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**Sharia Compliance Implementation Among Hoteliers
in Klang Valley, Malaysia**

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Abstract

Sharia compliance hotel has been created to cater to Muslim guests as demand and awareness for Islamic products and services increased. This innovative development can be found in countries where Muslim residents are the majority like Malaysia and Indonesia. However, there is a limited of study on the sharia compliance hotel acceptance among hoteliers particularly in Malaysia. Thus, the main purpose of the study is to examine the factors that contribute to the acceptance of sharia compliance hotel concept implementation among hoteliers. This study focuses on the middle management level employees in 3-5 star hotel situated in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Drawing from Theory of Planned Behaviour, the specific research objectives are three-fold: 1) to examine the relationship between attitude and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, 2) to investigate the relationship between subjective norm and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, and 3) to examine the relationship between perceived behavioural control and

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sharia compliance hotel acceptance. The study utilized quantitative research approach to achieve the stated research objectives. For data collection, a self-administered questionnaire was deployed which was developed based on previous studies. For the purpose of the study, the data collection was conducted in fifteen hotels in the Klang Valley that include hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Putrajaya and Cyberjaya. The results verified hotelier's attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are salient attributes of sharia compliance hotel acceptance in the hotel industry. The research model based on the theory of planned behavior managed to explain more than 60 per cent of the variance in sharia compliance hotel acceptance.

Introduction

The hotel industry increases in the central and reconstructed city where job opportunities and economic activities occur drastically. Sharia Compliance Hotel has been one part of the industry where we can see the numbers of hotels' operators following the practice. Malaysia, for instance, has been taken a step to empower the halal tourism industry. According to the Department of Statistic Malaysia (DOSM), in 2019, 61.3% of the Malaysian are Muslim, followed by Buddhist at 19.8%, Christian 9.2%, Hindu at 6.3% and others. As most of the population are Muslim, most of the hotels' operators are in line with Islamic values indirectly; for instance, some of the hotels providing Buffet Ramadhan during the fasting month, prayer room to perform prayers and promote traditional halal food.

According to the Malaysia Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC), in 2018, Malaysia welcomed an estimated 5.3 million inbound Muslim tourists (Islamic Tourism Centre, 2019). A report on Global Muslim Travel Index 2018 by Mastercard-Cresentrating (2018) highlighted that, there were an estimated 131 million Muslim visitor arrivals globally in 2017 compared to 121 million in 2016, and this figure forecasted to grow to 156 million by 2020, which will represent 10 per cent in the travel segment. While, in 2016, Malaysia received a total of 287,398 Middle Eastern tourists that contributed MYR2.56 billion to the country's revenue (Islamic Tourism Centre, 2017).

Considering the size and the opportunity lies ahead for halal tourism, hotel industry player should grab to ensure that the forecasted Muslim visitor is attracting to visit Malaysia. They should allow their hotels to implement the Sharia principle as an innovation in this segment. The market for Islamic products and services is one of the strategic advantages for hotel operators. The influx of tourists from the Middle East into Malaysia offers the Sharia Compliance Hotel (SCH) an enormous opportunity to attract them, increasing the hotel's profits (Mohd Salleh 2015).

Today, the halal market is not exclusive to Muslims and has gained more recognition among non-Muslim consumers who associate halal with ethical consumerism (Mastercard-Cresentrating 2018). For Muslims, it's no longer merely

a religious obligation or observance. Halal, meaning lawful, has become a robust market. According to ITC (2017), Islamic tourism can have high impacts on Malaysia's tourism industry from economics, social, environmental and politic. This is because Islamic tourism provides new peculiar and universal needs which will influence the development of the tourism industry in Malaysia. Suid, Nor and Omar (2018) mentioned this industry promises a profitable chain of economic opportunities.

