

BEYOND HALAL CUISINE: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF SHARIAH COMPLIANCE IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

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Abstract. *This study aims to comprehensively explore Shariah compliance in tourism, extending beyond halal cuisine, to encompass prayer facilities, gender segregation, modesty restrictions, and ethical considerations. Utilizing a combination of extensive literature review, case studies, and expert opinions, this research offers a comprehensive analysis of various aspects of Shariah compliance in tourism, providing a holistic understanding of its implications. The research identifies significant factors influencing Shariah compliance in tourism, including the availability of prayer facilities, adherence to gender segregation norms, enforcement of modesty restrictions, and consideration of ethical principles. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of Shariah compliance in hospitality firms and destinations, highlighting the importance of addressing diverse requirements to cater to Muslim travelers effectively. The insights gleaned from this research can inform hospitality firms and destinations about the importance of accommodating diverse Shariah requirements beyond halal food, thus enhancing the overall experience for Muslim travelers. Moreover, this study underscores the need for proactive measures to ensure Shariah compliance, which can contribute to the competitive advantage of tourism businesses in Muslim-majority markets. This research provides a comprehensive analysis of Shariah compliance in tourism, extending beyond halal cuisine to encompass various aspects such as prayer facilities, gender segregation, modesty restrictions, and ethical considerations, thereby filling a significant gap in existing literature.*

Keywords. *Tourism management, Sharia-based hospitality, Hotel management, Muslim friendly, Halal food.*

Abstrak: *Studi ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi secara komprehensif kepatuhan Syariah dalam pariwisata, yang melampaui kuliner halal, untuk mencakup fasilitas salat, pemisahan gender, pembatasan kesopanan, dan pertimbangan etika. Dengan memanfaatkan kombinasi tinjauan pustaka yang luas, studi kasus, dan pendapat ahli, penelitian ini menawarkan analisis komprehensif tentang berbagai aspek kepatuhan Syariah dalam pariwisata, memberikan pemahaman holistik tentang implikasinya. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor signifikan yang memengaruhi kepatuhan Syariah dalam pariwisata, termasuk ketersediaan fasilitas salat, kepatuhan terhadap norma pemisahan gender, penegakan pembatasan kesopanan, dan pertimbangan prinsip-prinsip etika. Temuan-temuan ini menggarisbawahi sifat multifaset kepatuhan Syariah di perusahaan dan destinasi perhotelan, yang menyoroti pentingnya menangani berbagai persyaratan untuk melayani wisatawan Muslim secara efektif. Wawasan yang diperoleh dari penelitian ini dapat memberi tahu perusahaan dan destinasi perhotelan tentang pentingnya mengakomodasi berbagai persyaratan Syariah di luar makanan halal, sehingga meningkatkan pengalaman keseluruhan bagi wisatawan Muslim. Lebih jauh,*

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penelitian ini menggarisbawahi perlunya langkah-langkah proaktif untuk memastikan kepatuhan Syariah, yang dapat berkontribusi pada keunggulan kompetitif bisnis pariwisata di pasar-pasar yang mayoritas penduduknya Muslim. Penelitian ini memberikan analisis komprehensif tentang kepatuhan Syariah dalam pariwisata, yang mencakup lebih dari sekadar kuliner halal hingga mencakup berbagai aspek seperti fasilitas salat, pemisahan gender, pembatasan kesopanan, dan pertimbangan etika, sehingga mengisi kesenjangan signifikan dalam literatur yang ada.

Kata Kunci : *Manajemen pariwisata, Perhotelan berbasis syariah, Manajemen hotel, Ramah muslim, Makanan halal*

