

# Halal Tourism Hospitality: Comparing Standards of Muslim-Friendly Accommodation in Indonesia and Malaysia

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## Abstract

This study explores the standards of Muslim-friendly accommodations in Indonesia and Malaysia, two countries recognized as leading halal tourism destinations. The primary focus of this research is to identify the differences in the implementation of hospitality standards between the two nations. The findings reveal that Malaysia's MS 2610:2015 provides a structured and clear framework that governs various aspects of accommodation services in alignment with Islamic principles. In contrast, Indonesia relies on non-binding fatwas issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), which, while encompassing a broader scope, lacks the enforcement mechanisms necessary to ensure uniformity within the tourism sector. The flexibility of the MUI fatwa allows for adaptation to local contexts but may lead to uncertainty in execution, especially given Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape. Although both standards aim to enhance the halal tourism experience, their differing approaches reflect not only the varying levels of regulatory formalism but also the distinct cultural and social contexts of each country.

## 1. Introduction

Halal tourism has emerged as a popular trend among travelers and has significantly influenced the growth of the global tourism industry. Global Muslim Travel Index (2023) mentioned that in 2022, the number of Muslim travelers reached 110 million, with projections indicating this figure could rise to 230 million by 2028, accompanied by an estimated spending of USD 225 billion. As the popularity of halal tourism increases, accommodation that caters to the needs of Muslims has become an essential aspect of consideration.

Muslim travelers not only seek out attractive tourist destinations but also take into account various factors that support their journey while adhering to sharia principles. The availability of prayer facilities, halal food and beverages, and tourism practices that align with Islamic teachings are crucial elements for global Muslim travelers (Aziz, 2018; Suseno, 2023). Additionally, Muslim travelers often prioritize the concept of tourism that emphasizes comfort and provides a sense of security (Pamukcu & Sariisik, 2021). It can be concluded that travelers not only take into account spiritual aspects but also consider emotional factors when selecting their travel destinations.

Hermawan (2019) and Subarkah (2020) observes that many countries engage in halal branding to build trust and attract Muslim tourists, while also expanding the global halal tourism market. Efforts to enhance reputation include the provision of accommodations that adhere to Sharia principles, covering products, services, and management (Djakfar et al., 2021). Therefore, large-scale campaigns promoting halal tourism in a country will be ineffective if not supported by Muslim-friendly accommodations. Moreover, this lack of support could negatively impact the country's reputation and hinder the development of its halal tourism sector.

Indonesia and Malaysia are two countries that have managed to rank at the top as halal tourist destination countries as mentioned in the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) report. This success is largely attributed to the efforts of both countries in providing muslim-friendly accommodations, which serve as a primary attraction for Muslim travelers. Malaysia offers a diverse range of products and services that cater to both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. From public facilities to halal food and beverages, as well as Sharia-compliant accommodations, everything is readily accessible, ensuring that all travelers can explore and experience Malaysia's unique charm with ease. For instance, mosques and prayer rooms are conveniently located in every district, while prayer spaces are available in almost all public places. Most dining establishments serve JAKIM-certified halal food, and many hotels provide qibla directions and prayer mats in guest rooms, ensuring a seamless and comfortable experience for worship during one's stay (Aziz, 2018).

Similar to Malaysia, halal tourism accommodations in Indonesia must adhere to Sharia principles by providing MUI-certified halal food, ensuring adequate facilities for worship, requiring employees to wear attire that complies with Sharia guidelines, having service protocols that meet established standards, and utilizing the services of Sharia-compliant financial institutions in their operations. Furthermore, the halal tourism environment in Indonesia must be free from practices related to pornography or activities that violate public decency. All these requirements are outlined in Fatwa DSN-MUI No. 108 of 2016, which provides guidelines for organizing tourism based on Sharia principles.

Ultimately, both countries adopt distinct approaches to offering halal accommodations. These varying strategies underscore each nation's commitment to addressing the needs of Muslim travelers while adhering to Sharia principles in their hospitality services. Comparing the standards of Muslim-friendly accommodations in both countries can provide a clearer perspective on best practices in the implementation of Muslim-friendly hospitality in Indonesia and Malaysia.

