

أَجْعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

Translation: Do you consider the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of Al-Masjid Al-Haram as equal to the worth of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and strive hard and fight in the cause of Allah, they are not equal before Allah. And Allah guides not those people who are the wrongdoers. (Surah al-Taubah, 9: 19)

The history of Islam has recorded that mutawif or the guide of hajj and umrah was pioneered by the Prophet Muhammad SAW himself. This is due to the fact that the Prophet SAW was the first person to guide the muslims in performing the worship. The Prophet SAW performed his first umrah in the sixth year of the hijrah while the hajj, which is also known as Hajjatul Wada', in the tenth year of the hijrah (Mubarakfuri, 2004).

Definition of Umrah

Umrah, literally is an act of pilgrimage, while technically it is an act of visiting the House of Allah (Baitullah / Kaabah) to perform certain act of worship including ihram, tawaf, sa'i and tahallul (shaving) in accordance with certain imposed conditions within a particular set of order at to be performed at any time. (al-Sharbini 1997, al-Ramli 2004, Tabung Haji 2015).

The Law of Performing Umrah

There are differences of opinion among the jurists (fuqaha') in determining the law of performing umrah. The Syafi'e scholars, rule that umrah is an obligatory act once in a lifetime for those who are able (al-Nawawi 1994) based on the evidence:

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ

Translations: and complete the hajj and umrah for Allah... (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 196)

Syafi'e scholars, rule that umrah can be performed at any time during the life of a Muslim. It is not a sin for a person to postpone the obligation of umrah even though the person is capable to fulfill all the required conditions. Nevertheless, should the person expedite to perform umrah, it will relinquish his/her duty as a responsible and obedient Muslim (al-Nawawi 1994, al-Sharbini 1997, al-Ramli 2004).

Since umrah is not a regular act of worship, performed by most individuals, then this act of worship should be performed under the supervision of an experienced guide, known as umrah mutawif. This is to ensure that the completion and legitimacy of the act of worship are in accordance with the prescribed Islamic teachings and jurisprudence. Should umrah is not performed in accordance with the procedures set by the Islamic law, it will lead to a catastrophic implication namely the pilgrims will forever be in a state of ihram (Tabung Haji, 2015).

Scenario Of Umrah Management In Malaysia

Within the current context of management in Malaysia, the legislation of umrah, currently is under the provision and jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOTAC) that governs the management, licensing (ticketing, inbound and outbound) and monitoring of the tourism/travel agency by the virtue of its act, AIP 1992 under the outbound licensing (going abroad within the permits of visa for leisure, business, or other purposes). MOTAC does not differentiate umrah travel with others as it is under outbound tourism. Even Tabung Haji and Tabung Haji Travel were licensed by AIP 1992 for its outbound package.

In order to curb umrah fraud, MOTAC has established Majlis Kawal Selia Umrah (MKSU) or Umrah Regulatory Council on 28 August 2014, comprises of various agencies including Tribunal for Consumer Claims Malaysia (TTPM), Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-operatives, and Consumerism (KPDNKK) and Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM). MKSU formed as a collective governing framework that attempt to reduce umrah fraud and enforce action against the fraudsters. One of the initiatives on MKSU is to

impose Lesen Khas Umrah (LKU) by mandating all travel agents who wish to sell umrah package to obtain by attending Umrah Specialized Enhancement Course (USEC). (<http://umrah.jawhar.gov.my>)

It is therefore a shocking revelation that matters pertaining to umrah and umrah mutawif are not governed, regulated, and monitored by any Islamic/religious authorities, be it at the federal or state level, despite umrah is an act of religion. In a general survey, majority of Malaysians perceived that umrah is governed by specific Islamic/religious namely Tabung Haji and JAKIM as the authority that regulates all affairs of umrah from ibadat to muamalat to the governance of mutawif to dispute settlement as well as licensing umrah travel agents and its mutawif. Public at large is under this impression since umrah is a religious devotion act. This is one of the most misperceived fact. Fact of the matter is that umrah and umrah mutawif is not even covered by Tabung Haji and AktaTabungHaji. Tabung Haji legal scope is only to govern matters related to hajj and does not cover the management of umrah (Mohd. Faizal 2015).

Problem Statement

Every pilgrim demands the greatest service from the mutawifs and travel agents to ensure that the pilgrim can perform the best ibadah (act of devotion) in the Holy Land. Hence the roles and duty of umrah mutawif is an utmost importance to the pilgrim and congregation, especially to those who is in their maiden voyage to the Holy Land.

