



**ELEMENTS OF MUSLIM-FRIENDLY  
ENTERTAINMENT IN HOTEL**

**BY**

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the  
degree of Master in Art (Halal Industry Management)**

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## ABSTRACT

It is important for the Muslim-friendly hotels to fully implement Shariah compliance from the entrance to the backdoor. However, Muslim-friendly concepts have not been widely applied by the hotels in Malaysia and therefore, the researcher would like to fill the gaps and conduct a study regarding the facilities of the hotels. The main objectives of this research are to identify entertainments in Islam, to identify entertainments in Muslim-friendly hotels and conventional hotels and to develop criteria for the rating of entertainment elements in hotels. The nature of this research is exploratory and observation studies were performed towards three Muslim-friendly hotels and three conventional hotels with three different star levels, ranging from 3-star hotels to 5-star hotels. Audit checklist was used to garner the data and the confirmation from the experts was collected upon the completion of data collection. The findings of the research resulted in 14 elements that have been the repetition of meaning in the previous research regarding Islamic elements for the entertainment. The highest percentage of 18.87% belonged to Gender Segregation and the lowest percentage belonged to Personal Care as it only encountered two repetitions or citation in literature review (1.89 %). However, the essentiality of each element cannot be observed from the percentage as the levels of *maqasid shariah* (foundation goals) are deemed more important and reliable. The *maslahah* (benefit) that needs to be preserved regarding the entertainment at the hotel includes eye care, nutrition or body, property, worship, art and personal safety. The fact that Muslim-friendly Entertainment rules have been widely applied by some of the 3-star to 5-star hotels allows the concept to be seen more believable and applicable by the industry stakeholders. The study was able to provide concrete criteria (fourteen criteria) for the rating of entertainment elements in hotels and the root causes were fully understood by the related stakeholders, both from hotel management side and guests' side. The criteria are gender segregation, channels/music/displays, halal drink, appropriate dress code, halal food, *Akhlaq*, no night club and information on prayer times, hygiene, cleanliness and Muslim-friendly personal care. Appropriate decoration - not depicting human or animal form, covered & not dark, safety feature - lifeguard and no gambling are required.

## خلاصة البحث

يتوجب على الفنادق التي تُوافق القيم الإسلامية تطبيق الشريعة بدايةً من البوابة وحتى الباب الخلفي. ومع ذلك، فإن مفاهيم القيم والعادات الإسلامية لم تُطبق بشكل كبير في الفنادق الماليزية ولذلك فإن الباحث يسعى لملى الفراغات الموجودة في هذا المجال ودراسة مرافق الفنادق. أهم أهداف هذا البحث هي التعريف بمصطلح الترفيه في الإسلام، التعريف بالترفيه في الفنادق التي تُوافق القيم والعادات الإسلامية وكذلك الفنادق التقليدية، والسعي لوضع معايير لتقييم عناصر الترفيه في هذه الفنادق. طبيعة هذا البحث استكشافية، لذا تم فحص ثلاثة فنادق تتوافق مع القيم والعادات الإسلامية، وثلاثة فنادق أخرى تقليدية بمستوى مختلف يتراوح بين ثلاثة نجوم وخمسة نجوم. تم استخدام قائمة التدقيق لجمع البيانات، وتم اعتماد المتخصصين بعد الانتهاء من تجميع البيانات. أشارت النتائج إلى وجود أربعة عشر عنصراً مُكرراً بالمعنى في الأبحاث السابقة الخاصة بعناصر الترفيه في الإسلام. أعلى نسبة مئوية 18.87% تخص "الفصل بين الجنسين" ، وأقل نسبة مئوية هي "العناية الشخصية" والتي حصلت على تكرارين أو اقتباسين في الأبحاث السابقة (1.89%). رغم ذلك، فإنه من الصعب فحص ضرورة كل عنصر من نسبته المئوية لأن مقاصد الشريعة تُعتبر أكثر أهمية وثقة. تتضمن المصلحة التي يجب حفظها في الترفيه في الفنادق: العناية بالمناظر التي تري بالعين مباشرة، التغذية وستر عورة الجسم، المال، العبادة، الفن والسلامة الشخصية. يساهم تطبيق الفنادق ذات الثلاث والخمس نجوم للقواعد المتوافقة مع الإسلام في زيادة نسبة تصديقه وتطبيقه من خلال أصحاب المصلحة في صناعة السياحة. تمكنت هذه الدراسة من توفير معايير مُحددة لتقييم عناصر الترفيه في الفنادق وتم فهم الأسباب الجذرية من قبل أصحاب المصلحة من كل من الإدارة الفندقية والضيوف. المعايير هي الفصل بين الجنسين، والقنوات التلفزيونية/ الموسيقي/ العروض، والمشروبات الحلال، وقواعد الزي واللباس المناسبة، والأطعمة الحلال، والأخلاق، والنادي الليلي، ومعلومات عن أوقات الصلاة، والنظافة، والمواد والأدوات المباحة الحلال للعناية الشخصية والزخرفة المناسبة - عدم تصوير شكل الإنسان أو الحيوان، المغطى وغير عاري الجسد، زائداً ميزة السلامة الشخصية- حرس، وعدم وجود أماكن القمار أو ما يشابهه.

