

UMRAH TRAVEL FAIR PERFORMANCE: AN INTEGRATED MODEL OF EVENT MANAGEMENT DIMENSIONS AND MUSLIM CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE (MCPV) AS A CRITICAL MEDIATOR. A CASE STUDY OF THE GARUDA UMRAH TRAVEL FAIR 2023–2025

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Abstract

The rapid growth of religious tourism in Indonesia, particularly the Umrah pilgrimage, has necessitated a shift in event management strategies to align with the unique needs of Muslim consumers. This study examines the performance of the Garuda Umrah Travel Fair (GUTF) 2023–2025 by analysing the influence of event planning, operation, and evaluation, with Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV) acting as a mediating variable. Utilizing a quantitative methodology and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM-PLS), a survey was conducted on 259 exhibitors and stakeholders across three years' event cycles. The findings indicate that while event operation and evaluation are significant performance drivers, event planning acts solely as a structural "hygiene factor" with no direct significant impact. Crucially, the study identifies an "evaluative scrutiny" paradox: higher perceived spiritual and functional values (MCPV) lead to more critical performance assessments by experienced stakeholders. This research contributes to Islamic event management theory by introducing the "Critical Amplifier" model of perceived value.

Keywords: Event Performance, Event Management, Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV), Religious Tourism, Garuda Umrah Travel Fair.

Abstrak

Pertumbuhan pesat pariwisata religi di Indonesia, khususnya ibadah Umrah, menuntut adanya perubahan strategi manajemen acara agar selaras dengan kebutuhan unik konsumen Muslim. Penelitian ini mengkaji kinerja Garuda Umrah Travel Fair (GUTF) 2023–2025 dengan menganalisis pengaruh perencanaan, pelaksanaan, operasional, dan evaluasi acara, dengan Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV) sebagai variabel mediasi. Dengan menggunakan metodologi kuantitatif dan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS), survei dilakukan terhadap 259 exhibitor dan pemangku kepentingan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun pelaksanaan dan evaluasi acara secara signifikan meningkatkan kinerja, biaya perencanaan acara berperan sebagai "faktor higienis" struktural yang tidak memiliki dampak signifikan secara langsung. Yang terpenting, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi paradoks "evaluative scrutiny": semakin tinggi nilai spiritual dan fungsional yang dirasakan (MCPV), justru menyebabkan penilaian kinerja yang lebih kritis oleh para pemangku kepentingan yang berpengalaman. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap teori manajemen acara Islam melalui pengenalan model "Critical Amplifier" mengenai nilai yang dipersepsikan.

Kata Kunci: Kinerja Acara, Manajemen Acara, Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV), Pariwisata Religi, Garuda Umrah Travel Fair.

1. Introduction

Tourism has solidified its role as a vital sector for both global and national economies, demonstrating an unparalleled capacity to stimulate economic growth, generate employment, and preserve cultural heritage (Manzoor et al., 2019). Within this broader industry, *event tourism* has emerged as a specialized strategy for destinations to create planned social experiences that actively influence visitor behavior and foster regional transformation (Getz, 2007). In general, the religious tourism sub-segment has displayed a remarkable post-pandemic recovery. Recent data indicates that the number of Umrah pilgrims in 2023 reached a record 13.55 million, representing a 58% increase compared to 2019 (Saudi Gazette, 2024), with 1.36 million from Indonesia (Kemenag RI, 2024). Indonesia became the second largest country of origin for umrah pilgrims after Pakistan (Himpuh, 2025).

This surge in demand led to the establishment and expansion of the Garuda Umrah Travel Fair (GUTF), which serves as a strategic nexus connecting the spiritual aspirations of the Indonesian Muslim population with premium aviation and travel services. The event has seen massive commercial success, with transaction values skyrocketing from USD12 million in 2023 to USD19 million by 2024 (Garuda, 2024) and projected to around USD30 million in 2025 (Marketers, 2025). However, the performance of such events in a religious context cannot be measured by financial metrics alone. There exists a persistent gap between technical event planning and the specific spiritual, ethical, and emotional expectations of Muslim consumers (Hassan et al., 2016).

