



**SHARIA COMPLIANT SPACE PLANNING FOR HOTEL
ROOM DESIGN**

BY

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the
Master of Arts in Halal Management**

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia has billion of tourists visiting for business and recreational purposes where 23.6 % of the tourists are Muslims. Therefore, having a righteous hospitality environment that best suit the Muslim tourists are important for their convenience and comfort. There are sharia compliant hotels readily available nowadays however, the guidelines differ and there is a lot of ambiguity in the implementation. The main issue is the hotel room criteria that did not meet up to the sharia compliant specifications, especially rooms that are supposed to cater to two guests. Privacy, room size and furniture layout are the concerning factors that are the most apparent. This research aims to analyse the room space planning for hotel room mainly in the context of sharia compliant requirements. The first objective for this research is to define the criteria of sharia compliant space planning to meet both sharia and international standards. The second research objective is to critically asses the needed factors and components to provide a more conducive space planning option for hotel rooms. The final research objective is to make recommendations for effective hotel room design according to sharia. The research employs a few research methodologies one of which requires the researcher to study on previous researches; secondary data like journals, conference papers, websites and other reliable sources are collected and analysed based on its relevance to the topic. From the information gathered from secondary data which include al-Quran and al-Hadith, characteristics of a sharia compliant hotel room are then recognised. Analyses are conducted on selected samples of sharia compliant hotels in Klang Valley. The characteristics are tested on the chosen hotels and the rooms are analysed to assess if it fits the sharia compliant criteria. Interviews with experts were conducted to further strengthen the findings from previous methodologies and gather their opinions on the importance of the sharia compliant hotel room criteria. Questionnaires were also distributed to get public opinion on room preference and problem faced that may be resolved through sharia compliant concept adaptation. The outcome of the research proves that the existing hotels are not compatible to the sharia teaching. Rooms that are meant to be for two (2) guests cannot accommodate the guest to perform congregational prayer; some rooms do not meet the minimum requirement for hotel rooms as provided by the Tourism Licensing System, whilst some rooms do not protect the privacy of guests. This research covered the topic of space planning in hotel room design that is vital in creating a comfortable space for everyone according to sharia teachings. There are three levels according to *maqasid* sharia; *darruriyat* (necessities), *hajiyyat* (needs) and *tahsiniyyat* (luxuries), and discussion on the classifications of the sharia compliant characteristics according to the *maqasids* are recorded. In conclusion, these problems may be solved by increasing the room size for better circulation. The layout of the room should also be considered when planning the room to ensure that the space is optimized without jeopardising the ability of the guests to perform religious practices in the room. Buffer zones and efficient furniture arrangements needs to be implemented to protect the privacy of guests among each other and to the hotel staffs. Lastly, proper implementation of the sharia compliant rules and regulation in the governing or non-governing body may ensure that the idea is carried out responsibly in the hotel premises.