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I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master in Art (Halal Industry Management).

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## DECLARATION

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*To my dear husband, Muhamad Syahir Nujaba'  
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*To my dearest daughter, Syahamah  
You are always my strength to complete this work.*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3D	Three-dimensional
et al.	(et alia): and others
etc.	(Et Cetera): and other things
ft.	feet
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
ITC	Islamic Tourism Council
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia
KTDC	Kerala Tourism Development Corporation
MFHS	Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services
MS	Malaysian Standard
Pbuh	Peace be upon him
Q	Quran
SAW	Sallallahu alayhi wa salam (Peace be upon him)
SWT	Subhanahu wa ta'ala (May He be glorified and exalted)
Wi-Fi	wireless fidelity
WTO	World Trade Organization



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will give out the big picture of this thesis. It starts with general history about this thesis topic, then it is followed by problem statement, Research objectives and research question will then be defined precisely after that, they will make the thesis more understandable. Lastly, the scope of the research will then focus out about this research.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH**

Islam has faced a lot of fallbacks after September 11, 2001, a lot of speculations pertaining Islam and associating it with terrorism after those tragic events has caused Muslims to be heavily discriminated and ridiculed by a majority of the world's population (Samori & Abd Rahman, 2013). Despite the harsh treatment towards Muslim, in 2010, the population of Muslim reached 1.6 billion while it increased in 2012 to an equivalent of 2.1 Billion (Pew Research Center, 2009). Research conducted by Kettani (2010) also shows the same thing. It shows that Muslims constitute 24% of the world population or 1.65 billion people and it is expected to increase by over one percent each decade, reaching one out of four by 2020 and one out of three by 2075. These numbers keep increasing even though Muslims suffer from false speculations as perpetuated in the media.

The increase of this figure certainly makes a difference to the lifestyle pattern of humankind with a wider acceptance towards Islam because of the tolerant and relatable nature of it. One of its teachings that is followed by Muslims is etiquette when travelling. Yusof & Muhammad (2013) said that the increased number of Muslim population globally contributes to a new trend in tourism, amongst its significant factors are the increase in the number of tourists going to Islamic countries, development of new tourist destinations and manufacture of tourism products according to Islamic requirements. Muslims are urged to travel around the world as discussed by Qutb, S. and Yacob (2000) due to many reasons and one of them is according to the verse from Quran, 67:15 which says:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ  
وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

“He is Who made the earth smooth for you, therefore go about in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His sustenance, and to Him is the return after death.”

This verse shows that the earth is free to be roamed by all people regardless their religion as Allah has made the earth for all human beings to be appreciative towards all creations in the world. Moreover, Allah has encouraged the Muslims to travel so they can learn more lessons in Quran, 6:11:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ أَنْظِرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ

“Say: Travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejecters.”