Muslim consumers require a specialized service delivery system that

adheres to *sharia requirements*, ensuring that goods, services, and environments are *halal-friendly* (Battour & Ismail, 2016). Consequently, evaluating the performance of religious travel fairs requires a unique theoretical lens: *Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV)*.

This study elaborates on the internal management processes, planning, operation, and evaluation, and how they translate into institutional performance through the mediation of perceived value, filling a critical gap in Islamic marketing and event management literature.

Building upon this contextual foundation, it becomes essential to frame the discussion within a coherent theoretical structure that can systematically explain how internal event management processes translate into perceived value and ultimately institutional performance. The complexity of religious event tourism – particularly in the context of umrah travel fairs – requires an integrative theoretical approach that bridges event management theory, perceived value theory, Islamic marketing principles, and performance measurement frameworks. Rather than viewing planning, operational execution, and evaluation as merely technical managerial functions, this study positions them as strategic value-creation mechanisms that shape Muslim consumers' cognitive, emotional, and spiritual assessments. Therefore, the following section presents the core theories underpinning this research, providing the conceptual foundation necessary to understand the relationships among event planning, event operations, event evaluation, Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV), and event performance within the specific context of religious travel events.

To begin with, Event Management Theory provides the primary managerial lens through which the internal structure

of an event is understood. Event management is conceptualized as an integrated, multi-stage process that includes planning, execution, and reflective evaluation to meet organizational objectives (Getz & Page, 2024). Modern management theory further emphasizes that event success is rooted in value creation, where outcomes are assessed not merely through immediate outputs but through sustained stakeholder impact and long-term relational benefits (Torre & Gallaud, 2022). Within this framework, planning involves backstage coordination such as site selection, experience design, and stakeholder integration (Getz & Page, 2024), functioning as a structural prerequisite that prevents failure rather than serving as a visible differentiator for attendees (Goldblatt, 2010).

The operational phase then translates strategic design into tangible frontstage delivery, including logistics, registration responsiveness, and on-site service quality (Mishra et al., 2024), requiring disciplined coordination among owners, customers, vendors, volunteers, and organizers to integrate operational, strategic, and creative dimensions (Silvers, 2015). In religious markets, such operational reliability acquires symbolic meaning as a form of religious assurance that confirms the safety and legitimacy of the spiritual journey (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015). Subsequently, evaluation functions as a reflective instrument to assess impact, outcomes, and sustainability (Allen et al., 2011), while simultaneously serving as an organizational learning mechanism that identifies vulnerabilities and enables ecosystem refinement based on empirical feedback (Maguire & McLoughlin, 2020).

While Event Management Theory explains how value is structurally produced within the organization, the

concept of Muslim Customer Perceived Value (MCPV) explains how that value is interpreted and judged from the perspective of Muslim consumers. MCPV represents a comprehensive assessment of the benefits received—quality, price, emotional, social, and Islamic values—relative to the sacrifices made (Hassan et al., 2016). Unlike conventional perceived value models, MCPV embeds sharia compliance as a central evaluative dimension rather than a peripheral attribute (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015). In this framework, quality and price value relate to the transparency of Umrah packages and fairness of pricing structures (Hapsari et al., 2016); emotional and social value encompass feelings of security and reinforcement of religious social identity (Hassan et al., 2016); and Islamic value represents the most critical dimension, involving halal food provision, prayer facilities, and Sharia-compliant transaction processes (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015; Afriansyah & Wardi, 2024). Through this multidimensional lens, internal managerial processes are translated into subjective yet structured value judgments.