Introduction

In countries with a predominantly Muslim population, such as Malaysia, Turkey, Indonesia, Brunei, and several Middle Eastern nations, it is quite simple to locate Halal food and drinks, as well as accommodations and hotels that adhere to Islamic law. Moreover, the tourism offerings and experiences in these nations are well-prepared to accommodate the diverse interests of Muslim tourists (Ramli & Zawawi, 2017). However, this is not the situation in many non-Muslim countries where Muslims are in the minority, such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, the United Kingdom, Europe, and the United States. In these countries, it can be not easy to find Halal food and drinks, as well as accommodations and hotels that are compliant with Islamic law, and touristic products and activities that adhere to Islamic principles (Ramli & Zawawi, 2017). Therefore, it would be absurd to expect non-Muslim service providers in a non-Muslim country to meet all the standards of the Shari'ah in these countries. Therefore, it is proposed that these service providers should be capable of fulfilling at least some, if not all, of the requirements of Muslim visitors. Given such circumstances, Ramli and Zawawi (2017) in the article journal stated that the concept of "Muslim-friendly hospitality services" is regarded to be more practical and palatable to all stakeholders in the tourism industry, irrespective of whether they are catering to Muslims or non-Muslims.

As the number of Muslims in the world continued to rise, a new subset of the hospitality sector emerged which is, Islamic tourism (Baykal, 2021). Consequently, Muslim-friendly lodging has been adopted by numerous countries to cater to the different demands of Muslim travelers, regardless of whether they are located in primarily Muslim or non-Muslim regions (Ramli & Zawawi, 2017). In response to the growing demand from the halal tourism industry, 138 countries have introduced halal tourism policies, as reported in the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2022. There is a Muslim minority in 28 of these nations. According to Crescent Rating (2023), the number of Muslim

visitors is expected to reach 140 million in 2023, and then it will rise to 160 million the year after.

In response to the increasing demand, the creation of Muslim-friendly lodging has been undertaken to meet the religious requirements of Muslim travelers in accordance with Islamic principles (Jussaini et al., 2023). Religiosity greatly influences the decision-making process of Muslims. Muslims must adhere to halal and haram principles in every area of their daily routines, especially during their travels (Hanafiah & Hamdan, 2020). Providing suitable accommodation is crucial for meeting the requirements of devout Muslim visitors. Hotels can offer a comfortable environment for them to satisfy their religious duties, such as conducting the five daily prayers and accessing halal food alternatives (Abd Razak et al., 2019). Their expectations include amenities such as prayer mats, facilities for ablution, bathrooms provided with water, workers dressed modestly, halal meals without pork or alcohol, an acceptable Islamic atmosphere, and facilities that are separated (Bastamam, 2019).

Shariah compliance in tourism extends beyond the provision of halal food, encompassing various aspects that influence the travel experience for Muslim visitors. Understanding and addressing these multi-faceted Shariah requirements are essential for hospitality businesses and destinations seeking to attract and accommodate Muslim travelers. This thesis aims to explore the breadth of Shariah requirements in tourism, highlighting their significance and implications for stakeholders in the industry. By going beyond halal food, this study seeks to provide insights into creating a more inclusive and Sharia-compliant tourism experience.

Literature Review

Literature review inherent with the idea of the research. In the field of research, Shariah compliance is said to be a comprehensive instruction from Allah that encompasses all elements of human life (Omar et al., 2017). In the Holy Qur'an, Surah An-Nur, Allah states, "Allah directs His Light to whomever

He chooses...". The translation used is the one by Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, namely from verse 24:35.

According to Abdul Karim Zaidan and other modern scholars, Shariah is the Islamic teachings and system found in the Qur'an that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and is followed as a guided way of life known as the sunnah (Laldin, 2011). As stated by Majid and Ismail (2004), compliance refers to the act of adhering to and obeying all the commands of Allah S.W.T. Moreover, the primary aim of Shariah is to establish integrity and equity on a global scale. The concepts of Shariah encompass tolerance, liberation from burdens, and a progressive implementation process (Majid & Ismail, 2004).

Following the findings of the research carried out by Siti et al., (2022), it is suggested that there should be an increase in the standardization of tourism in order to cater to the specific requirements of Muslim tourists. Within the tourism industry, this demonstrates that there is a growing awareness of the necessity of providing accommodations for this demographic.

The study also highlights the significance of combining tourism development with the principles of Good Tourism Governance (GTG) in order to build extraordinary tourist attractions (Siti et al., 2022). It brings to light the importance of catering to the requirements of Muslim tourists by providing religious sites and hotels with an assortment of amenities, including food options that are in accordance with national rules (Battour & Ismail., 2016).

