

Sharia-Compliant in Budget Hotel: D’Metro Hotel, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Mohd Suhaini Abdul Majid¹, Aida Zuraina Mir Ahmad Talaa^{2,3}, Mohd Zaid Zulkifli³, Nor Shaiza Mir Ahmad Talaat⁴, Habibah Yahaya⁵

¹(Centre For Instructor and Advanced Skill Training (CIAST), Taiping, Perak, Malaysia)

²(Seberang Perai Polytechnic, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia)

^{3,4}(Post Graduate Student of University Sultan Azlan Shah, Kuala Kangsar, Malaysia)

⁵(Advanced Technology Centre (ADTEC), Taiping, Perak, Malaysia)

ABSTRACT: *Sharia-compliant hotel is a creative and innovative approach offered by hotel operators in Malaysia. The scope of Sharia-compliant hotel is very wide and it covers every services offered. Some of budget hotel operators in Malaysia are not aware that the service is being offered has achieved most of Sharia-compliant hotel. The objective of this study was to examine the budget hotel has achieved the characteristics of a shariah-compliant or not. It was found D’Metro Hotel Shah Alam is a budget hotel has almost reached the status of Sharia-compliant hotel. Most of the facilities offered by D’Metro Shah Alam meet the characteristics outlined in Sharia-compliant hotel. With offering the shariah-compliant hotel concept among budget hotel operators give a choice to Muslim traveler in Malaysia.*

Keywords : *Sharia-compliant hotel, budget hotel, Malaysia*

I. INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has a major impact on the economy as a whole especially in Malaysia. According to statistics released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia in 2015, the tourism industry had a gross income of RM166 billion to Malaysia and contributed to 14.4% of the overall economy. A total of 25.7 million tourists from all over the world have visit to Malaysia in 2015. 13.3% from overall revenue from the tourism industry contributed by the accommodation sector. The need to provide quality accommodation is the main agenda of industry players in Malaysia. Sharia-compliant hotel has become a benchmark in guaranteeing the quality of services, especially to attract visitors from Muslim all over the world. The Sharia-compliant hotels are innovative and creative services that are offered by hotels around the world (Nor et al., 2014). Shamim (2009) defined Sharia-compliant hotel that provides services in accordance to the Sharia principles. In order for the said hotel to be considered as Sharia-compliant, the services provided by the hotel must comply with the need of Sharia (Norzafir, 2014). In Malaysia, an example hotel that has achieved the status of Sharia-compliant is De Palma Hotel Ampang, Selangor (Sahida Wan et al., 2011). Up to now there are no specific studies on Sharia-compliant among budget hotels in Malaysia. According to the Department of Statistics, Malaysia, budget hotel is defined an accommodation with limited facilities compared to the hotel. Normally, the budget hotels don’t have banquet, food and beverages department, conference hall, swimming pool, gymnasium, sauna, games facilities (indoor and outdoor). Classification of budget hotel in Malaysia based on the rating of 2 stars or below or by forging Orchid issued by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia.

II. BACKGROUND OF D’METRO HOTEL, SHAH ALAM, SELANGOR, MALAYSIA

D’Metro Hotel Shah Alam managed by Kutub D’Metro Sdn Bhd with Company No. 1141247. This hotel located at No 10, Jalan Nelayan D19/D, Section 19, 40300 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia. D’Metro rated as 2-star hotel and categorized as a budget hotel. It has the total of 41 rooms, which include single bed, a twin room, queen room, king room and family room. Hotel reservations can be made via phone and website search engines such as hotels agoda.com, booking.com, tripadvisor.com and other web based search. This hotel located at strategic location and equipped with modern facilities such as lift, Wi-Fi internet, LCD screen television, modern interior design and etc.

III. FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

From the previous studies a lot of characteristics Sharia-compliant had been proposed based on the needs of Muslim traveler. Nor Zafir (2014) highlighted several hotel services accordance to Sharia-compliant as shown in Table 1. This table shows the basic needs of Muslim traveler to perform daily religious activities but not all activities should be done everyday such as The Fast (perform at Ramadan month), Az-Zakah (can be perform at Az-Zakah Centre or Online Banking) and Perform Hajj (should be perform at Mecca). The top

priority for the Muslim traveler is Solat Requirement (should be perform five time a day). Most of hotel in Malaysia offered Solat Requirement facilities such as bidet, Qiblah direction and prayer mat. Other criteria such as services for general needs and hotel management practice should be implemented if that hotel needs to known as Sharia-compliant hotel.