This study aims to serve as a foundation for stakeholders in the halal tourism industry to formulate more effective policies and strategies to attract a greater number of Muslim tourists, both domestic and international. It will compare the practices of Muslim-friendly accommodation in Indonesia and Malaysia, particularly focusing on the standards used as references in providing such accommodations. The findings of this research will offer valuable insights for the government, tourism business operators, and certification bodies to enhance the quality of halal tourism, thereby potentially contributing to the economic growth of both countries through an increase in global tourist arrivals.

## 2. Method

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology with a comparative framework to analyze and compare the standards related to Muslim-friendly accommodation in Indonesia and Malaysia. Data is collected through an extensive literature review and a practical comparison of the standards applied in both countries. The data sources comprise official government documents, industry reports, and pertinent academic publications.

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1 Halal Tourism Hospitality

Henri J.M explained that *hospitality* comes from '*hospes*' which means guest. *Hospitality* is also often associated with a feeling like home. The three components of *hospitality* according to Tasci and Semrad in Kennedy (2024) are warmth (feeling invited, polite, respectful), guaranteed security (reliable, honest, trusted), and soothing (open, generous, easy to get along with). *Hospitality* is the provision of friendly, empathetic, and caring services. The main goal of *hospitality* is to create a memorable experience for guests so that they have the desire to return and recommend it to others.

Building on this idea, the sustainability of an industry or business in the context of *hospitality* is closely related to the ability to continuously offer empathetic and rewarding service to each guest (Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017). Consistency in providing a positive experience and paying attention to guests' emotional needs and comfort can improve customer reputation and loyalty. Industries that are able to maintain good relationships with guests and create a pleasant environment tend to be more resilient to market challenges and can thrive in the long run (Brunner - Sperdin & Peters, 2009).

In contrast to conventional hospitality offerings, halal tourism hospitality refers to the services and facilities provided to meet the needs of Muslim tourists. The term "halal hospitality" is used to describe how a business provides services that are in accordance with Islamic principles. Meanwhile, "halal tourism" refers to the demand from Muslim tourists for services that accommodate their needs while on vacation (Hall et al., 2019). When associated with halal tourism, *hospitality* must consider several factors, including (Boediman, 2017):

- a. Courtesy in accordance with Islamic teachings
- b. Comfort for Muslim tourists
- c. Paying attention to:

- 1) The spiritual aspect of tourists in the form of ease in carrying out religious practices (halal food, places of prayer)
- 2) The emotional aspects of tourists, namely hospitality, friendliness, trustworthiness, courtesy, serving patiently, etc
- 3) The intellectual aspects of tourists, such as providing informative, educational, understanding and extensive knowledge of tourism services that are useful for visitors
- 4) The physical aspects of tourists, such as cleanliness, safety, and ambience

Therefore, the sustainability of an industry in the context of halal tourism hospitality is closely related to its ability to continuously offer empathetic and rewarding service to Muslim guests. Maintaining consistency in providing a positive experience and attending to the emotional needs and comfort of Muslim tourists can enhance customer reputation and loyalty.

## 4. Result and Discussions

### 4.1 Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Regulations in Indonesia and Malaysia

Before discussing the Muslim-friendly accommodation standards in Indonesia and Malaysia, it is essential to first understand the regulations that form the foundation for the development of halal tourism in both countries. These regulations serve as legal frameworks and policy guidelines that dictate how tourism services, particularly accommodations, should be aligned with Sharia principles.

Indonesia and Malaysia have been recognized as the top global destinations for halal tourism. However, the two countries differ in their establishment of standards for Muslim-friendly accommodation, reflecting the policies set forth in each nation. Indonesia previously had regulations governing sharia hotels through the Ministerial Regulation of Tourism and Creative Economy (Permenparekraf) No. 2 of 2014, which provided guidelines and insights into the implementation of sharia hotel businesses, as well as guidance for the certification of such businesses (Article 2, paragraphs 1 and 2). However, this regulation was revoked with the issuance of Permenparekraf No. 11 of 2016, based on the consideration that the regulations governing the guidelines for sharia hotel operations were no longer aligned with the evolving tourism landscape. As a result, Indonesia currently faces a legal vacuum regarding the explicit regulation of halal tourism accommodation standards.