The MFH (Muslim-friendly Hospitality) encompasses various subsystems, including Government Policy, Laws and Regulations, Implementation Guidelines, Manual Procedures, Circulars, Quality Standards, and Terms of Reference (Jais & Marzuki, 2018). The borders of organizational systems are evaluated to distinguish between internal (micro) and external (macro) components (Jais & Marzuki, 2018) The presence of linkages and interrelations between elements must be acknowledged, as a system does not exist in isolation (Awang & Aziz, 2011). The system obtains information, material, and energy from external systems as inputs. These inputs are subjected to a process of transformation within a system and are then sent as

output to other systems and the result of this method will generate feedback. An organization is a dynamic system that is responsive to its environment. It is susceptible to changes in its surroundings.

In order to maintain a competitive edge, the tourist regulatory body must develop a strategic strategy that would position Malaysia ahead of its rivals. Malaysia was placed 26th in the global competitiveness report for travel and tourism by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2017. The competitiveness ranking takes into account various factors, including the Travel and Tourism policy and the enabling conditions (World Economic Forum, 2017). The research also mentioned that Malaysia received a score of 4.7 for its travel and tourism strategy, which is somewhat lower than the average score of 5.0 for Southeast Asia (Jais & Marzuki, 2018). However, our tourism strategy still falls behind those of Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia. These observations indicate that the current policy on tourist development in Malaysia does not sufficiently address the entire range of the constantly evolving tourism industry. This strategy also encompasses certain crucial regulatory prerequisites (Giap et al., 2016).

The Halal regulatory framework in Malaysia serves as the foundation for the proposed Muslim-Friendly Hospitality regulatory framework, considering it as a precedent. The Malaysia Halal regulatory framework is deemed sufficient, as it comprehensively outlines all aspects related to the administration of Halal and Halal certification (Zakaria & Ismail, 2014). The authority and enforceability of Halal regulations and laws are derived from the TDA 2011. Sections 28 and 29 of the TDA 2011 provide clear definitions of Halal symbols and the Halal definition. These sections also outline the authority given to relevant agencies responsible for overseeing Halal matters in Malaysia. The Act is the source of the Malaysian Halal certification's credibility. The Halal ecosystems obtain their legal authority from various supporting Acts and legislation, including the Trademark Act of 1975, the Food Act of 1983, and a range of state-enacted legislation (Zakaria & Ismail, 2014). The regulatory system is supervised by a governing body, namely under the jurisdiction of

Halal Hub, Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). JAKIM performs two crucial regulatory duties, namely the surveillance and implementation of Halal standards, as well as the accreditation of the sole certifying bodies for Halal in Malaysia. One of the improvements that was implemented was the designation of JAKIM as the sole authority responsible for issuing Halal certificates in Malaysia. The act of self-declaring something as Halal was deemed illegal.

Additionally, there were stricter regulations on the use of the term "Halal" and higher penalties for offenses related to Halal. This significant transformation has fundamentally reshaped the Halal sectors into their current form (Ismail et al., 2016). Consumer confidence in the Halal certification and Halal industries has been enhanced, as demonstrated by studies conducted by (Shafiq et al., 2015).

Method

This research employs a qualitative research methodology, utilizing a combination of primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is collected through interviews with industry experts, tourism professionals, and Islamic scholars. Secondary data is obtained from academic journals, industry reports, and other relevant publications. The research methodology involves thematic analysis, allowing for the identification of key themes and patterns related to Shariah requirements in tourism.

Results and Discussion

Result and discussion that support research problems and objectives. Result for data analysis can be showed by Table, Graphic, and Chart. According to the Mastercard-Crescent Rating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2023, Malaysia has been recognized as the top Muslim-friendly destination. Malaysia has also been listed as the "Main Muslim-Friendly Destination in the Halal Tourism Awards 2023", among the countries belonging to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The Muslim-friendly tourism and hospitality

industry (MFTH) provides a distinct tourism experience in contrast to the typical Sharia-friendly one. An essential component of a successful MFTH ecology is the convenience of acquiring halal food and beverages, a task considerably facilitated by the nation's halal sector. However, the MFTH ecosystem encompasses more than just the matter of halal cuisine. It also includes lodging facilities, religious worship, tourism activities, and travel services that cater to the needs of Muslim travelers.