خلاصة البحث

يزور ماليزيا العديد من السواح سنويا لغايات تجارية و ترفيهية ، حيث يشكل المسلمون نسبة 23.6٪ من السياح . لذلك، فإن وجود بيئة الضيافة الصالحة التي تناسب السياح المسلمين مهمة جدا لراحتهم. هناك فنادق متوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية متوفرة في الوقت الحاضر ومع ذلك، فإن المبادئ التوجيهية تختلف والكثير يكتنفها الغموض في التنفيذ. المسألة الرئيسية هي معايير غرف الفنادق التي لا تلبى المواصفات المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية، وخاصة الغرف التي من المفترض أن تلبى احتياجات اثنين من النزلاء. الخصوصية، حجم الغرفة وتنسيق الأثاث تعتبر عوامل القلق الأكثر وضوحا. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل تخطيط مساحة غرفة الفندق بشكل رئيسي في سياق المتطلبات المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية. الهدف الأول لهذا البحث في تحديد معايير التخطيط المكاني المتوافق مع الشريعة الإسلامية والمعايير الدولية. ويتمثل الهدف الثاني من البحث في تقييم العوامل والمكونات اللازمة بشكل حاسم لتوفير خيار أكثر ملاءمة لتخطيط الفضاء لغرف الفنادق. الهدف الأخير من البحث هو تقديم توصيات لتصميم غرفة الفنادق بشكل فعال وفقا للشريعة، لقد اتبع هذا البحث عدد من المنهجيات والتي تتمحور المنهج الأول حول دراسة البحوث السابقة؛ تم جمع البيانات الثانوية مثل المجلات وأوراق المؤتمرات والمواقع الإلكترونية وغيرها من المصادر الموثوقة وتحليلها استنادا إلى صلتها بالموضوع. من المعلومات التي تم جمعها من البيانات الثانوية والتي شملت القرآن والحديث، تم التعرف على خصائص الغرفة الفندقية المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية. تم إجراء التحليل على عينات مختارة من الفنادق المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية في وادي كلانج. حيث تم اختبار الخصائص على الفنادق المختارة وتم تحليل الغرف لتقييم ما إذا كانت تتفق مع معايير الشريعة الإسلامية. تم إجراء المقابلات مع الخبراء لمواصلة تعزيز النتائج من المنهجيات السابقة وجمع آرائهم حول أهمية معايير الغرفة الفندقية المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية. كما تم توزيع استبيانات للحصول على الرأي العام تجاه الخيار المفضل للغرفة الفندقية والمشاكل التي يواجهها ويمكن حلها من خلال تطبيق حلول تتوافق مع الشريعة الإسلامية. أثبتت نتائج البحث أن الفنادق الموجودة لا تتوافق مع التعليم الشرعي. الغرف التي من المفترض أن تكون لشخصين لا يمكن أن تستوعب الضيوف لأداء صلاة الجماعة؛ بعض الغرف لا تلبى الحد الأدنى من متطلبات غرف الفنادق كما هو منصوص عليه في نظام ترخيص السياحة، في حين أن بعض الغرف لا تحمي خصوصية الضيوف. وتناول هذا البحث موضوع التخطيط الفضائي في تصميم غرف الفنادق وهو أمر حيوي في خلق مساحة مريحة للجميع وفقا لتعاليم الشريعة الإسلامية. هناك ثلاثة مستويات وفقا لمقاصد الشريعة الضرورية، الاحتياجات والتحسينات (الكفايات)، وتم تسجيل مناقشة تصنيفات الخصائص المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية وفقا للمقاصد. ختاماً، يمكن حل هذه المشاكل عن طريق زيادة حجم الغرفة لتحسين التهوية وينبغي أيضا أن تؤخذ بعين الاعتبار نسق الغرف عند التخطيط للغرفة لضمان أن الفضاء هو الأمثل دون تعريض قدرة الضيوف لأداء الممارسات الدينية في الغرفة. وهناك حاجة أيضا إلى المناطق العازلة وترتيبات الأثاث الفعالة لتنفيذ حماية خصوصية الضيوف فيما بينهم و موظفي الفندق. وأخيرا، فإن التنفيذ السليم للقواعد واللوائح المتوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية في الهيئة الحاكمة أو غير الحاكمة قد يضمن أن تتم الفكرة بشكل مسؤول في مباني الفندق.

APPROVAL PAGE

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 of Art (Halal Industry Management).

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background study in general. It includes the research problem, research aim, research objectives, research scope, research methodology, research limitations, research significance and research structure. The research mainly covers the space planning of a hotel room in order for it to be considered as sharia compliant which includes furniture organization, space allocation, space planning and management as well as openings.

The sharia compliant hotels are one of the newest editions in the conceptual hotel market trend nowadays. Crispian (2010) stated that there has been a significant increase in the demand of a hotel with more Islamic friendly facilities and the trend of Islamic hotels is actively available due to the availability of sharia financed investment funds because 10% of the source for tourism is funded by Muslims from Middle East. Since the main attraction of hotels is the bedroom it is important to note that the improvement of hotel rooms can possibly impact the sales. Muslims have a more conservative protocols and religious requirements that may be a challenge to conduct in a conventional hotel design.