HisyamuddinAyob (2017) highlights that, the experience of repeatedly performing umrah would serve as the greatest experiences and tools for umrah mutawif to assist any pilgrims who are left behind by their own umrah mutawif or incompetence staff that does not perform their duties satisfactorily. However, to err is human, they will be certain shortcomings, even though the person is entrusted to discharge their duties with perfection in the Holy Land. Worst case scenario would be the entrusted umrah mutawif himself would be ghosting out and lost into oblivion without any traces and leaving his pilgrims behind without any guidance. This horrific act would tarnish the mutawif, travel agent's name and its branding. Therefore, it is crucial for the travel agents to select and provide umrah mutawifs that are really sincere and committed in performing their duty in assisting the pilgrims and congregation. This selected, competence and entrusted umrah mutawif would always be sought after (Utusan Malaysia, 24 March 2017).

HisyamuddinAyob (2018) further states that, an experienced, competence and faqih (well verse in term of fiqh-al-ibadah) mutawifs, are highly sought after by the pilgrims. The pilgrims select and trust their travel agents to manage and act on their behalf, to provide the best available mutawif, and to facilitate them throughout their duration in the Holy Lands as the Guest of Allah. Nonetheless, the undeniable fact is that there are still certain mutawif would carelessly and unprofessionally ignoring their responsibility despite having been trusted by the pilgrims (Utusan Malaysia, 11 April 2018).

These issues have received attention and reaction from Lembaga Tabung Haji. In a statement issued by the General Manager (Hajj Agency) Haji Mat Ad Mara AlangAzizdin, the appointed mutawifs must be hold accountable for the trusted responsibility and must execute his duty to guide and assist the congregations performing their act of devotion, as sincerely as possible. This is not a simple and easy task as mutawifs must equip themselves with relevant skill and knowledge to become the centre of and source of reference for the congregation of pilgrims (Utusan Malaysia, 2 February 2012).

According to ZakkinaWati, Ahmad Tarmizi and Nor Azlina Jaafar (2016), mutawif is an important person who guides and assists the congregation in performing their umrah and hajj in the Holy Land. In the past, religious teachers or ustaz would normally serve as mutawif as they themselves had vast experience in performing umrah and having in-depth knowledge in intricacies of umrah and the Holy Lands. However, current development has witnessing the booming of mutawif as an admirable profession that attracts not only those who are having religious background but from other various fields as well including from accounting and language studies (Utusan Malaysia, 20 August 2016).

Based on the stated problem, there are two fundamental issues of mutawif. The first issue is the unethical attitude of some mutawifs including not carrying out their responsibilities as a mutawif effectively. The second issue is the credibility of mutawifs' diverse background of which some of them are not qualified nor having experiences to guide the umrah pilgrims.

Therefore, it is beyond reasonable doubt that this presented problems has warranted a scientific study that would formulate umrah mutawif qualifications guideline. This is to ensure that they will be no imperfection of pilgrims performing umrah to successfully obtain a mabrurah umrah under the guidance and assistance of a competent umrah mutawif. In addition, the formulation and drafting of this qualification's guideline would help to ease and reduce the fraud cases of umrah that occur in the community.

Literature's Review:-

Mutawif as a profession transcends beyond a noble career as it is a sacred trust (amanah) that needs to be fulfilled. Al-Amudi (2011) states that Muslims also need to be professional in carrying out trusts and responsibilities because it is an obligation from the Almighty Creator Allah SWT. Allah's words in surah al-Nisaa 'verse 58:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

Translation: Verily, Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.

The above verse explains that when a person perfecting his duties and obligations well, it is as if he has executed the trust towards himself, his leaders and most importantly Allah SWT. Thus the betrayal of his duties and responsibilities is a cruelty not only unto himself, but to his organization and his Creator and thus it is a sin in the sight of Allah SWT.

According to Mohd. Faizal (2015), an umrah travel agent is a representative who has been appointed by the umrah pilgrims through the collection of payment (ujrah) for their services. In this case, the company has a trust that needs to be resolved, which is to ensure that the demands and desire of the pilgrims in performing the best and perfect umrah experience can be achieved. From the consular documentation, visa issuance, transportation and accommodation bookings and most importantly, ensuring that the umrah pilgrims are properly guided so that the umrah performed is valid and rewarded.