Nonetheless, most traditional hoteliers hesitate to move to SCH because of the term's lack of knowledge and comprehension. Capacity hotel management refers to room constraints and facilities provided to hotel resource customers. The hotel must handle the efficiency of its rooms well because this influences its returns. Additional costs incurred for renovating the existing pool and spa facilities can add to the challenges facing existing hotel operators (Samori and Sabtu 2014). In designing proper Sharia hotels such as; the separation of rooms for men and women, architectural and interior design is suggested, which demands comfort and space for prayer (Samori and Sabtu 2014). Ideally, hoteliers are advice to hire consultant or officer who knows the SCH concept to ensure that everything conforms to the guidelines. According to Zailani, Omar and Kopong (2011) mentioned in their exploratory study, most of the managers are not well understood the importance of Halal certification, however they still can have a successful business without it.

Previous studies indicated that, the level of awareness and profit are their biggest concerns to follow the requirement of SCH. Meanwhile, most industry player in Malaysia refuse to accept this concept due to acceptance. Acceptance towards the concept from the operators, the customer and the regulation. Until today, there is a lack of research on the acceptance level among the hoteliers on this concept. Drawing from Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the specific research objectives are three-fold: 1) to examine the relationship between attitude and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, 2) to investigate the relationship between subjective norm and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, and 3) to examine the relationship between perceived behavioural control and sharia compliance hotel acceptance.

Literature review

This section will explain about the related literature review of the topic. The focus will be on literature reviews about shariah compliant (or compliance) hotel (SCH), theory of planned behaviour, attitude and acceptance, subjective norm and acceptance and finally perceived behavioural control and acceptance.

Shariah Compliant Hotel (SCH)

The SCH is a hotel that delivers not only halal food and beverage services in accordance with Sharia principles, but also covers the entire hotel business (Razalli, Mohd Ismail and Yaacob 2015). This definition was supported by Mohamad Rasit,

Hamjah and Mansor (2016), that stated Muslim or Islamic hotel is a hotel that provides sharia-compliant services as a moral code to lay the guideline for Islam's whole life.

In addition to providing a tranquil, cozy and healthy environment with guest-friendly services, Baharudin, Hisyam, Muhamad and Mohsin (2015) defined a Sharia hotel as one with its management and services delivered based on the Muslim Sharia principle. Saad (2014) stated that a hotel compliant with Sharia is defined as a hotel providing Sharia-compliant services. Besides, Samori and Sabtu (2014) argued that a hotel which is Sharia-compliant does not merely supply halal food and drink but involves the entire operations of the hotel.

Sharia is an Arabic word meaning the oath that Muslim should follow (Doi 1984). The Sharia Compliance Hotel can therefore be defined as a hotel providing Sharia principle-based services (Yusuf 2009). Reviews of work of literature differed between three categories of hotels covered by the Islamic Hospitality Concept; dry hotels which serve non-alcoholic in their centres; partly SCHs that provide a few additional Islamic services, such as Halal food and prayer rooms; Qur'an and prayer rug in each room as well as split facilities between men and women, and fully controlled by the Sharia from its design, interior to hotel accounts (Zulkharnain and Jamal 2012).

The SCH can be defined as a hotel entity that provides all services according to the Sharia principles (all the commands of Allah Subhanahu Wataalla in all aspects) (Samori and Sabtu 2014). Further, Shaharuddin, Kassim, Yusof, Bakar and Talib (2018) stated that SCH is defined as the hotel that is governed by Sharia standard which goes beyond the concept of dry and Islamic hotels. Henderson (2016) explained that the SCH as not serving non-halal food and no alcohol at the premises or hotels only. The holy book Qur'an must be put in the room and the room must be provided with a prayer mat and a *qibla* sign. The beds and toilets must not be positioned facing the *qibla* and the prayer room has to be available in the premises and hotels, and no inappropriate entertainment.

Research framework: Theory of planned behavior perspective

TPB is basically an extension model of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen 1991; Ajzen and Madden 1986) and is one of the most researched models for a social psychologist to predict behavioral intentions (Armitage and Conner 2001). TPB allows the examination of the influence of personal determinants and social surroundings as well as non-volitional determinants on intention (Han and Kim 2010). TPB was developed due to the limitation of the original models in dealing with behaviors that people have incomplete volitional control.

The theory postulates three conceptually independent determinants as the main model where attitude is the psychological tendency to evaluate a certain entity in some degree of favor or disfavour (Eagly and Chaiken 1993). The subjective norm evaluates

the social pressure on persons to perform or not to perform certain behaviour. The perceptions of behavior are described as the degree to which behaviour, or to which people perceive control, is regarded as controllable (Liou and Contento 2001).