Support for halal tourism is clearly evident in the Fatwa of the National Sharia Council of the Indonesian Ulema Council (DSN-MUI) No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of Tourism Based on Sharia Principles. This fatwa regulates provisions related to the operation of sharia hotels and other general principles of halal tourism. It can be regarded as the most comprehensive guide outlining the products and services that must be provided in the implementation of halal tourism in Indonesia. The provisions encompass various aspects, including regulations for different stakeholders (tourists, tourism entrepreneurs, tour guides, as well as government and local authorities), certification requirements, types of contracts used, guidelines for the utilization of Islamic financial institutions, regulations regarding sharia hotels, the provision of halal food and beverages, BPWS (Sharia Travel Bureau), tour guides, provisions related to spas and therapists, and criteria for tourist destinations. Although this fatwa emphasizes the exclusivity of halal tourism, its legal status does not equate to that of formal legislation.

In contrast to Indonesia, Malaysia has established regulations concerning the standards for halal tourism accommodation through the Malaysian Standard (MS 2610:2015) on Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services – Requirements. This regulation is designed to provide clear guidelines for hospitality service providers in creating an environment that aligns with sharia principles. MS 2610:2015 addresses various essential aspects, such as the provision of halal food and beverages, designated prayer spaces, and services that cater to the needs of Muslim travelers. The implementation of these standards aims not only to attract Muslim tourists but also to enhance the trust and loyalty of the global Muslim travel community.

### 4.2 Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Standards Implemented in Indonesia

The aspect of halal tourism hospitality in Indonesia and Malaysia certainly refers to the regulations implemented in each country. As previously explained, Indonesia does not yet have a binding national regulation. Currently, the reference for halal tourism hospitality in Indonesia refers to the DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016 on Guidelines for the Implementation of Tourism Based on Sharia Principles. This fatwa also serves as the guideline for local governments that take the initiative to issue regulations related to halal tourism.

DSN MUI Fatwa No. 108 of 2016 consists of 11 points of provisions, namely general provisions; legal provisions; general principles of sharia tourism implementation; provisions related to the parties and contracts; provisions related to tourists; provisions for tourist destinations; spa, sauna, and massage provisions; provisions related to sharia travel agencies; provisions related to sharia tour guides; and closing provisions. The following are the results of the classification of articles in the MUI fatwa regarding halal tourism hospitality in Indonesia:

**Table 1** *Halal tourism accommodation and hospitality standards in Indonesia*

Provision	Spiritual	Emotional	Intellectual	Physical
<b>General Principles of Sharia Tourism Implementation</b>	Tourism arrangements must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Be free from shirk (polytheism), immorality, corruption, <i>tabdzir/israf</i> (extravagance), and vice</li> <li>b. Create benefits and advantages both materially and spiritually</li> </ol>	-	-	-
<b>Provisions related to the parties and contracts</b>	Contracts for the implementation of tourism insurance, storage and management as well as the development of tourism funds must use contracts that are in accordance with the fatwa with DSN-MUI and applicable laws and regulations	-	The parties in the implementation of Sharia Tourism are ... Sharia Travel Agency ... tour guide	The parties in the implementation of Sharia Tourism are ... Therapist
<b>Terms and Conditions Related to Sharia Hotels</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sharia hotels must not provide facilities that allow access to pornography or engage in immoral activities.</li> <li>b. Sharia hotels must not offer entertainment that leads to shirk (polytheism), immorality, pornography, or other illicit behaviour.</li> <li>c. They must provide adequate facilities, equipment, and amenities for worship, including facilities for ablution.</li> <li>d. The management and staff of sharia-compliant hotels are required to wear clothing that complies with Islamic principles.</li> <li>e. Sharia hotels must utilize the services of Sharia financial institutions for their operations.</li> </ol>		Sharia hotels are required to comply with guidelines and/or guidelines regarding hotel service procedures to ensure the implementation of hotel services in accordance with sharia principles	
<b>Conditions related to travellers</b>	Travelers must meet the following conditions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Adhere to sharia principles by avoiding shirk, vices, munkar, and corruption (<i>façade</i>)</li> <li>b. Maintain the obligation of worship during travel</li> <li>c. Maintaining noble morals</li> <li>d. Avoid tourist destinations that are contrary to sharia principles.</li> </ol>	Tourists are required to uphold noble character		
<b>Tourist Destination Provisions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tourist destinations must have:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Worship facilities that are suitable to use</li> <li>b. Easy to reach and meet sharia requirements halal food and beverages that are guaranteed halal with MUI Halal Certificate</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Tourist destinations must be avoided:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Polytheism and superstition Vice, adultery, pornography, pornography, liquor, drugs, and gambling</li> <li>b. Art and cultural performances and attractions that are contrary to sharia principles</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	Tourist destinations must be directed to efforts to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Realize public benefit</li> <li>b. Provide enlightenment, refreshment, and tranquility</li> <li>c. Maintain trust, safety, and comfort</li> <li>d. Achieve universal and inclusive good</li> </ol>	Tourist destinations must be directed to efforts respect social and cultural values and local wisdom that do not violate Sharia principles	Tourist destinations must be directed to efforts to ensure cleanliness, environmental sustainability, sanitation, and hygiene