Table 1. The proposed characteristics of Sharia-compliant Hotel

Muslim Travelers'Needs (Customer focus)	Hotel Services (Sharia-compliant)
1. Obligatory Religious Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solat Requirement • The Fast or Siyam • Az-Zakah • Perform Hajj 	1. Special services for religious activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shower hose, Prayer mat, mosque location, prayer dress, solat time, Qiblah, Imam • Sahooh and Break fast food, Taraweeh, Quran. • Payment of Zakah • Knowledge of Hajj
2. General needs of a Muslim traveler: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Facilities • Room entertainment • Recreation 	2. Services for general needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halal food • Separate male and female • No adult entertainment • Islamic tourism packages
3. General rules for Islamic values in hotel management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Finance • Operation • Interior design and decoration 	3. Hotel Management practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS1900:2005 & MS1500:2004 • No Riba • Dress code, Separate floor for male and female • Toilet face away from Kaaba, no art deco on human part

Adopted from: Nor Zafir (2014)

From Choufarry (2009) and Herderson (2010) proposed as Sharia-compliant hotel is more realistic and acceptable criteria in case of budget hotel. Based on interviews with hotel staff and the observations at the hotel, Table 2 show the analysis level of compliant D'Metro Hotel based on Choufarry (2009) and Herderson (2010). Most of criteria outlined are complied and only Islamic funding is not confirmed due to lack of information.

Table 2. Level of compliance as outlined by Choufarry (2009) and Herderson (2010)

No	Choufarry (2009) and Herderson (2010) attribution of Shariah Compliant Hotel in Malaysia	D'Metro Hotel (Comply/Not Offer)
1	Conservative staff dress	Comply
2	Predominantly Muslim staff	Comply
3	No alcohol	Comply (No F&B Department)
4	Halal food only	Comply (Breakfast ordered from halal restaurant)
5	All female floors	Not offer
6	Separate recreational facilities for men & women	Not offer
7	Prayer room	Comply
8	Islamic funding	No information (Muslim owned)
9	Appropriate entertainment	Comply
10	Bidets in the bathrooms	Comply
11	Bed & Toilet positioned so as not to face the direction of Mecca	Comply

Adopted from: Aomarun and Kaedsiri (2014)

Table 3 show the requirement of Sharia-compliance space planning for hotel room design proposed by Syaza, et al. (2015). All these criteria are quite difficult to achieve if the hotel owner does not plan correctly during the process of design and construction of the hotel. D'Metro Hotel meets all these criteria and perhaps the hotel owners have got the proper consultation from the architect in order to meet Muslim traveler.

Table 3. Space requirements and the size recommended by Syaza, et al. (2015).

No	Requirement under design & interior category	D'Metro Hotel (Comply/Not Comply)
1	Markers in the room indicating the direction of Mecca	Comply (Certificate of Compliance Qiblah Direction Coordinate from Selangor Mufti Department). Prayer mat also provided.
2	Bidet and toilets should not face the direction of Mecca	Comply
3	Art in the hotel should not depict the human form	Comply
4	Bedroom double occupancy size 15m ² to meet double prayer mats.	Comply (17.2 m ² for queen room)

Adopted from : Syaza, *et al.* (2015)

D'Metro Hotel also gazettes their premise as non-smoking area and pets are prohibited from entering the premises. Both of these features are designed to ensure the comfort of its customers. These two additional

elements that have been included is in line with the Malaysia Ministry of Health (2012) declaration that smoking is prohibited at public area. From the Islamic perspective, smoking declared Haram (Strongly Prohibited) in Malaysia based on Malaysia Fatwa (1995). Prohibition entering the pets is also in line with Islamic perspective especially to maintain cleanliness and comfort of customers. For Muslim there are pet's categorized Haram (Strongly Prohibited) to be held or touch such a dog.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the characteristics outlined in previous studies of Sharia-compliant hotel, D'Metro Hotel has achieved almost all the characteristics of Sharia-compliant for the budget hotel category. D'Metro Hotel cannot be regarded as Sharia-compliant caused of certain Sharia characteristics are not offered or yet comply such as copies of Quran not provided, Islamic funding (hotel financed through Islamic financial instruments), overall hotel management practices and others Sharia requirements. In addition, the hotel is also not advertised or disseminate them in the services as Sharia-compliant. In Malaysia there is no special certification in recognition of Sharia-compliant premises. Most of the hotel operators only focusing on Halal certificate for their Food and Beverage (F&B) Department and Qiblah Direction Certificate by State Mufti Department for the basic needs for Muslim traveler. Nor Zafir, et al. (2014) highlighted the development of the Sharia-compliant model in Malaysia should based on the Muslim's needs and include several standard such as MS1500:2009 (Malaysian Standard of Halal Food Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage) and MS1500:2009 (Malaysian Standard for Quality Management System Requirement from Islamic Perspective). Sharia-compliant hotel concept is still at infant stage and most of conventional hoteliers refuse to transform to Sharia-compliant hotel due to lack of awareness and understanding on the concept (Junaidah and Norazla, 2015). Mohd Fazil and Mod Zulkifli (2013) added the concept of Sharia-compliant hotel is very unique and it needs to be promoted not only towards the Muslim market but also non Muslim. In case of Malaysia, to expand the idea of setting up Sharia-compliant hotel need a team of religious advisors providing guidelines or set of manual for a hotel to be awarded as an Islamic hotel.

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