Finally, to connect managerial processes and perceived value with measurable outcomes, Event Performance theory provides the outcome-oriented perspective of the framework. In the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) industry, event performance refers to the success of an event in delivering meaningful experiences while achieving strategic targets such as stakeholder satisfaction and economic impact (Radic et al., 2024). Event quality, encompassing both affective and cognitive dimensions, significantly influences perceived value, satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions (Armbrecht, 2021). To sustain competitive advantage, event organizers must continuously deliver superior customer experience value through

efficient and strategically aligned management practices (An et al., 2021; Zhan et al., 2023). Increasingly, performance is conceptualized as a collaborative construct grounded in value co-creation, where participants actively engage in the service process and contribute to their own loyalty formation (Mursid & Wu, 2022).

Collectively, these theoretical perspectives establish a coherent explanatory pathway in which internal event management processes shape multidimensional Muslim customer perceived value, which in turn determines overall event performance within the religious tourism context.

2. Research Methodology

Design and Population.

This study adopts a quantitative descriptive design using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM-PLS) to explore complex causal relationships (Hair et al., 2022). The population includes all exhibitors and partners of the GUTF from 2023 to 2025, totalling 259 entities, with 130 eligible responses.

Measurement and Instrumentation.

Data were collected via a structured questionnaire using a 4-point Likert scale (1: strongly disagree to 4: strongly agree) to eliminate neutral bias and force definitive responses (Kankaraš, & Capecci, 2024). The instrument measured five constructs: Event Planning (X1), Event Operation (X2), Event Evaluation (X3), MCPV (Z), and Event Performance (Y).

Data Analysis (SEM-PLS).

The study utilized SmartPLS software to evaluate: (a). *Outer Model*: assessing convergent validity (AVE>0.5), discriminant validity (cross-loading), and construct reliability (composite reliability>0.7) (Hair et al., 2021); (b) *Inner Model*: assessing path coefficients

(β), r-square (R^2), effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2); and (c) *Mediation Analysis*: testing the indirect effect of MCPV on the relationship between management dimensions and performance.

3. Results and Discussion

Respondent characteristics.

The respondent profile was dominated by males (56.4%) and individuals aged 30–50 years (63.3%), reflecting a mature, rational, and economically stable decision-making group. Significantly, 38.2% of respondents were Travel Owners/Owners, and over 65% were repeat participants. This indicates that the evaluations were provided by strategic business actors with comprehensive experience in the religious travel industry.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing.

The significance of the structural relationships was examined using the bootstrapping procedure within the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) framework. Bootstrapping enables the estimation of standard errors and t-statistics through repeated subsampling, thereby allowing robust assessment of the statistical significance of the path coefficients. The t-statistic serves as the primary criterion for hypothesis testing, indicating whether the estimated structural paths differ significantly from zero. Following established methodological guidelines in PLS-SEM, a structural relationship is considered statistically significant when the obtained t-value exceeds the critical threshold corresponding to the selected confidence level. This procedure ensures that the observed effects among event planning, event operations, event evaluation, Muslim Customer Perceived Value, and event performance are not attributable to sampling error but reflect

meaningful structural associations within the proposed model.