<b>Spa, Sauna, and Massage Terms</b>	Spas, saunas, and massages must meet the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use halal and non-impure materials certified by MUI Halal Certification</li> <li>b. Avoid pornography and lewd behaviour</li> <li>c. Male therapists are only permitted to provide spas, saunas, and massages to male tourists; which female therapists are only permitted to perform spas, saunas, and massages to female tourists</li> <li>d. Provide facilities that facilitate worship</li> </ul>		Preservation of the dignity of tourists
<b>Provisions related to Sharia Travel Agencies</b>	Sharia Travel Agency is required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Organizing tour packages in accordance with sharia principles</li> <li>b. Using the services of Sharia Financial Institutions in carrying out tourism services, both banks, insurance, financing institutions, guarantee agencies, and pension funds</li> <li>c. Managing funds and investments must be in accordance with sharia principles</li> <li>d. It is mandatory to have a tourist guide that can prevent the occurrence of shirk, superstition, immorality, adultery, pornography, pornography, liquor, drugs and gambling</li> </ul>		Sharia Travel Agency is required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Maintain a list of accommodations and tourist destinations that adhere to sharia principle</li> <li>b. Maintain a list of halal food and beverage providers with MUI Halal Certification</li> </ul>
<b>Provisions related to Sharia Tour Guides</b>	Sharia Tour Guides are required to understand and be able to implement sharia values in carrying out their duties; especially those related to tourism fiqh	Sharia tour guides are required to have noble character, communicative, friendly, honest and responsible	Sharia Tour Guides are required to have competencies according to applicable professional standards as evidenced by certificates

DSN-MUI Fatwa No. 108 of 2016 has provided a holistic and comprehensive standard reference related to the implementation of halal tourism in Indonesia. The spiritual aspect is addressed by ensuring the availability of adequate worship facilities, maintaining halal food, prohibiting actions related to polytheism and disobedience, regulating contracts and fund management, and adhering to other sharia principles. The emotional aspect is considered by establishing rules for tourists and tour guides to uphold noble morals. The intellectual aspect is covered by the requirement for competence and understanding of sharia values, as well as providing appropriate guidance and education. Finally, the physical aspect is met through regulations on the use of halal ingredients, offering halal-certified food and beverages, and preserving the dignity of tourists with services that align with sharia principles to ensure their comfort.

Furthermore, in the MUI Fatwa No. 108 of 2016, several standards for the implementation of halal tourism have been established as follows:

1. General Standards: Halal tourism activities must avoid acts of *shirk* (associating partners with God), immorality, corruption, extravagance, wrongdoing, and must bring about benefits both materially and spiritually (Article 3).
2. Contract Standards: The contracts executed within halal tourism must adhere to Islamic legal provisions, such as *ijarah* (lease), *ju'alah* (fee for services), *wakalah bil ujah* (agency with fee), and others (Article 4).

3. Sharia Hotel Standards: Establishments must provide facilities that do not lead to violations of laws and morality, serve food and beverages that have been certified halal by MUI, ensure the availability of worship and ablution facilities, implement hotel service procedures in accordance with Islamic principles, and utilize sharia-compliant financial services (Article 5).
4. Tourist Standards: Tourists are required to adhere to Islamic principles and maintain noble morals throughout their travels (Article 6).
5. Tourist Destination Standards: These destinations must consider environmental sustainability and respect cultural values and local wisdom. They must provide appropriate and accessible worship facilities and guarantee the availability of halal food (certified by MUI), while not accommodating activities that contradict religious values (Article 7).
6. Spa, Sauna, and Massage Standards: These services must use halal materials, maintain the dignity of tourists, provide facilities for worship, and avoid actions that contradict Islamic principles (Article 8).
7. Sharia Travel Agency Standards: Travel agencies must offer tours that comply with Islamic law, provide a list of Muslim-friendly accommodations and tourist destinations, ensure the availability of halal food and beverages, and manage funds in accordance with sharia principles (Article 9).
8. Sharia Tour Guide Standards: Tour guides must comprehend and be able to implement Islamic values in their duties, possess the necessary competencies, and maintain a polite and attractive appearance that aligns with Islamic principles (Article 10).