Past research has shown that TPB offers an excellent framework to identify predictors of the intention to buy automotive technology e.g., autonomous (Kelkel 2015), environmentally friendly vehicles (Afroz, Masud, Akhtar and Islam 2015). Apart from that, applications for the use of TPB were also used to study safety behaviors such as motorcycle helmet use (Ali, Mahmoodabad, Saeed and Mohammad 2011) and occupational health-related behaviour (Colemont and Van den Broucke 2008). In hospitality, TPB is used to explain consumer's decision-making process of visiting green hotels (Han and Kim 2010). Apart from that, TPB is also being used to study on the intention to purchase halal food product (Mohd Suki and Abang Salleh 2016).

Attitude and intention to accept SCH concept

TPB assumes a behavior attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are three cognitively independent determinants. The first important factor for behavioral intent is the attitude which can be described as the extent to which the individual has a favorable or unfavorable assessment or evaluation of the behavior concerned (Ajzen 1991). Ajzen (1991) also mentioned that the more favorable the attitude concerning behavior, the stronger is the individual's intention to perform the behavior under consideration. Attitude toward a behavior is assumed to be the result of one's own prominent beliefs that represent perceived effects of behavior and his assessment of the important impacts it delivered. According to Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006), attitude is the evaluation of performing a particular behavior involving the attitude object, such as buying the product. In addition, it also includes an assessment as to whether the behavior is good or bad and whether the actor wants to do it (Leonar, Graham and Bonacum, 2004). Ramayah, Lee and Mohamad (2010) reported that attitudes involve perceived behavioral consequences. According to Chen and Tung (2014), the main predictor of behavioral intentions is attitude and also as a psychological emotion routed through consumers' evaluations and, if positive, behavioral intention tend to be more positive. Miniard and Engel (2006)

A person will most likely evaluate the benefits and costs resulting from a behavior when determining whether to perform a particular behavior (Cheng, Lam and Hsu, 2006). A person tends to be favorable when the outcomes are assessed positively and is therefore having a high tendency to engage in that particular behavior (Cheng et al. 2006). In this context, hoteliers will accept the implementation of SCH on their premises if only they have sufficient assessment to identify the outcomes. They have to put into consideration the attributes of SCH and at the same time, they are not losing anything. Other than that, if they accept SCH, will it change their workflow, their

SOP or maybe their attitude in serving their guest because an individual's attitude toward a certain behavior will strengthen his/her intention to perform the behavior.

Subjective norm and intention to accept SCH concept

In the TPB model, the second determination of behavioural intention is the subjective norm. The term "subjective norm" is defined as the social pressures perceived for performing or not performing the behaviour (Ajzen 1991). Hee (2000) highlighted the influence from others close to the person like close friend, family members, relative, colleagues or business partners. Subjective norm captures a sense of social pressure of an individual for a certain behaviour. Subjective norm is usually defined as the normative beliefs of a person concerning what prominent references he or she thinks should or should not make and its motivation to meet these referents (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980). Prior research by Sukato (2008) and Webster (2000) and Yoh et al. (2003) stated that friends and family members actually influence the decision-making of consumers. This argument is further supported by Mohd Suki and Abang Salleh (2016), who have found the most important predictor of the consumer's behavioral intentions to be subjective norms.

Many studies have documented subjective norms in the marketing and consumer behavior context as being an important determinant of intentions, including participation intention (Lee, 2005), technology use intention (Baker, Al-Gahtani & Hubona 2007), green hotel revisit intention (Chen & Tung 2014). In a study by Al-Nahdi (2008), the intention of consumers to patronize Halal food was shown to be significantly linked to the subjective norm. Shah Alam and Sayuti (2011) confirmed the same conception further, who found social pressure remained a strong influence on the intention of the consumer to purchase Halal food.