According to Mohd. Faizal, two main causes have been identified in the increase in umrah package fraud. The first is the greed of irresponsible parties in cheating and profiting and the second is the weakness of consumers themselves who are easily deceived by the trap of cheap umrah packages.

In the Umrah Service Management Manual (Manual Pengurusan Perkhidmatan Umrah) published by JAWHAR (2009), it is stated that providing preparation course and reference materials to guide the pilgrims are critical. Hence it is an utmost important for travel agents to ensure this. The course and reference materials intended to explain the procedure of performing umrah accordingly and the travel itineraries according to the umrah package. The competent, educated and experienced mutawifs and staffs will facilitate and further streamline the process of guidance and supervision of the pilgrims in the Holy Land. The quality of the information, clarity of procedures, and in-depth knowledge of fiqh given to the pilgrims could and would benefitting them in performing the worship at their best ability. (<http://umrah.jawhar.gov.my>)

Research Methodology:-

In carrying out research related to these umrah mutawif's qualifications' guideline, qualitative research methods have been used. Qualitative refers to a method of exploring and understanding individuals or groups involved with a human and societal problem or phenomenon (context). The quality of a context is the main focus of the research and thus its related question of quality is opted as the based method (Ahmad Munawwar 2018).

Three methods were used to compile the qualitative data for this study. The first method is through library research which refers to the search for information through reading materials which includes two main sources, namely the primary, refers to the Qur'an, hadith and reference books that are authoritative, while the secondary source consists of related journals, articles, books, press reports as well as websites.

The second data collection method was through semi-structured interviews. The researcher has prepared an interview guide that contains a list of questions to be asked. These questions are built based on the themes that have

been identified and the list of questions will be a guide to the researcher in the process of conducting the interview sessions.

The third data collection was through the researcher's involvement as umrah mutawif. The researcher has repeatedly performed umrah during his period as student in Medina and was voluntarily acted as mutawif. He also being employed as umrah mutawif during 2016 - 2017 with the largest umrah travel agent in Malaysia. As such he had an extensive umrah networking throughout Malaysia, Mecca and Medina. This greatly helped the researcher in collecting relevant and specific data to carry out this study.

Respondent selection, data management and analysis

This study uses purposive sampling method in conducting the interview sessions by deploying interviewing technique to the respondents who are experienced and knowledgeable about the research problem. Accordingly, the researcher has interviewed five informants who are experienced in the problems of this study. The informants are depicted in the following table:

Informants	Justification
General Manager of Tabung Haji Counsel Support Division (Bahagian Bimbingan Haji)	The informant was selected as he is the responsible individual that coordinate the guide selection for the pilgrims in the Holy Land. The modules used in the affairs of the Hajj guide are compatible and suitable to be implemented in the selection of umrah mutawif.
Directors of Umrah Travel Agents	These selected informant have experience in managing a large number of umrah mutawif and have expertise in training them in addition to having the large capacity of umrah pilgrims in a single umrah season.
Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) Officers	The selection of officers from MOTAC to be informants in this study is critical as the management of umrah in Malaysia is under the jurisdiction of this agency through AIP 1992.
Program Director Manhajj Mutawwif	This informant was selected based on his credential as the director of the television reality show that showcasing the selection of umrah mutawif. The show has received encouraging response from the viewers. (Harian Metro, 2 Febuari 2019)
Experienced Mutawif	The selected Mutawif has been experienced in handling umrah pilgrims for over twenty years. He also has his own travel agents. Hence his selection as an informant is seen as critical element based on his merits and experience.

The interviews sessions were conducted between 40 minutes to an hour per session. Among the topics highlighted was the need to develop qualifications' guideline that qualify a person to venture into the career of umrah mutawif. Apart from that, the integral components were listed out as criteria that serve as pre-requisite to any individuals who wish to engage in this career as well as suggestions for continuous improvement to develop the umrah industry, especially mutawif, was also refined.

During the interview process, the researcher recorded the results of the interview using an audio recorder as well as manual reporting. Researchers also copied transcripts of the interview sessions to facilitate data analysis.

In analyzing the data obtained either through library research, interviews or observations and involvement, researcher employed inductive methods to generate specific conclusions or evidence from generic data and employed deductive methods to generate generic conclusions and evidence from specific data. Researcher also compared the

obtained data, compiled and grouped it into relevant and appropriate theme or title using comparative and thematic method.