Overall, these standards adequately address the needs for organizing halal tourism in accordance with Islamic principles, providing clear guidelines for all parties involved. Referring to the views of Nizar (2020), halal tourism implementation must fulfill aspects of *maslahah* (welfare), including *maslahah dharuriyyah* (primary welfare), *maslahah hajjiyah* (secondary welfare), and *maslahah tahsiniyyah* (tertiary welfare). The entire fatwa has successfully accommodated all *maslahah* (welfare) and provided comprehensive standards for tourists, service providers, and the government, thus serving as a reference for conducting halal tourism activities in Indonesia that align with Islamic principles.

### 4.3 Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Standards Implemented in Malaysia

In Malaysia, the Muslim-friendly hospitality industry is experiencing significant growth in response to the increasing demand from Muslim travelers seeking services that align with Sharia principles. Most Muslim-friendly service providers and facilities in Malaysia are 3- and 4-star hotels. JAKIM, however, only issues halal certification for hotel kitchens, without extending it to cover the entire hotel operations. Furthermore, the Malaysian government restricts the provision of Muslim-friendly services to local hotel operators and does not grant permission to franchise providers from abroad, such as those from the United States, Singapore, or the United Kingdom (Samori & Sabtu, 2014). This presents a valuable opportunity for local hotel operators to strengthen their position in the halal tourism industry by capitalizing on the growing market of Muslim travelers.

The Muslim-friendly accommodation standards in Malaysia are outlined in MS 2610:2015, which pertains to Muslim-friendly hospitality services and their requirements. This Malaysian standard was developed by the Technical Committee on Management Systems from Islamic Perspectives, operating under the authority of the Industry Standards Committee on Halal Standards. MS 2610:2015 is based on the normative regulations of ACT 1992 and MS 1500 concerning halal food. The standard covers seven areas: scope; normative references; terms and definitions; general requirements; specific requirements; legal requirements; and compliance. It applies universally to all organizations and individuals managing Muslim tourism products and services in Malaysia. However, it explicitly excludes healthcare and beauty facilities such as spas, massage services, or any balneotherapy facilities, products, and services. The specific requirements, detailed in sections 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4, are applicable to accommodation, tour packages, and tourist guides. Below is a classification of the halal tourism accommodation standard in Malaysia based on spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects as outlined in section 5 on specific requirements:

**Table 2** *Halal tourism accommodation and hospitality standards in Malaysia*

Spiritual	Emotional	Intellectual	Physical
<p>1. <b>5.2 Accomodation:</b> “The organisation shall ensure that the accommodation premises is in compliance with the requirements set in this standard. The organisation shall also ensure that pet from non-halal animals are prohibited in the accommodation area. In the event that the establishment is contaminated with <i>najis mughallazah</i>, it shall perform ritual cleansing procedure in accordance to MS 1500.</p> <p>2. <b>5.2.1 – Rooms:</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.2.1.1.b:</b> “The organisation shall ensure that the guest rooms have a clearly marked <i>kiblat</i> direction verified by competent authority.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.2.1.1.c:</b> “The rooms shall have adequate floor space for a Muslim guest to perform solah in the room.” c. <b>Sub Article 5.2.1.1.f:</b> “The organisation shall ensure that personal care amenities and/or products provided in the washroom are suitable for Muslim use.” d. <b>Sub Article 5.2.1.1.g:</b> “Alcoholic beverages and intoxicants shall not be stored in the room’s refrigerator.” e. <b>Sub Article 5.2.1.2 a:</b> “There should be sajjada available for use in the room or upon request by the guest.”</p> <p>3. <b>5.2.2 Food and Beverages Sub Article 5.2.2.1:</b> “The organisation’s kitchen shall be certified halal by competent authority.”</p> <p>4. <b>5.2.3 Public Musalla</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.1:</b> “There shall be allocated public musalla for Muslims at the establishment.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.d:</b> “Has segregated prayer areas for men and women.” c. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.h:</b> “Has segregated wudhu’ facilities for men and women which are adjacent to the musalla.”</p> <p>5. <b>5.2.4 Public Washroom Sub Article 5.2.4.c:</b> “The amenities/products provided in the washroom are suitable for Muslim use.”</p> <p>6. <b>5.3.3. Product Selection Sub Article 5.3.3.2:</b> “The product selection shall not include the premises with the</p>	<p>1. <b>5.2.1.3:</b> “The organisation is recommended to provide friendly services to disabled guest as well.”</p> <p>2. <b>5.3.2 Ground Transfers Sub Article 5.3.2.3:</b> “Upon request, the package shall be able to provide transportation for women guests exclusively.”</p> <p>3. <b>5.4. Tourist guide</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.4.2 Travel Conduct:</b> “Licensed tourist guide shall follow the code of conduct and ethics as imposed by relevant authority.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.4.3:</b> “Licensed tourist guide shall dress a modest and professional dress code as imposed by relevant authority. For female Muslim personnel, wearing a headscarf is highly recommended.” c. <b>Sub Article 5.4.3.2:</b> The licensed tourist guide shall act in courteous manner in accordance with Islamic values</p>	<p>1. <b>5.2.1 – Rooms</b> a. <b>Sub-Article 5.2.1.2c:</b> “Information on prayer times should be available in the room or upon request by the guest.” b. <b>Sub-Article 5.2.1.2d:</b> “A copy of translated al-Quran should be made available upon request by the guest.”</p> <p>2. <b>5.2.2. Food and Beverages Sub Article 5.2.2.2:</b> “The organisation shall ensure that the information on services during Ramadan is available and communicated. The services shall include times and meals for sahur and iftar.”</p> <p>3. <b>5.2.3 Public Musalla:</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.1a:</b> “Located at suitable location and has a signage that dedicated for musalla.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.1.c:</b> “Has a clearly marked kiblat direction verified by a competent authority.” c. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.f:</b> “Has current information on prayer time or upon request.”</p> <p>4. <b>5.3.4 Itinerary:</b> “The itinerary shall have an allocated scheduled time for prayers, sahur and iftar during Ramadan.”</p> <p>5. <b>5.3.6 Food and Beverages Sub Article 5.3.6.2:</b> “If the package does not include food and beverages, upon request, it should provide a list of halal certified restaurants within the vicinity.”</p> <p>6. <b>5.4. Tourist guide</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.4.1 Credentials:</b> “Tourist guides shall possess valid license, skills, language competence and shall meet all legal requirements to give tours in their area.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.4.4 Muslim Friendly Services:</b> “The licensed tourist guide providing Muslim friendly services to the</p>	<p>1. <b>5.2.1 Room</b> a. <b>Sub-Article 5.2.1.1.a:</b> “The room shall be kept clean and well maintained.” b. <b>Sub-Article 5.2.1.1.d:</b> “The washroom shall be equipped with bidet, hand shower or water hose.” c. <b>Sub-Article 5.2.1.1.e:</b> “The washroom floor shall be kept clean.” d. <b>Sub-Article 5.2.1.2.b:</b> “The room should provide clean female prayer garment or be made available upon request.”</p> <p>2. <b>5.2.3 Public Musalla</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.b:</b> “Well-lit with adequate ventilation, is kept clean and well maintained.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.e:</b> “Has sufficient number of sajjada.” c. <b>Sub Article 5.2.3.2.g:</b> “Provides clean female prayer garment or upon request.”</p> <p>3. <b>5.2.4 Public Washroom</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.2.4.a:</b> “The washroom shall be equipped with bidet, hand shower or water hose; the washroom floor shall be kept clean.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.2.4.b:</b> “The washroom floor shall be kept clean.”</p> <p>4. <b>5.2.5 Recreational and Wellness Facilities</b> a. <b>Sub Article 5.2.5.a:</b> “Recreational and wellness facilities shall be kept clean and well maintained.” b. <b>Sub Article 5.2.5.b:</b> “The washroom at the facilities shall be equipped with bidet or hand shower.”</p> <p>5. <b>5.3.5 Facilities:</b> “The travel agent shall ensure that the selected tourism products have the appropriate facilities i.e. musalla, washroom, etc. or easy access to the facilities. The travel agent should ensure the facilities are generally clean and in good condition.”</p>

following core activities: a) manufacturing of non-halal products or related products, for example selling of liquor and pork; b) gambling and gaming; c) pornography; d) entertainment activities that are non-permissible according to Shariah; e) non-Muslim worship places; f) other activities deemed non-permissible according to Shariah