Perceived behavioral control and intention to accept SCH concept

Among these three antecedents in TPB, perceived behavioral control (PBC) is most significant when behavioral control is partially controlled by will. The term PBC refers to perceived behavioral ease or difficulty (Ajzen, 1991) and actually reflects previous experiences and expected barriers. According to Zhou, Thøgersen, Ruan and Huang (2013) behavioral control and motive determines behavior. In particular, PBC evaluates how well factors can be controlled that can make the actions required to deal with a specific situation more simple or restrictive. PBC is defined to be a function of control beliefs (CB) that refers to one's perception of the existence or lack of the resources or opportunities required to conduct a particular behavior, and its determination of the extent of importance of such resources or opportunities to the outcome (Ajzen & Madden 1986).

Many studies showed that in several research contexts, such as recycling, PBC is positively linked with the intention (Taylor & Todd 1995), conservation (Albayrak,

Aksoy & Caber 2013). green hotels (Han et al. 2010; Chen & Tung, 2014; Chang et al. 2006). Research has shown that PBC has an impact on consumer intention to purchase and re-patronize Halal foods like food service facilities (Al-Nahdi 2008; Shah Alam & Sayuti 2011). Thus, for this study, perhaps PBC has a direct influence for hoteliers to accept the implementation of SCH as mentioned by the previous scholar that peoples' intentions are positively influenced by their self-confidence in their ability to perform the behavior (Baker et al. 2007; Cheng et al. 2006; Conner & Abraham 2001).

Methodology

In this chapter the process of getting data will be discussed. The study utilizes the quantitative research method, using a survey questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire was developed based on TPB, adapted from the studies of Paul, Modi and Patel (2016), and Chen and Tung (2014). They used TBP on studies in predicting consumers' intention to visit green hotel.

For this study, the questionnaire consists of six sections. Section one is a set of demographic questions used for respondent segmentation. Section two test on Sharia compliance attributes by testing hoteliers understanding and knowledge about SCH. Section three discuss on the hoteliers' acceptability towards the SCH concept . Section four test on attitude as the first variable in the TPB, followed by section five that test on subjective norms and section six on perceived behavioural control. Respondents indicated their level of agreement using the semantic Likert scale for questions in Section two till six. The reliability of the questionnaire were tested using the Cronbach Alpha to ensure that all questions are reliable to measure the variables.

Research respondents

For this research, the respondents are hoteliers in the Klang Valley area. They were categorised according to their star rating hotels. Using a cluster sampling technique, staffs from the supervisor level to senior managers were selected to participate in this study. Cluster samples in this study are hotels that have not applied for Halal Certification from JAKIM and rating from 3 to 5 stars. The sampling size was determined using the Cochran's formula. Although the sample size for the study is 400 respondents, however only 391 respondents returned the survey with valid data.

Results

For this section the result obtained from data collection process will be presented. Firstly, pilot study result will be presented followed by full-scale study and finally multiple regression.

Pilot study reliability analysis

Pilot study was conducted by this study to ensure that it is reliable and valid before the full-scale test is conducted. Based on the reliability analysis shown in table 1, the acceptance score $\alpha = .921$, attitude $\alpha = .968$, subjective norm $\alpha = .948$ and perceived behavioural control $\alpha = .824$. This indicates that all question are significant and reliable for this study.

Table 1: Reliability analysis

Factor	α	N of Items
Acceptance	.921	7
Attitude	.968	14
Subjective Norm	.948	6
Perceived Behavioural Control	.824	8

Full-scale study

The questionnaires were distributed to gather demographic information like age, gender, religion, years of service and their position can be used to grouping the respondent for future use. The findings are as below:

Table 2: Frequency distribution of respondent's demographic information

Demographic information	Frequency <i>n</i> =391	Percent
Age		
20 to 30 years	202	51.7%
31 to 40 years	127	32.5%
41 to 50 years	26	6.6%
51 to 60 years	24	6.1%
Gender		
Male	168	43.0%
Female	202	51.7%%

Demographic information	Frequency <i>n</i> =391	Percent
Religion		
Islam	318	81.3%
Buddha	34	8.7%
Hindu	26	6.6%
Christian	13	3.3%
Others	0	0%
Years of service		
1 to 5 years	127	32.5%
6 to 10 years	55	14.1%
11 to 15 years	29	7.4%
16 to 20 years	17	4.3%
21 and over	28	7.2%
Position		
Head of Department	40	10.2%
Senior Manager	18	4.6%
Junior Manager	89	22.8%
Supervisor	82	21.0%

Based on the above table, 391 respondent are male (43.0 %) and female (51.7%). Most of the respondents are between 20 to 30 years old (51.7%) and the majority of the respondent are Muslim (81.3%). A total of 127 respondents have worked between 1 to 5 years and 7.2% of the respondents have been working at the same hotel for more than 21 years. In addition, 40 respondents are Head of Department while the majority of the respondent 22.8% are junior manager.