Malaysia is an Islamic country and has billion of tourists coming over for business and recreational purposes. Therefore, having a righteous environment that best suit this target user is important in terms of generating the economy as well as providing a better understanding to the community on the benefits of applying these qualities in a conventional hotel design.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The main business of a hotel depends heavily on the room condition because that is usually the characteristics that guests focus on when choosing for a place to stay. A hotel room acts as a temporary home for the guests during their stay there; therefore, a hotel room should be able to accommodate the guests with their basic needs in their everyday lives. Muslim guests have more specific needs in performing their daily religious routines that may require more features and requirements in a room as opposed to conventional hotel room design.

Rosenburg & Choufany (2009), as well as Henderson (2010) stated the criteria that are important in defining sharia compliant hotels; however, no emphasis was mentioned on the design elements especially concerning the hotel rooms. Added requirements may be needed in addition to the existing requirements of a hotel room in order to create a sharia compliant hotel room design. A sharia compliant hotel room design may not only benefit Muslims guests, it may potentially provide a more conducive environment for guests of different beliefs as sharia compliant concept protects the good of all. Existing hotel rooms are not designed to be compatible for Muslim guests to perform their basic religious routines. The research for this niche market is ever evolving, thus loopholes are bound to be discovered and improvements may be needed with further research. Currently, the argument that is present is the lack of consistency in defining these hotels (Henderson, 2010), due to this circumstance; the existing hotels that claim to be fully sharia compliant differ in characteristics and are not properly evaluated.

Abdul Halim Ismail is the CEO of TH Hotels, which is one of the few fully sharia compliant hotels in Malaysia, states that the growing trend now is guests being more educated in good accommodation (Sekaran, 2014). Often time hotels have

added cost and extra charges for items that guests may not need, contrary to conventional hotels, sharia compliant concept allows a more straight forward approach where guests are less likely to spend on unnecessary items.

In conclusion, it is important to take note that a lot of elements should be taken into consideration to create better flow and accessibility of the workers and guests in a sharia compliant hotel. Apart from controlling the fluidity of space, sharia compliant space objective is to create a safer, more comfortable environment for everyone.

1.2 RESEARCH AIM

The research aims to analyse the room space planning for hotel room mainly in the context of sharia compliant requirements. Sharia compliant hotel is a widely used term especially of late without a clear definition and the research determines the criteria of sharia compliant space planning to meet the sharia and international standards.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- To identify the sharia compliant elements in hotel room design
- 2- To critically asses the needed factors and components to provide a more conducive space planning option for hotel rooms.
- 3- To make recommendations for effective hotel room design according to sharia.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1- Are the elements of sharia compliance space planning considered when designing a hotel room?
- 2- What are the sharia compliant space planning implementations in the hotel rooms to the public?
- 3- What are the sharia compliant recommendations for effective hotel room design?

1.5 RESEARCH SCOPE

To explore the possibilities, potential and impacts of applying the sharia compliance concept in hotel room space planning. Research is focused on a room with double occupancy only and only covers the ability of performing basic Islamic religious routines required by Muslims. Double occupancy rooms are the main focus because rooms offered for one person has less requirement and the existing criteria are sufficient for one person in comparison to rooms that are supposed to cater to two guests. The space planning includes furniture configuration, space allocation and planning, and openings only. Other elements are subject to further research in the future. Result of these findings will help more hoteliers understand the design criteria according to Islamic perspective view, giving examples for designers that will design the Islamic concept living space.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of achieving desired information is done based on the consideration of the objectives and research questions of the research.