Research Findings:-

The study found out that the management of umrah in Malaysia is led by an entity that is not from a religious agency, namely MOTAC. Its jurisdiction is limited to only within the scope of outbound licensing of the travel agents as business operators. It does not cover the management of umrah nor matters related to the credentials of umrah mutawif. Therefore, it is an established facts that there is no government agencies or non-government entity that currently have provision to act and regulate as well as coordinate and monitor the management of umrah mutawif in Malaysia. At its minimum supervisory level, the management of the umrah mutawif is only under the guidance of certain umrah travel agents that normally having limited supervision, not comprehensive, and prioritize its profit making over the quality and competence of umrah mutawifs.

The importance of establishing the qualifications' guideline for a credible umrah mutawif.

Guidelines refers to the determination of scope limitations or limits of a process and activity. From a technical point of view, it serves as a guide or guidelines that need to be followed, a policy or characteristics that can be used as a guide or principles (Kamus Dewan, 2010). In Arabic, the word dhabit (ضابط) or mi'yar (معيار) is often used to describe the meaning of guidelines which means rules and measures (Munir 2009, Mustafa Sano 2002). Based on the given definitions, it can generally be understood that guidelines are a benchmark or limitation that affects the way something is done or made.

As cited in the problem statement segment, there are various backgrounds of individuals who venture into the profession of umrah mutawif, yet at the same time there is no entity that entirely monitors the credentials, qualification and accreditation of these individuals before they are appointed as a competence umrah mutawif. Concurrently, there are umrah travel agents asumrah package operators, have established their own mutawif academy including Andalusia Travel and Tours Sdn. Bhd. and ManhajjMutawwif. However, the existence of this mutawif academy is not governed and monitored by any specific entity either a religious agency or otherwise.

Therefore, creating a qualifications' guideline that qualifies a person to be an umrah mutawif is seen as priorities as this guidelinewill serve as a reference and guide to travel agents in choosing qualified mutawif to guide umrah pilgrims under their company as well as reference to public at large as consumers on how to select and assess the credibility of umrah mutawif.

With this guideline, it will, to some extent,assist the umrah industry in providing the best service to theirguided pilgrims. Apart from that, from the legal point of view, the fiqh of ibadah could be streamlined and standardized according to the National Hajj Muzakarah (Muzakarah Haji PeringkatKebangsaan) in order to eliminate conflicting views on umrah fiqh, as well as avoiding confusions so that the pilgrims could and obtain a mabrurah umrah.

Umrah Mutawif's Qualifications' Guideline

This following qualifications' guideline is a set of criteriafor career qualification of a person to become a competent, credible and professional umrah mutawif:

1. Have Performed Umrah

The experience of performing umrah is an integral component to qualify a person to venture into the field of umrah mutawif. This experience is a critical factor as it exposes first-hand experience and accumulates knowledge of umrah mutawif to facilitate and assist his future umrah pilgrims. With this importance experience, umrah mutawif can explicitly and tacitly impart the knowledge and illustrate the real situation in the Holy Land either in Mecca or in Medina.

Umrah mutawifs could impart their knowledge by providing an overview related to the practical implementation of umrah, handling hectic situationat the airport, dealing withthelocalcommunity by understanding their language and culture, anticipating changes of weather, handling the deceased pilgrims and other aspects of umrah management. Only an experienced umrah mutawif that has gone through umrah possibly repeatedly would have this invaluable in-depth knowledge as this would not be possible for those who has yet performing umrah themselves.

However, there are also views that criticize that own experience of performing umrah is not the basis to qualify a person to venture into the field of umrah mutawif as the experience could also be obtained through the learning and experience of others. This view may have a basis but if a person has never performed umrah, the person should firstly be appointed as an assistant to the umrah mutawif to lead and assist the congregation of umrah pilgrims. This is important to ensure the smooth and safe journey for that particular congregation of pilgrims.

Counsel Support Division of Tabung Haji has set such conditions in selecting their Homeland Hajj Courses (Pengkursus Ibadat Haji Tanah Air - PEKTA) and Holy Land Hajj Guides (Pembimbing Ibadat Haji Tanah Suci - PIHTAS). The roles of PEKTA and PIHTAS outlined by Tabung Haji is to assist and ensure that prospective pilgrims are given thorough understanding of knowledge related to fiqh of ibadatin Malaysia and subsequently preparing the pilgrims to be ready, confident and appreciate the perfection of Hajj execution in the Holy Land towards Hajj mabrur. (<https://www.tabunghaji.gov.my/ms/haji/perkhidmatan/pekta-pihtas>)

2. Have State's Teaching Credential (Tauliah)

Under the schedule Nine of the Malaysian Federal Constitution, Islam is a religion under the custodian and virtue of states authority. Hence, having states' teaching credential is important as umrah is related to religious matters and are subjected to the jurisdiction of each state.