#### 7. 5.3.6 Food and Beverages Sub

##### Article 5.3.6.1:

"The travel agent shall ensure that all food and beverages included in the package are certified halal by competent authority."

customers shall include but not limited to the following: a) Having basic knowledge on the requirements for Muslim travellers; b) Keep the guests informed on their prayer time; c) Facilitate ample time for guests to perform their prayer; d) Ensure all restaurants and eateries are certified halal by competent authority; and e) In the absence of halal food, the tour guide shall provide the guests a list of halal certified eateries

Based on this classification, it can be concluded that MS 2610:2015 places significant emphasis on all aspects of Muslim-friendly accommodation with the following details:

- a. **Spiritual aspect:** the standard emphasizes the provision of worship facilities, such as a prayer room (*musalla*) with a clear qibla direction and complete prayer equipment. It includes detailed guidelines on cleanliness, including the purification process for areas contaminated with *najis mughaladhah* (severe impurity). Each room must feature a qibla indicator and personal care products that are guaranteed to be halal. Additionally, the standard strictly prohibits the storage of intoxicating beverages in room refrigerators. It also specifies the availability of public prayer rooms with separate areas for men and women. MS 2610:2015 underscores the importance of fulfilling the spiritual needs of Muslim travelers by ensuring that accommodation, food, and facilities adhere to Sharia principles while maintaining cleanliness and purity in the environment.
- b. **Emotional aspect:** The standard reflects this aspect through requirements for friendly and attentive service, particularly towards guests with disabilities, to ensure a truly comfortable travel experience. It also addresses the importance of providing female-specific transportation upon request to enhance safety and comfort. Moreover, tour guides are required to follow a code of conduct, dress modestly and professionally according to the applicable guidelines, and behave with courtesy in line with Islamic values. MS 2610:2015 highlights the significance of delivering friendly and considerate service to enhance the emotional experience of Muslim travelers.
- c. **Intellectual aspect:** This aspect is prioritized by ensuring the availability of essential information such as prayer times, suhoor and iftar times during Ramadan, clear qibla indicators, and lists of halal restaurants in travel packages that do not include food. Additionally, tour guides must possess the necessary licenses and skills to provide valuable information about travel services, tourist attractions, or other required information. MS 2610:2015 emphasizes the importance of knowledgeable and competent tour guides and providing clear information about halal food, beverages, and facilities available.
- d. **Physical Aspect:** The standard places a high priority on physical comfort by stressing the importance of cleanliness and maintenance of facilities. Rooms must always be kept clean and well-maintained, equipped with bidets, handheld showers, or water hoses, and bathroom floors must be consistently clean. Public prayer rooms and recreational facilities must be regularly cleaned and provided with adequate equipment, such as prayer mats and women's prayer attire if needed. All facilities, including public restrooms and recreational areas, must be well-equipped and consistently clean. Additionally, travel agents must ensure that the tourism products they offer include suitable facilities, such as prayer rooms and restrooms, or at least easy access to these amenities. MS 2610:2015 sets strict physical standards to ensure the cleanliness and comfort of accommodation facilities.

In summary, MS 2610:2015 provides a comprehensive guide to meeting the diverse needs of Muslim travelers through a holistic approach that covers spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects. The standard ensures that accommodation and facilities are not only compliant with Sharia principles but also designed to enhance a comfortable, safe, and satisfying travel experience.

## 4.4 The Differences Between Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Standards in Indonesia and Malaysia

Indonesia and Malaysia, as leading halal tourism destinations favored by global travelers, have developed Muslim-friendly accommodation standards to attract Muslim tourists. While both countries share this objective, there are significant differences in the implementation of these standards. One major difference lies in the level of formality

in the regulatory framework. Malaysia has established a clear national standard, known as MS 2610:2015, which specifically governs various aspects of Muslim-friendly hospitality services. This standard encompasses facilities such as prayer rooms and halal food provisions, while also outlining service protocols that align with Islamic principles. In contrast, Indonesia faces challenges in establishing an integrated national standard that regulates Muslim-friendly accommodations effectively. Ramadhani (2021) emphasizes the urgent need for expedited regulations specifically governing halal tourism to prevent any further legal gaps concerning halal tourism in Indonesia. While various standards have been established through the fatwas issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), these fatwas lack binding legal authority, resulting in inconsistent implementation across different regions.