Therefore, Allah has encouraged Muslims to pay attention to the importance of traveling across the globe. Malaysia has also become the choice of many Muslim tourists for vacation as mentioned by Yusof & Muhammad (2013). In the transformation plan, the ministry has identified several key areas to focus on which are to provide affordable luxury accommodation, to create family fun activities, to organize more events and entertainments, to create nature adventure products and to provide more facilities for business tourism. From this, we can see that one of the reasons is because of the easy access of Muslim-friendly services and the empowerment of Muslim-friendly basic needs for tourists. This specialty of Malaysia has defeated other countries with Muslim majorities.

Although the Malaysian population is not limited to Muslims only, but because of the peace and tolerance of multiracial and multi-religious communities allows Muslims and non-Muslims alike to practice religion from multiple angles. In fact, other religions also recognize and participate in Islamic religious ceremonies and use Islamic services. This shows that the Islamic rules are very compatible with the whole world regardless of religion. Malaysia is a country that can control its harmony with a multiracial and multi-religious population. Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia has stated that Malaysia is a multiracial country which comprises of 32 million of the total population as of July 2017. Islam is the largest practiced religion, and approximately 62% of them are Muslim adherents, or around 19.8 million people, as of 2017, Buddhist 20% and Christian 9.3%. These numbers are estimation count by the statistics from Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia in 2000 and 2010. The country's tourism products diversification contributes to the strength of the industry and its current promotion tagline 'Malaysia, Truly Asia' which represents all major civilizations in Asia (Malays, Chinese, and

Indians) is one of its major unique selling points in promoting multiculturalism and cultural diversity as one of the successful tourism products.

Being a Muslim country, Malaysia is a pioneer in introducing a comprehensive standard for *halal* products through MS 1500:2004 in Malaysian Standard: *Halal* Food-Production, Preparation and Storage-General Guidelines-Amendment, 2009 and has several laws regulating *Halal* products and services such as the Trade Descriptions Act 1972 (Samori, 2013).

Due to the easy access of Muslim-friendly services in Malaysia as mentioned by Razalli, Abdullah, & Hassan (2009), many Muslim tourists love to come to Malaysia. The significant increase in the number of visitors can be clearly seen from the Middle East. Most of these visitors choose Malaysia as their destination because of the Islamic identity and Muslim-friendly services offered by the country and it is one of the important aspects that significantly affect Malaysia's economy.

The accessibility of Halal food, for example, is one of the main reasons as it is the basic need of human beings. There is another important thing that is slightly ignored by industry players even though it is actually a good investment to attract foreign tourists to come to this country which is the entertainment facilities. Entertainment that welcomes Muslims will be a great attraction to the Muslim tourists.

The upgrade of Muslim-friendly services is a comprehensive innovation that has made a high impact in the tourism industry. Tourism Industry in Malaysia emerged as part of a contribution to the enhancement of economy in Malaysia (Razalli et al., 2009). Many organization and people from various type of level has taken part in this rapid growth such as the government, industry, producers, suppliers and much more. Rong,

Li, & Law (2014) discussed that Islam has taught Muslims to be very nice to the guests as mentioned in a Hadith:

“Believe in Allah, and the Last Day (the Day of Judgment) makes it obligatory for a Muslim to be generous to guests and to give them what they need. More specifically, the Prophet Muhammad said in relation to hosting a guest: “He is to be entertained for three days. Whatever is beyond that is an act of charity” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

This verse is also an indicator to the Muslims to make the best of their places for people to visit. Islam always teaches Muslims to glorify their guests. Glorifying here means providing all amenities in a convenient way so guests will feel comfortable and happy. Hosts must be advanced in taking care of to their guests need, they should think of how far the needs will benefit to the guests. Therefore, as Muslims, Al-Qur’an and As-Sunnah becomes a guide to harmonize the whole world.

According to Shuriye & Daud (2014) the awareness of Muslims to use Halal services has increased recently. This improvement is very good, but this awareness is not yet comprehensive. The fact is that this awareness brings profit to Malaysia. This improvement has made Malaysia a recognized country of Shariah Compliance.

This will increase the interest of Muslim tourists to come. Services and products must give a high expectation to them. One of the services is the accommodation. We can see now that hotels, resorts and homestays grow rapidly. As Muslim travellers increase, the demand for Muslim-friendly hotel also increased. The demand is not for food only as mentioned by Abang Abdul Rahman, S.E.D.H, A.M Dayang-Affizzah (2012) but also for other elements in the hotel such as services and facilities.