Application for state's teaching credentials could be obtained from a state that is of interest for the umrah mutawifs themselves. To obtain a teaching credential from a state, applicants need to adhere to certain processes that includes having sets of certificates of qualification and undergo several assessments sessions such as written and oral tests, as well as attending interviews sessions. Persons who have teaching credential, would be deemed as possessing the in-depth fiqh of ibadat knowledge and are trusted to have achieved satisfactory level of mastery in knowledge to impart his guide and authority in guiding the umrah pilgrims.

State's Teaching Credential is one of the pre-requisites by Tabung Haji in selecting and appointing their PEKTA and PIHTAS. Tabung Haji experiences in managing hajj pilgrims, developing syllabus, administering and governing PEKTA and PIHTAS could and should be used as a determining guideline in qualifying a person to venture into the field of umrah mutawif. (<https://www.tabunghaji.gov.my/ms/haji/perkhidmatan/pekta-pihtas>)

3. Attending the Umrah Mutawif's Course

Every interested individual who intends to venture into the field of umrah mutawif should at least attend relevant courses offered by credible institutions or travel agents. Although currently there are no umrah mutawif course mandated and endorsed by any government agency, exposure to the umrah mutawif course offered by credible institutions could be taken into account in preparing and enriching the umrah mutawif's knowledge. Despite the offered modules for umrah mutawif's course might differ from one institution to another's, principal teachings and content would be same revolving the travel management of umrah pilgrims including airport, transportation, accommodation, effective communication as well as the theoretical and practical fiqh of umrah including tawaf, sa'i and shearing.

The coordination of umrah mutawif's courses that are mandated, governed and endorsed by a dedicated government agency in the future is a very crucial element. This is to ensure that the quality of services provided by umrah mutawif, qualified and streamlined fiqh advisory, as well as continuous improvement could and would benefitting the industry as a whole and all Malaysians muslims. With the coordination and recognition by the government authority, the umrah mutawif profession would be able to emerge as a professional career of choice. Even local tourist guide is accredited and licensed by government agency - MOTAC.

MOTAC's tourist guides accreditation requires every individual who provides services as a tour guide to be certified by MOTAC. They need to attend several courses organized by the Association of Tourism Training Institute of Malaysia (ATTIM) such as Travel and Tours Management Course (TTMC), Travel and Tours Enhancement Course (TTEC) and Tourist Guide Course. The TTMC, TTEC model implemented by MOTAC could be mapped in providing professional framework accreditation for umrah mutawif. (<http://www.motac.gov.my>)

The future proposed framework, syllabus, and module of umrah mutawif course and accreditation could adopt MOTAC's TTMC, TTEC and LKU, Tabung Haji's SPIH (Sijil Pembimbing Ibadat Haji), PIHTAS and PEKTA,

IPB's USEC and homegrown Diploma Pengurusan Haji dan Umrah, and Jabatan Pembangunan Kemahiran Malaysia (JPK)'s Sijil Kemahiran Malaysia Mutawif Umrah dan Ziarah Tahap 3,4 dan 5 (NOSS).

4. Mastering the Basics of Fardu Ain, In-depth Knowledge of Fiqh of Umrah, and Continuous Advancement of Umrah Rulings Based on the National Hajj Muzakarah

Mastering the basics of Fardu Ain is a fundamental knowledge for umrah. This is because umrah mutawif is the central reference point for the pilgrims to refer to for any religious matters during their period of stay in the Holy Lands. Various acts of worship will be performed by the pilgrims such as ablution, prayer, rukhsa prayer while traveling, fasting, slaughtering sacrificial animals, alms, reciting doa and the Qur'an and the intricacies of laws involving women's menstruation, childbirth, and istihadah to name a few.