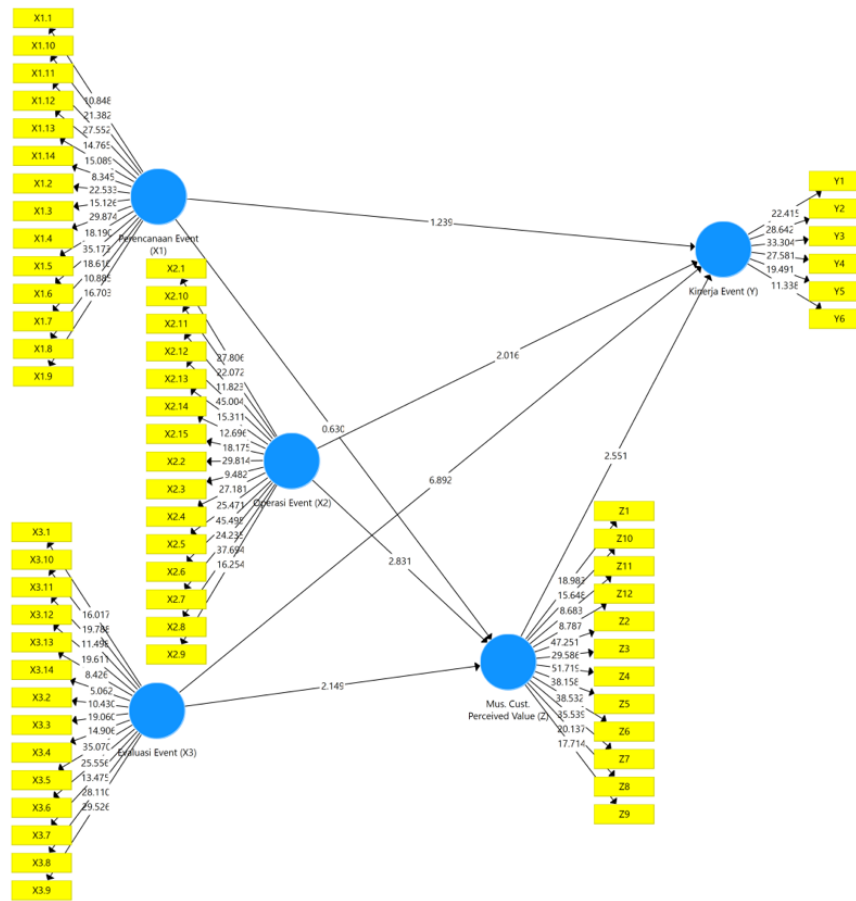


Figure 1. Bootstrapping t-Statistics of the Structural Model

The result of SEM-PLS analysis of this research data for hypothesis testing as follows:

Hyp.	β	t-Stat.	p-Val.	Result
H1: X1 → Z	0.048	0.630	0.529	Rejected
H2: X2 → Z	0.485	2.831	0.005	Accepted
H3: X3 → Z	0.363	2.149	0.032	Accepted
H4: X1 → Y	0.132	1.239	0.216	Rejected
H5: X2 → Y	0.317	2.016	0.044	Accepted
H6: X3 → Y	0.726	6.892	0.000	Accepted
H7: Z → Y	-0.374	2.551	0.011	Accepted

H8: X1 → Z → Y	-0.018	0.537	0.592	Rejected
H9: X2 → Z → Y	0.182	2.068	0.039	Accepted
H10: X3 → Z → Y	0.136	1.383	0.167	Rejected

Direct Effect.

H1. Event Planning (X1) on Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) has a path coefficient (β) value of 0.048 and a p-Values of 0.529 greater than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is no significant influence, so H1 is rejected and H0 is accepted.

H2. The Event Operation (X2) on the Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) has a path coefficient (β) value of 0.485 and a p-Value of 0.005 that is less than

0.05. Based on these values, it can be known that there is a significant positive influence, so H2 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

H3. The Event Evaluation (X3) on Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) has a path coefficient (β) value of 0.363 and a p-Values of 0.032 which is less than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is a significant positive influence, so H3 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

H4. Event Planning (X1) to Event Performance (Y) has a path coefficient (β) value of 0.132 and a p-Value of 0.216 greater than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is no significant influence, so H4 is rejected and H0 is accepted.

H5. The Event Operation (X2) to the Event Performance (Y) has a path coefficient (β) value of 0.317 and a p-Values of 0.044 that is smaller than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is a significant positive influence, so H5 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

H6. The Event Evaluation (X3) on Event Performance (Y) has a path coefficient (β) value of 0.726 and a p-Value of 0.000 smaller than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is a significant positive influence, so H6 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

H7. The Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) on Event Performance (Y) has a path coefficient (β) value of -0.374 and a p-Values of 0.011 that is smaller than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is a significant negative influence, so H7 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

Overall, based on the results of the direct influence hypothesis test, it can be concluded that Event Planning has no significant effect on Muslim Customer Perceived Value or Event Performance. On the other hand, Event Operations

and Event Evaluation have a positive and significant effect on Perceived Value and Event Performance, with Event Evaluation showing the most dominant influence on Event Performance. In addition, Muslim Customer Perceived Value has been proven to have a negative and significant effect on Event Performance. In general, event performance is more determined by operational and evaluation aspects than planning aspects.