Table 1.1 The correlation table between the objective, research questions and methodology

Objective	RQ	Methods
To identify the sharia compliant elements in hotel room design.	Are the elements of sharia compliant space planning considered when designing a hotel room?	Interview interior designer / knowledgeable bodies / experts
To critically asses the needed factors and components to provide a more conducive space planning option for hotel rooms.	What are the sharia compliant space planning implementations in the hotel rooms to the public?	On-site Observation Questionnaire
To make recommendations for effective hotel room design according to sharia.	What are the sharia compliant recommendations for effective hotel room design?	On-site Observation Questionnaire Plan Analysis

The methods are chosen according to the effectiveness of obtaining information required to ensure that the objective of research is achieved and the research questions answered. The methods employed are described as the following:

1.6.1 On-site Observation

On-site observation is done by the researcher to study the design elements, interior space planning of hotel rooms. Information is attained through observation and case studies in existing hotels that may or may not follow sharia compliance regulations. The site is chosen based on the criteria of the study that is later explained in detail in the methodology chapter. The researcher should narrow down from a list of hotels, to a few places that are most strategic to carry out such experiments. Samples are determined through the list of crescent rated hotels and from the lists of hotels that provide halal services in Islamic Tourism Centre, Malaysia.

1.6.2 Interviews

Interviews are to be conducted with experienced individuals from design backgrounds. The interviews are conducted regarding the individual's design solution tactics, opinions, space planning and layout ideas.

1.6.3 Questionnaire/Surveys

Questionnaires are distributed to understand the needs and problems that occur in hotels to study the preference and guest behaviour.

1.6.4 Secondary Data

Secondary data is collected through different means and sources, the secondary data are data that are taken directly or indirectly from old journals, thesis, newspaper articles, magazine and websites.

1.6.5 Journal

The journals that are referred to are from architecture, space planning, interior design, religious researches, traditional and sharia compliant architecture. Most of the journal are discussing about the issue that is being studied.

1.6.6 Books

Books are one of the main sources that are used as reference due to the validity of the information. Most of the data collected come from books that are based on the Islamic perspective of space planning, hotel design and other related topics that may include in the findings.

1.6.7 Articles

The articles that are referred to are about the tourism industry in the country and other related issues. The articles support the significance of study and focuses on the current events in Malaysia.

1.6.8 Websites

The internet brings many benefits; one of it is to be able to access information easily. Most organizations like Tourism organizations have their own websites where they store their information. Studies were also done by the researcher via internet to get the international input for further research.

In a later chapter of the research (Chapter 3), a more detailed explanation of the research methodology is presented. The research methodologies are broken down into two phases to obtain desired results.

1.7 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The Sharia compliant idea is relatively new in the design industry in general which makes it difficult to apply in a space that required much protocol to execute. This leads to limited number of samples, moreover, the books available mainly discuss on new interiors for conventional hotels as well as sharia compliant houses and not on sharia compliant hotels. Although the internet has been a good source of information, there is lack of information for the topic as it is relatively new and it is hard to rectify these sources as reliable sources of information. The research is done specifically for space planning of the hotel rooms but there are also other contributing factors that can provide better sharia compliant hotel rooms like management and other design solutions that are yet to be discussed. Although usually rooms have a standalone

section in hotel rating guidelines, there seem to be little attention given to the requirements of a sharia compliant hotel rooms.

1.8 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

The study of sharia compliant space planning for hotel rooms may seem like a small contribution but due to its foreign nature to the current market, it may be a good step in the right direction in improving awareness on the importance of implementing these criteria. Sharia teachings are good for Muslims, and claims to be beneficial to all mankind; a sharia compliant space does not only highlight the religious aspect of the space, but also the hygiene and environmentally friendly qualities that are also a part of the sharia teaching. Non-Islamic countries like Thailand, Japan and Korea are also recognising the need to provide Muslim friendly facilities and halal food and drinks as they see the business opportunity that the sharia compliant hospitality can attract. As Muslims, it is an ethical responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of all and since the importance of Muslim guests are overlooked in the current layout of some of the sharia compliant hotels in Malaysia, it is important to discuss and create better solution in order to solve these problems.