In-depth knowledge of Fiqh of Umrah is a principal component that act as a qualifying condition to filter a person who desires to venture as umrah mutawif. Fiqh of umrah is an act of worship that is rarely performed by a person and thus it would attract various queries by the pilgrims. A deep mastery of the Fiqh of Umrah hence crucial as it is unlike any other acts of worship and possesses inherent implications, such as always being in ihram and the obligation to perform tahlulihisar, that will be borne by the pilgrims should the condition of umrah is not satisfactorily fulfilled.

Among the emphasized focus of umrah including miqat, umrah intention, conditional intention, tawaf, tawaf during menstruation for women, saie, shearing, law and practice of umrah involving children, prohibition during ihram and dam or fidyah imposed in case of prohibition violation during ihram.

Various laws and rulings (hukum) of umrah will be changed and updated depending on circumstances, situations and technological advancement. In this regard, umrah mutawifs need to update the current laws decided by the National Hajj Muzakarah, annually. The purpose of this Muzakarah among others, is to standardize and coordinate the laws related to Hajj, Umrah and Pilgrimage.

Umrah mutawif is urged to comply with the decisions by Muzakarah Haji Peringkat Kebangsaan when guiding and giving explanations to their umrah pilgrims. This is to prevent confusions of various laws given to the pilgrims and this would develop senses of credible authority, trust and confidence for the pilgrims to performing their umrah. Tabung Haji updated and published Hajj Muzakarah's resolutions annually and its easily accessible in their website. (<https://www.tabunghaji.gov.my/ms/resolusi-muzakarah-haji>)

5. Possesses Enthusiasm, Mental Resilience and Physical Strength in Managing the Congregation of Pilgrims

Without interest there is no intrinsic motivation for a person get involved in anything. Without any interest, it would even reduce the quality of entrusted work and will further cause problems. For umrah, it transcends beyond basic interest as it requires enthusiasm that would push any persons to achieve their desired goal. Interest and enthusiasms could be nurtured in various ways i.e., guidance, family and even peer's pressure. With the acquired knowledge, interest could lead to enthusiasm and increase an individual's attention towards his selected career (Syahida Sidek, 2018).

As umrah mutawifs, enthusiasm in this field is highly required as they will face a variety of challenging situations and circumstances that derives from the diversity and attitude of the pilgrims, unforeseen circumstances, as well challenges in foreign land. This would include bureaucracy and red tapes when dealing with the airports, immigration, customs, domestic transportation's officials and staff, other foreign pilgrims and changes of weather which are definitely would be different from the homeland.

These conditions would definitely test any person's mental and physical endurance. Without umrah mutawif's enthusiasms, mental endurance and physical strength, this would be difficult to deal with. This would further lead to failure in providing satisfactory services and congregation of pilgrims would then be dissatisfied towards the services provided by the travel agents. Worst case scenario includes the quality of pilgrim's ibadah would then be affected and nullified due to such incidents.

Hence, umrah mutawifs are required to have regular health check-ups at any government and private health service provider. This would assess their mental and physical conditions to ensure that they are fit to guide and lead their umrah pilgrims. Only fit and healthy umrah mutawifs should be allowed to continue their services. If they fail this

test or unable to meet the adequate prescribed level of health, then the umrah mutawif is not qualified to handle the pilgrims at that particular point of time until his health result shows otherwise.

Tabung Haji imposed good health conditions when selecting and appointing their PIHTAS to guide hajj pilgrims during Hajj season. This is a significant condition to be imposed on umrah mutawif to ensure the quality of services that they provided. (<https://www.tabunghaji.gov.my/ms/haji/perkhidmatan/pekta-pihtas>)

6. Leadership and Communication Skills

Leadership is a process of moving a group of people towards a predetermined direction through non-coercive encouragement. Good leadership motivates people to meet long-term goals. Likewise, leadership is a role and process of influencing others. A leader is a part of a group member who is given a particular position and is expected to act in accordance with his or her position. A leader is also a member of the group who is expected to use influence in implementing and achieving group goals. (Abdullah Muhammad Zin 2002)

In the context of umrah mutawif as a career, high leadership is an intrinsic quality that should be possessed by anyone who would want to join in the field. Umrah mutawif by the very nature of its profession is a nexus to his pilgrims. All the movements of umrah pilgrims during their stay in the Holy Land would be monitored, led, guided and regulated by the umrah mutawif appointed by the travel agents. In short, this crucial services by the umrah mutawif would naturally be referred as the pilgrim's leader from the point of pilgrim's embarkation in KLIA until they disembark back in KLIA once completing their umrah in the Holy Lands.