Indirect Effect.

H8. Event Planning (X1) on Event Performance (Y) through Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) has a path coefficient (β) value of -0.018 and p-Values of 0.592 greater than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is no significant indirect influence, so H8 is rejected and H0 is accepted.

H9. Event Operations (X2) on Event Performance (Y) through Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) has a path coefficient (β) value of -0.182 and p-Values of 0.039 less than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be known that there is a significant indirect influence, so H9 is accepted and H0 is rejected.

H10. The Event Evaluation (X3) on the Performance of the Event (Y) through the Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) has a path coefficient (β) value of -0.136 and a p-Values of 0.167 greater than 0.05. Based on these values, it can be seen that there is no significant indirect influence, so H10 is rejected and H0 is accepted.

Overall, these results show that Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z) only acts as a mediator in the relationship between Event Operations (X2) and Event Performance (Y), while in the relationship between Event Planning (X1) and Event Evaluation (X3) to Event Performance (Y), no significant mediating role was found in Muslim Customer Perceived Value (Z).

The Hygiene Factor of Event Planning.

The results showed that Event Planning (X1) has no significant effect on MCPV or Event Performance. This suggests a theoretical decoupling between *backstage* preparatory structures and *frontstage* experiential outcomes (Glushko & Tabas, 2009). For experienced industry owners, strategic locations and Islamic concepts are viewed as *baseline expectations*, standard prerequisites that do not necessarily enhance value but would cause severe dissatisfaction if absent (Boo & Kim, 2022).

Operation and Evaluation as Performance Drivers.

In contrast, Event Operation (X2) and Event Evaluation (X3) were found to be significant positive drivers of both MCPV and Performance. *Operational Reliability*: effective registration, transaction security, and staff responsiveness during the *frontstage* phase provide the *religious assurance* necessary for value formation. *Evaluation Dominance*: evaluation emerged as the most dominant factor ($\beta=0.726$) influencing performance. This confirms that a systematic mechanism for organizational learning is the primary key to maintaining stability and trust in sensitive religious markets (Maguire & McLoughlin, 2020).

The MCPV Paradox: The Critical Amplifier.

The study revealed a significant *negative influence* of MCPV on Event Performance ($\beta=-0.374$). This phenomenon, termed the *Critical Amplifier* effect, suggests that as the spiritual and functional value perception increases, the evaluative standards of stakeholders become more stringent (Rasool et al., 2025). High perceived value raises the bar for excellence; when stakeholders feel a

deep sense of religious and quality value, they become more sensitive to any perceived structural or managerial shortcomings in long-term performance.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusion. The success of religious travel fairs is primarily dictated by operational consistency and robust reflective evaluation rather than symbolic planning. Planning serves as a structural enabler, but the actual *frontstage* interactions drive the formation of Muslim Customer Perceived Value. Furthermore, the study concludes that MCPV acts as a critical evaluative filter; higher perceived value results in more rigorous performance scrutiny by industry stakeholders.

Suggestions.

Theoretical: future models of Islamic event management must explicitly distinguish between *backstage planning* and *frontstage experiential value*. MCPV should be re-conceptualized as a "Critical Amplifier" rather than a linear positive mediator. *Practical*: GUTF organizers should prioritize *Operational Reliability* as their core *Religious Assurance* engine. *Strategic*: evaluation systems should be integrated with long-term growth roadmaps, focusing on regional expansion and exhibitor retention to align high perceived values with sustainable performance.

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