In comparison to Malaysia's MS 2610:2015, the fatwa DSN MUI No. 108 of 2016 regarding the organization of sharia tourism offers a broader scope. This fatwa extends beyond hotel accommodations to encompass various other aspects, such as general halal tourism standards, contractual standards, standards for tourists, destination tourism standards, and standards for spa, sauna, and massage services. Additionally, it sets guidelines for travel agencies and tour guides, thereby creating a more comprehensive ecosystem for tourism that adheres to sharia principles. However, the absence of binding regulations presents challenges in the implementation of Muslim-friendly accommodations in Indonesia, which could affect the enforcement of standards, oversight, and overall tourist experiences.

Another difference concerning the halal hospitality standards in both countries lies in the approach utilized in the formulation of accommodation guidelines. The fatwa DSN-MUI employs a more general approach and lacks a clear and specific framework. In contrast, MS 2610:2015 contains more practical and specific guidelines, making it applicable as a global reference for halal accommodations. However, the general approach found in the MUI fatwa can be more flexible and adaptive, allowing it to be tailored to the diverse religious and cultural contexts of different regions or countries. This adaptability is particularly relevant given Indonesia's more pluralistic and multicultural social fabric compared to Malaysia. This approach aligns with the principles of political communication, as explained by Tarigan (2020) which emphasizes that effective communication is essential for facilitating adaptation to various social contexts.

Additionally, regarding the hospitality aspects implemented in both countries, Malaysia pays more attention to emotional dimensions compared to Indonesia. The MS 2610:2015 emphasizes the importance of services for individuals with disabilities and the provision of dedicated transportation for female tourists when needed. In contrast, the accommodation standards in Indonesia do not explicitly address these elements, indicating an opportunity for Indonesia to enhance its focus on the emotional needs of travelers. By integrating such considerations, Indonesia could improve the overall experience for Muslim tourists, aligning with global best practices in halal tourism and hospitality.

Here's a table comparing the halal tourism standards and approaches in Indonesia and Malaysia based on the previous explanation:

Aspect	Malaysia	Indonesia
Regulatory Framework	Established MS 2610:2015 as a clear national standard	Faces challenges in creating an integrated national standard
Scope of Standards	Specific to hospitality services	Broader scope with fatwa DSN MUI No. 108:2016 covering various aspects of sharia tourism
Legal Authority	MS 2610: 2015 has binding authority	Fatwas lack binding legal authority, leading to inconsistent implementation
Approach to Guidelines	Practical and specific guidelines	More general approach
Flexibility and Adaptability	Less adaptable to diverse contexts	More flexible, allowing adaptation to local cultures
Attention to Emotional Aspects	Emphasizes services for disabled individuals and special transport for women	Does not explicitly address these aspects

In conclusion, the differences in halal tourism standards between Indonesia and Malaysia reflect not only the varying levels of regulatory formalism but also the distinct cultural and social contexts of each country.

## 5. Conclusion

As a final point, the examination of Muslim-friendly accommodation standards in Indonesia and Malaysia highlights both countries' commitment to promoting halal tourism while revealing fundamental differences in their regulatory approaches. Malaysia's MS 2610:2015 provides a structured and clear framework that explicitly governs various aspects of hospitality services, offering guidance aligned with Islamic principles. In contrast, Indonesia's reliance on non-binding fatwas from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) poses challenges, leading to variability in implementation across regions and a lack of cohesive national standards. The broader scope of DSN MUI No. 108 of 2016 in Indonesia, while commendable for its inclusivity, lacks the necessary enforcement mechanisms to ensure uniformity within the tourism sector. The flexibility of the MUI fatwa allows for adaptation to local contexts but may also result in uncertainty in execution, especially considering Indonesia's diverse cultural and religious landscape.

Both standards aim to enhance the halal tourism experience, yet their differing approaches and implementation details reflect each country's unique cultural and legal contexts. Malaysia's emphasis on emotional dimensions in hospitality, particularly in providing services for individuals with disabilities and dedicated transportation for female tourists, offers valuable lessons for Indonesia. By prioritizing these aspects, Indonesia could significantly improve the overall experience for Muslim travellers, aligning with global best practices in halal tourism. The evolution of these halal tourism standards also presents opportunities for both nations to learn from one another, thereby enhancing their competitiveness in the global tourism market.

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## Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the paper.

## Author Contribution

All authors confirm contribution to the paper. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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