Thus, the qualities of leadership such as fair in action, far-sighted, willing to accept opinions, wise and tolerant must be possessed and practiced while guiding the umrah pilgrims. If the umrah mutawif fails or is seen as failing in his leadership to guide the umrah pilgrims, it will definitely affect the operation of the travel agents represented by the umrah mutawif. It will further cause the dissatisfaction amongst the umrah pilgrims.

Having great communication skills is also one of the main conditions in qualifying a person to engage in this career as umrah mutawif. Communication skills are among the most important elements demanded in all professions. Communication skills are important to ensure the smooth running of business either in communication among colleagues or with external parties, especially to gain the trust, confidence and response of customers.

Without communication skills, discussions on any matter would be difficult and it would not reach to a professional, harmonious and amicable agreement and settlement. It even would trigger towards serious disagreements and dissatisfaction thus risking an effective implementation and settlement. To make it worst, weaknesses in communication can lead to overtly or covertly conflicts that inevitably have a negative impact and endanger the organization (Berita Harian, 12 November 2016).

In the context of career, effective communication skills are very important and must be possessed by umrah mutawif in conveying complete, reliable, practical and timely information to their guided umrah pilgrims. This aims to ensure that all conveyed information such as movements and laws related to worship can be understood, accepted and adhered well by the pilgrims.

Among the emphasized matters in communicating with the umrah pilgrims is the use of high level of fluency to ensure the language and presentations are easily understandable, clear and concise. Umrah mutawifs need to utilize appropriate language to avoid being seen as demanding, abusive and rude.

7. Ability to Communicate in Arabic

The ability to communicate in fluent Arabic is not the main condition to qualify oneself as umrah mutawif. This is due to the facts that travel agents would normally have other representatives (either local or Malaysians) assigned in the Holy Land that could communicate fluently in Arabic. However, this a very valuable skill should any umrah mutawif could master the Arabic themselves as an additional language as it would be an added value in carrying out the responsibilities while guiding the umrah pilgrims effectively.

Umrah mutawifs are recommended to learn the basics of Arabic communication which is often used in everyday conversation. Umrah mutawifs are highly urged to learn and use the conditional and circumstantial Arabic language that customize the situation that they would normally face. This would include the situations when dealing with the

officials and staff at the airport, immigration, customs, hotel and accommodation, mosques, hospitals, pharmacies and grocery stores. This would be a great service to their own umrah pilgrims when umrah mutawif could master the Arabic in these circumstances.

Conclusion:-

Umrah pilgrims, especially for the first time, should only be guided by a competence, qualified, credible and credential umrah mutawif. Currently, the industry is not thoroughly regulated as it only requires outbound license, under the jurisdiction of MOTAC by the virtue of AIP 1992.

Other operations including the industry workers, especially the umrah mutawif are not governed by any effective rules to ensure standardisation of fiqh of ibadat and fiqh of muamalat. AIP 1992 alone is insufficient to develop module, mandate, regulate and accredit the governance of umrah mutawif. If there is any, the self-governance of umrah mutawif is under the travel agents own initiative, without any government sanctions and authority.

The outcome of this study is hoped to be as a catalyst that serves as a reference and guide for the umrah travel agents in selecting qualified umrah mutawif and for the public to assess umrah mutawif's credibility and performance. In addition, this study could also be used as a self-guide for individuals who wish to venture and excel into the profession of umrah mutawif.

Based on the study, the researcher would recommend that the management of umrah in Malaysia to be placed under one religious' entity as umrah regulatory body, as umrah is an act of worship in Islam that must be monitored and scrutinized thoroughly and continuously. Currently, there is no government or non-government institutions that having the jurisdiction to do so. Since the general public misperception has already viewed that umrah is supposed to be under an Islamic/religious authority, despite its currently only governed by AIP 1992 under MOTAC, it might be a good starting point to look there. TH, JAWHAR and JAKIM are among the prospect to be considered to govern the accreditation of umrah mutawif.

To do this, it requires enactment of a new act or amendment of relevant existing acts namely AIP 1992 and Tabung Haji Act 1995 (Act 535). This new act is hoped to comprehensively govern the umrah industry as a whole, including the management of umrah mutawif. This move would ensure that umrah mutawif could be a professional career of choice in the future. This recommendation is critical as it would heighten the umrah industry in Malaysia to be at par with other professional industries and could simultaneously improve the Muslims economy in Malaysia.

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