Level of awareness of SCH in Malaysia

To assess the level of awareness of SCH in Malaysia, the result has shown that most of our hoteliers are aware of the SCH implementation in Malaysia. As we can see, 95.4% of respondent are aware that Malaysia is one of the leading Muslim tourist destinations and 92.6% or 362 respondents understand about Sharia compliance hotel. Similarly, 92.6% of the respondents are aware of the needs of Muslim tourists. Furthermore, 312 respondents or 80% of the respondents are equipped with information on the attributes of Sharia compliance hotel.

Based on the question given, 78% or 304 respondents were not aware whether their premises are certified Halal by JAKIM or JAIN and only 22% of respondent were aware that their premises are certified Halal by JAKIM or JAIN.

About 89% of respondents think it is important for their premises to run according to the SCH attributes. Only 11% of the respondents think it is not important for their premises to implement based on the SCH attributes. Out of 391 respondents, 304 respondents mentioned that their premises sell Non-Halal food and beverages at their premises to capture the Non-Muslim market.

Table 3: Level of awareness among hoteliers in Malaysia.

<i>n</i> =391	Yes	No
Malaysia is a top Muslim tourist destination	373 (95.4%)	18 (4.6%)
Understand about Sharia compliance Hotel.	362 (92.6%)	29 (7.4%)
aware of the need for Muslim tourist	362 (92.6%)	29 (7.4%)
Premises certified Halal	87 (22.3%)	304 (77.7%)
attributes of Sharia compliance Hotel	312 (79.8%)	79 (20.2%)
Important runs according to Sharia compliance attributes	348 (89.0%)	42 (11.0%)
Selling Non-Halal food and beverage	304 (77.7%)	28 (7.2%)

Based on the frequency test, majority of hoteliers have high level of awareness about SCH implementation in Malaysia. Besides that, most of the hotel operators are starting to target the Muslim market due to the major influx from the Middle Eastern continent.

Relationship between attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control on the acceptance of SCH implementation

Four correlation coefficients were tested via Person's product-moment correlation and the significance level was set at 0.01 level (2-tailed). The strength of the relationship can be determined via the Pearson correlation (r). If the r -value is 0, then it indicates no relationship between the two variables and if the r value is 1, then it can be interpreted as perfect positive correlation, while if the r value is -1, it can be interpreted as a negative correlation. The summary for the matrix for correlation of these four variables is presented in the table below:-

Table 4: Correlation between attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and acceptance

Factors	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Attitude	1			
(2) Subjective Norm	.494**	1		
(3) Perceived Behavioral Control	.476**	.719**	1	
(4) Acceptance	.736**	.661**	.492**	1
Mean	6.01	5.85	5.86	5.68
SD	.761	.916	.614	.917

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Relationship between attitude and acceptance

Based on the result, there is a strong relationship between hoteliers' attitude and their acceptance towards the implementation of Sharia compliance with a positive correlation ($r=.736$, $p<0.01$). These findings suggest that hoteliers have a positive attitude towards the acceptance of Sharia compliance hotel implementation. Attitude is an important factor in influencing people's intention to accept because those with high positive attitudes appeared to have greater intention to accept the implementation of SCH. Several past studies have found that attitude has a significant direct relationship with intention to accept (Baker et al. 2007).

Relationship between subjective norm and acceptance

The result indicates a strong relationship between subjective norms and the acceptance towards SCH implementation with a positive correlation ($r=.661$, $p<0.01$). This shows that the subjective norms such as peer pressure and family background have a significant positive relationship to the acceptance of SCH implementation. SN is important in influencing people's intention in this context, hotelier's intention to accept SCH. Consistent to the research by Afendi, Azizan and Darami (2014), SN was positively and significantly related to the intention which is can be interpreted into acceptance.