Hence, the government, via the Islamic Tourism Centre, should consider the MFTH empowerment program from a broader perspective, encompassing the full supply chain ecosystem. The various stakeholders within the ecosystem must collaborate in order to collectively advance the industrial empowerment objective. Industry, government organizations, and higher education institutions, including universities, polytechnics, community colleges, and public skills training institutes, are all essential. The sector plays a crucial part in the MFTH ecosystem by offering Muslim-friendly transportation, lodging, entertainment, and other leisure and adventure packages to tourists upon their arrival.

Accommodation providers, including hotels, must ensure that the bedroom amenities cater to the requirements of worshipping travelers. This includes ensuring that the bedroom is free from prohibited food and beverages and that there are qibla indications and prayer facilities available. Simultaneously, it is necessary to offer a transit package that caters to the demands of Muslim individuals, which includes the provision of segregated seating areas for men and women, as well as designated stops for prayer. Entertainment, leisure, adventure packages, and tourism must also consider the requirements of Muslim tourists.

Furthermore, there should be an increase in packages that focus on the historical aspects of Islam in this country, in addition to the traditional tourism activities such as shopping and relaxation. Iconic sites of worship might be included as part of the tourism itinerary. To provide a comprehensive Muslim-friendly package, it is essential to have a proficient and highly competent

workforce to ensure the sector can be managed and operated at the appropriate level of excellence. Consequently, higher education institutions must offer proficient human resources in managing tourist packages that cater to the needs of Muslim travelers. Public colleges can contribute to developing the necessary human resources at the managerial level to comprehend the notion of Muslim-friendly tourism. Essentially, the country needs a more proficient workforce to consistently provide the finest and most superior services in the Muslim-friendly tourism sector. Providing superior services will guarantee that the industry maintains its position as the preferred option for tourists.

Additionally, as for accommodations, Muslim-friendly tourism in Malaysia includes establishments like Kuala Lumpur's PNB Darby Park Executive Suites Hotel, Ampang's Grand Pacific Hotel, and Kuala Lumpur's De Palma Hotel, all of which are certified as Shariah-compliant by the Islamic Tourism Council (ITC) (Mohd, 2011). Research from Malaysia's Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) found that businesses in the field are more likely to succeed when they are prepared to adhere to Shariah law (Razak et al., 2019). A standard has been launched by the Department of Standards Malaysia and ITC to help hotels comply with Shariah law and meet the needs of its Muslim clientele. As stated by Mustaffa (2016), the purpose of the standard known as Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS)-Requirements (MS 2610:2015) is to safeguard the systems and services associated with tourist products from Islamic nations.

However, according to COMCEC (2017), there were problems with implementing Muslim-friendly hospitality services (MFHS) in Sharia-compliant hotels (SCHs) around the world. This is because different madhabs and degrees of practice have varied ideas about what constitutes a "halal" accommodation. Additionally, evaluating halal components is challenging because items are constantly evolving, and Muslim and non-Muslim guests have different needs (Razak et al., 2019). Following the implementation of Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS)-Requirements (MS 2610:2015), there is a pressing need to update the limited literature on the difficulties faced

by SCHs in the Malaysian context. Although Muslim-friendly hotel concepts are voluntary, a standard is required to ensure and preserve the integrity of products and services catered to Muslims. The Malaysian Standard (MS2610:2015) is developed with the aim of ensuring that the products and services catered to Muslim travelers are in accordance with the Shariah principles.

In order to ensure that their services are per Shariah law, hotels often employ specific standards or legislation to verify that they are meeting the needs of Muslim tourists. To sum up, hotels that are Shariah-compliant run their business by Islamic principles (Jais, 2017). As mentioned by Razak et al (2019), research regarding Sharia-compliance hotels (SCH) by Henderson (2010) provided a more generic set of qualities, but Rosenberg and Choufany (2009) separated theirs into three categories: operations, design, and interior plus finance. There were some shared features between the two points of view, though, including halal meals, gender-separate facilities, modest forms of entertainment, a staff that was predominately Muslim, conservative clothing restrictions, and Islamic-inspired room design and interior decorations.

