



Media and the Corona pandemic: credibility or crises and rumors?

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Role of Media in Shaping Umrah Seekers' Attitudes towards Saudi Arabia Decision of Umrah Suspending in the beginning of Corona Pandemic and its Relationship to the Image of Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

Visiting the Holy Mosque to perform Umrah is a precious wish sought by hundreds of thousands of Muslims. Umrah is a lofty goal that is exciting for many Muslims, in response to God's order and achieving an interesting wish for many Muslims, with diversity of categories, nationalities, languages, and economic and social levels.

Considering the pandemic of the emerging virus (Coronavirus COVID-19), Saudi Arabia has taken decisions to provide protection for the safety of citizens and residents. Saudi Arabia government, represented by the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, decided to suspend entry to Saudi Arabia for the purpose of Umrah and visiting the Prophet's Mosque.

This study aims to know role of media in shaping Umrah seekers' attitudes towards Saudi Arabia decision to ban Umrah because of the Corona pandemic and its relationship to the national image of Saudi Arabia.

The current research is part of Descriptive Research, and the study used the survey method. The results of the study revealed that social media took the lead in terms of respondents following them to know about the Hajj and Umrah, by following "the pages of friends on social media".

Although the decisions related to Umrah may not be trusted by the public except after verifying it from direct sources, the sample of the study justified its reliance on the media to identify the decisions of Hajj and Umrah.

With regard to the attitudes of the ban decisions on the image of Saudi Arabia among the respondents. Respondents' attitudes came positively, and although the decision caused a lot of Umrah performance to be disrupted after its readiness for these rites. It came in favor of the Saudi Arabia image among the Umrah seekers who viewed the decision from the side that it is in the public interest and prevents harm to the health of the pilgrims. Therefore, confirmed that the Saudi Arabia cares significantly health of the pilgrims, which resulted in a positive image of the Kingdom among those who desire Umrah after this decision.

Keywords: Umrah Suspending, Corona Virus, Covid 19, National image, Saudi Arabia, image of Saudi Arabia, Media.