Relationship between perceived behavioural control and acceptance

There is a medium-strength relationship between perceived behavioural control and acceptance towards SCH implementation among hoteliers in Malaysia with a positive correlation ($r=.491$, $p<0.01$). The analysis indicates that perceived behavioural control has a significant value in hoteliers' acceptance towards SCH implementation. This is because control could directly affect behaviour by increasing effort to goal achievement. In collectivistic cultures such as the Muslim culture, people tend to perceive themselves as interdependent with their group and tend to strive for in-group rather than personal goals Afendi et al. (2014).

Multiple regression

In this study multiple regression assumes that the sample size is large enough. Stevens (2002) recommends that 'for social science research, about 15 participants per predictor are needed for a reliable equation. However, for this research, the researcher following Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) rule of thumb by following the equation, the sample size shall be greater than 82 participants. Since our sample size is 391 it meets the rules. Besides that, referring to r value that less than 0.9, hence, no multicollinearity exist.

Table 5: Regression analysis summary

Source of Variation	β - value	t-value	p-value	R	R ²	F-value
Attitude	.558	16.144	.000			
Subjective Norms	.462	10.573	.000			
Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC)	.106	2.445	.000			
Acceptance				.815	.664	255.500

a. Dependent Variable: Acceptance

b. Predictors: (Constant), SN, Attitude, PBC

To provide answer to the research question, regression analysis has been conducted and the result as show above. Based on the result given, it explained on the R square, the result indicates that 0.664 which means that this model explains 66.4% of the variation of SCH implementation acceptance can be explained by the model containing attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control ($R^2=.664$). It is very high and regression equation forecasts are relatively accurate. It also means that 33.6% of the variation is still unexplained so the addition of other independent variables could improve the model's fit. The model in this study reaches statistical significance (Sig. = .000; this means $p<.005$).

As can be observed from the table above, the relationship between acceptances of the three predictors was examined by the multiple regression. The result shows the three predictors have been statistically significant ($p<0.05$). Results showed that attitude explained the largest portion of individual acceptance of SCH at 55.8% ($p=0.000$); closely followed by subjective standards (46.2%, $p=0.000$) and perceived behavioral control (10.6%, $p=0.000$).

Conclusion

The findings of this study found that majority of hoteliers in Klang Valley, Malaysia are aware and understood about the Sharia compliance hotel concept and its attributes. Besides that, their intention to accept the SCH concept to be implemented is also influenced by their attitude, subjective norms and PBC. Thus, the result can be used as a reference to the tourism industry and regulators bodies that monitoring and controlling the tourism situation in Malaysia. Importantly, the result shows that Malaysia can go fully SCH to capture the growing demand of Muslim tourists since Islam is the country's official religion. That can lead to the positive outcome for SCH concept to be implemented significantly among the hoteliers. Nonetheless, more studies from all aspects of SCH are needed to strengthen the SCH concept.

Although, SCH's attractiveness is tempting, as a hotel operator requires careful consideration and needs to balance with Malaysia's current hotel scenery market to avoid the hotels losing other tourists. The function of government bodies such as the ITC is intended to assist hotel operators and tourists from other countries in raising awareness of the SCH concept. For example; Halal can be generalized as promoting cleanliness and hygiene from housekeeping to preparing food for guests. Besides that, ITC can help to penetrate more market for SCH to keep them relevant in the industry rather than being just another market trend. Other than that, it contributes to the body of knowledge about SCH by referring to the result and also the use of the theory of planned behavior in predicting human intent to choose. It can reinforce the theory for use in various study disciplines.

In order to encourage more hotels in Malaysia to accept the SCH concept, the existence of the universal SCH standard is important. The benefits of SCH are many and one of them, because of the significant demand for Islamic goods and services, it could be a competitive advantage for the tourism industry. As a conclusion, this paper has identified the level of awareness and understanding of hoteliers in Klang Valley, Malaysia on SCH concept.

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