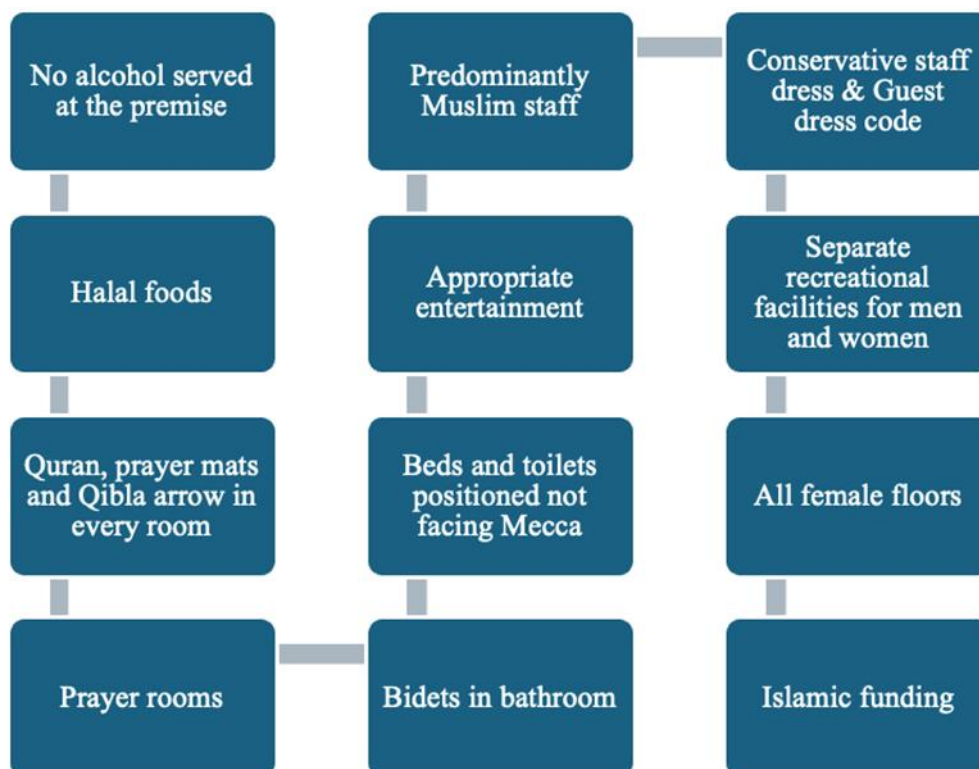


Figure 1. The attributes of Sharia-Compliance Hotel (SCH) by Henderson (2010)

Table 1. The attributes of Sharia-Compliance Hotel (SCH) by Rosenberg and Choufany (2009)

Operations	Design and interiors	Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halal food only • No alcohol • Majority of Muslim staff • Female staff and single female floors • Conservative television service • Quran and Sajada available in every room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger function rooms for men and women separately • Markers or arrow for Qibla direction in each room • No entertainment venues • Beds and toilets should not face Qibla • Art in the hotel does not depict the human form • Separate wellness facilities for men and women • Separate floor for males and females and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel financial is Islamic financial • The hotel should follow the zakat principle

Subsequently, a standard known as Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services – Requirements (MS 2610:2015) was created in 2015 by the Malaysian Department of Standards. The purpose of this standard is to improve customer satisfaction by meeting their needs and to guarantee that products and services offered to Muslim travelers comply with Shariah principles, as stated by the Department of Standards Malaysia in 2015. All lodging establishments should be checked by the organization to make sure they meet the standards set by the Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS) (Samori & Sabtu, 2014).