Facilities are one of the important elements in a hotel that can attract guests (Samori & Sabtu, 2014). Components facilities that are provided including services such as laundry, business compartment, Wi-Fi service and much more. It has become one of the main reasons for hotel selection based on the facilities provided. Each hotel has different facilities. This research will focus on one of the facilities provided in a hotel which is entertainment.

Entertainment is defined by Kamdar (2011) as something that makes someone feels happy, relax, and free. Aziz (2000) also stated that entertainment in Arabic is *lahw* and *tarwihiya*. *Lahw* means playing freely. While *tarwihiya* means happiness. If viewed through this concept, every activity that provides happiness and relaxation is called Entertainment. If viewed from the side of the hotel, every entertainment services are called facility and some are called recreational. Therefore, to harmonize the term, the author chooses a term based on research of many definitions. It is found that every facility and recreational hotels are also included in terms of Entertainment.

This is also supported by many previous studies. All sort of consumption activities containing significant elements of amusement and diversion are now considered to be entertainment. Sayre (2008) defined that the heart of entertainment is the concept of leisure. Entertainment is also one part of the art. Definition of art is every activities and product from a human. This is agreed by Z. Salleh (2013) as he mentioned that music, writing, poem, dance, and theatre are also the examples of art.

When viewed from that context, we can see that entertainment is a very broad concept. Therefore, there are researchers who have conducted various studies to divide this vast scope. Entertainment can be divided based on the nature of the entertainment.

It is divided into two classes which are passive entertainment and active entertainment. Passive entertainment is an activity that does not require movement like watching television, reading, and listening. While active entertainment is an activity that requires movement such as playing sports, cooking, riding horses and much more (Z. Salleh, 2013). Therefore, this thesis will focus on active entertainment as it is more critical and easier to analyse by using a checklist. Since Islam is a very comprehensive religion and greatly cares for the benefit of its people, the Messenger of Allah has been instructed to bring Islam as a true way of life. Islam is always open to humankind to entertain but something overwhelming will certainly bring harm.

It is understood from the above discussion that a real entertainment concept according to Islamic rules should be implemented regardless the difference of various parties' perceptions. For this, a comprehensive study of Muslim-friendly entertainment concept and its benefits should be presented to be understood and believed by various parties.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE**

A Muslim-friendly hotel should fully implement shariah compliance from the entrance to the back door. The entertainments which are known as facilities are parts of its priorities. Muslim-friendly hotels' facilities have not been attended by any party so far, while the kitchen certification has been taken care by JAKIM and the hotel room has been widely discussed by researchers.

The lack of hotels right now is that they are more concerned with external issues such as the dress code without taking seriously internal matters (Ahmat, Ridzuan, & Zahari, 2012). Whereas the most important is the basis of Muslim-friendly a hotel depends on its management. As reported by Rosenberg & Choufany (2009) and Ahmat et al. (2012) demand for Muslim-friendly hotels are getting higher, unfortunately, lack of Muslim-friendly criteria in hotel management is the main problems among hotel managers. Consequently, there is low practice in the implementation of Muslim-friendly in hotel management.

Islam is a way of life whereby the facilities in Muslim-friendly hotel are an important aspect to be attended. The use of the right facilities is part of a Muslim's dignity. The number of Muslim tourists entering Malaysia has increased year by year and they deserve services that suit them and meet Muslims' requirements. Therefore, the implementation of Muslim-friendly services must be done in these certain hotels.

Many Muslim tourists love to travel but they have difficulties in finding hotels that provide entertainments that suits with shariah. The entertainment that conducted according to shariah principle may give the perception to the Muslims and non-Muslim about the exact use of hotels. It also can be a form of *dakwah* to the non-Muslim. Although there are few researchers that contribute to the Muslim-friendly hotel, none of them emphasize the accurate elements of entertainment from an Islamic perspective in the hotels. Therefore, my contribution to this subject will improve the main research topic which is entertainment elements in Muslim-friendly hotels.