Table 2. Standards set by the Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS) by Razak et al., (2019) and the Department of Standard Malaysia (2015)

Standards set by the Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS)
1. Enough room on the floor for Muslim guests to perform daily prayers conveniently
2. Bathrooms should be clean and equipped with a bidet, hand shower, or water hose

3. Must have Muslim-friendly toiletries and not have any alcoholic drinks or other intoxicants in the fridge
4. Qibla (Mecca direction) was marked and verify by the qualified authority
5. Organization's kitchen must have a halal certification from the appropriate authority for food and drink
6. During Ramadan, details for when and what to eat during <i>sahur</i> (the pre-dawn meal) and iftar (breaking the fast) should be provided
7. Public <i>musalla</i> , or prayer rooms, should also be available on the premises of accommodation for Muslims. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These rooms should be in a clean, well-ventilated area with enough lighting and a special signboard indicating their purpose

The analysis of the tables above indicates that:

- a) both Table 1 (The attributes of Sharia-Compliance Hotel (SCH) by Henderson, 2010) and Figure 1 (The attributes of Sharia-Compliance Hotel (SCH) by Rosenberg and Choufany, 2009) demonstrate that the notion of a Shariah-compliant hotel can be completely realized in an Islamic country where Shariah law is the governing legal system. The table indicated that meeting all the requirements is necessary to be considered a Shariah-compliant hotel. If any of the standards are not met, the hotel will not be eligible to be classified as a "Shariah Compliant Hotel".
- b) Table 2 Standards set by the Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS) by Razak et al., (2019) and the Department of Standard Malaysia (2015) presents the recommended characteristics of a "Muslim-friendly Hotel," which is often characterized by a more lenient, accommodating, and inclusive approach that is appealing to both Muslim and non-Muslim hoteliers and service providers. In order to foster industry engagement, it is widely believed that a balanced and more amicable approach should be embraced.

- c) Both the Muslim-friendly hotel idea and the Shariah-compliant hotel are optional. Therefore, it is crucial to provide the sector with a sufficient amount of time to comprehend the notion.
- d) The Muslim-friendly hotel concept is widely thought to have significant potential in gaining industry trust, as long as there is a consistent awareness programme about the notion of Muslim-friendly hotels.
- e) In nations where Islam is not the dominant religion, such as Korea, Japan, and the United Kingdom, there is a high demand for Muslim-friendly hospitality. This notion is particularly appealing to businesses in these countries.
- f) Undoubtedly, the Shariah-compliant hotel is highly regarded and sought after by Muslims. However, in order to guarantee its complete implementation and execution, it necessitates unwavering dedication from government agencies (policymakers), stakeholders, and the general public. The implementation must adhere strictly to the principles of Shariah.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis stresses the significance of knowing more than just the halal food standards of Shariah in tourism. Hotels, attractions, and restaurants can do their part to accommodate Muslim tourists in a way that complies with Shariah law by resolving issues of gender segregation, modesty standards, and prayer spaces. In order to raise awareness and encourage the adoption of tourism practices that are compliant with Shariah, it is crucial that industry players, lawmakers, and Islamic scholars work together going ahead.

Moreover, fostering collaboration between industry stakeholders, policymakers, and Islamic scholars is imperative to advance the awareness and implementation of Sharia-compliant practices in the tourism sector. Through collective efforts, various initiatives can be undertaken to promote inclusivity and cater to the needs of Muslim travelers effectively. Firstly, education and training programs should be developed to equip hospitality professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to understand and respect Shariah

principles and cultural sensitivities. By providing comprehensive training resources, businesses can ensure that their staff members are equipped to deliver high-quality services that meet the expectations of Muslim guests.

Additionally, collaboration in policy development is crucial for creating an enabling environment that supports Shariah-compliant practices in the tourism industry. By working closely with policymakers, industry stakeholders can advocate for the development of guidelines and regulations that facilitate the implementation of Sharia-compliant standards in hospitality establishments. Furthermore, the establishment of certification programs and accreditation standards for Muslim-friendly hotels and destinations can provide reassurance to Muslim travelers and enhance the credibility of Sharia-compliant businesses. Finally, research and innovation play a vital role in driving progress in this field, as they enable the development of new technologies and services that cater to the specific needs of Muslim travelers while upholding Shariah principles. By fostering collaboration across these key areas, the tourism industry can take significant strides towards promoting inclusivity and enhancing the overall travel experience for Muslim guests.

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