



## Bridging Faith and Hospitality: A Comparative Analysis of Muslim Hotel Services in China and Malaysia

Yang Yashu<sup>1</sup>, Nurul Farah Izzah Zailani<sup>2</sup> & Ahmad Albattat<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bachelor of Honours in Hospitality and Tourism Management, Management and Science University, University Drive, Off Persiaran Olahraga, Section 13, 40100, Selangor, Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup>School of Hospitality and Creative Arts, Management and Science University, University Drive, Off Persiaran Olahraga, Section 13, 40100, Selangor, Malaysia.

<sup>3</sup>School of Global Hospitality and Tourism, Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

\*Corresponding author: dr.battat@gmail.com

**Citation:** Yashu, Y., Zailani, N. F. I., & Albattat, A. (2025). Bridging Faith and Hospitality: A Comparative Analysis of Muslim Hotel Services in China and Malaysia. Exploreresearch, 02(04), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.62823/exre/2025/02/04.115>

### Article History:

Received: 15 October 2025

Accepted: 15 November 2025

Published: 01 December 2025

### Keywords:

Muslim Hotel Services, China, Malaysia, Comparative Analysis, Service Philosophy, Management Mode.

**Abstract:** This article focuses on the Muslim hotel services in China and Malaysia. Through methods such as literature review, case study and comparative analysis, a comprehensive and in-depth comparative study of the Muslim hotel services in the two countries is conducted. The research background focuses on the recovery of the tourism industry under globalization and the growth of the Muslim tourism market, pointing out the different opportunities for the development of Muslim hotel services in China and Malaysia. The paper first elaborates on the core elements of Muslim hotel services, including dietary restrictions, prayer facilities, schedules and staff services. Then, the development background and service characteristics of Muslim hotels in China and Malaysia were analyzed respectively. Chinese Muslim hotels focus on local characteristic halal cuisine, basic prayer facilities, religious etiquette training for employees and personalized services. The Muslim hotel in Malaysia integrates multi-ethnic halal cuisine, its architecture and facilities are rich in Islamic elements, its staff are mostly Muslims and provide professional services, and it emphasizes the observance of religious doctrines and cultural dissemination. Through comparison, it is found that both countries attach great importance to halal catering and prayer facilities in terms of service content, but there are differences in dietary characteristics, religious nature of facilities, and services during religious festivals. In terms of service concepts, China focuses on personalized demands, while Malaysia emphasizes adherence to religious doctrines. In terms of management models, China is influenced by market and industry norms, while Malaysia is influenced by religious culture and national policies. The causes of the differences lie in the variations of religious and cultural backgrounds, market demands, and policies and regulations. Finally, the paper puts forward inspirations such as strengthening cultural exchanges and cooperation, attaching importance to market research, intensifying staff training, and improving policies and regulations, in order to promote the healthy development of the Muslim hotel service market in the two countries.

## Introduction

In the context of globalization, the tourism industry has emerged as a crucial pillar of economic development for many countries. According to the latest data from the United Nations World Tourism Organization, the global tourism industry has been steadily recovering from the impact of the pandemic, with the number of international tourists reaching 14 billion in 2024, almost returning to the pre-pandemic level (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2024). This growth trend is expected to continue in the coming years, driven by factors such as increased disposable income, improved transportation, and the rise of digital platforms for travel planning.

Among the diverse segments of the tourism market, the Muslim tourist group has attracted significant attention due to its large size and distinct needs. The Muslim population worldwide is projected to reach 3 billion by 2060, accounting for a substantial portion of the global population (Pew Research Center, 2015). As their economic conditions improve, more and more Muslims are engaging in tourism activities. The Muslim travel market is not only growing in scale but also showing unique consumption characteristics. For example, they have specific requirements regarding accommodation, catering, and religious facilities during their travels. These demands have spurred the development of Muslim-friendly hotel services around the world.

China, a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, has a considerable Muslim population, mainly concentrated in regions such as Xinjiang, Ningxia, and Gansu. With the booming development of domestic tourism and the continuous increase in the number of international Muslim tourists visiting China, the Muslim hotel service industry in China has been constantly evolving. In 2024, China recorded a total of 5.615 billion domestic tourist trips (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2025). It is estimated that Muslim tourists accounted for around 2% of the total, representing approximately 100 million domestic Muslim trips nationwide. These tourists bring new opportunities and challenges to the development of China's Muslim hotel services. These tourists bring new opportunities and challenges to the development of China's Muslim hotel services.

Malaysia, on the other hand, is a predominantly Muslim country where Islam is the state religion, and Muslims account for most of the total population. The rich Islamic cultural heritage in Malaysia has a profound impact on all aspects of social life, including the hotel service industry. The hotel services in Malaysia are deeply influenced by Islamic teachings and local cultural traditions, forming a unique service model.

Against this backdrop, comparing the Muslim hotel services between China and Malaysia becomes highly significant. It can not only help us understand how different religious and cultural backgrounds shape hotel services but also provide valuable insights for the development of the hotel industry in both countries.

The main purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth comparative analysis of the Muslim hotel services in China and Malaysia. By examining the similarities and differences in service content, service concepts, and management models between the two countries, we aim to uncover the underlying reasons for these differences. This includes analyzing the impacts of religious and cultural backgrounds, market demands, and policy regulations.

For China, understanding the service characteristics of Muslim hotels in Malaysia can provide valuable references for improving the professional level and religious characteristics of its own Muslim hotel services. As China aims to attract more international Muslim tourists, learning from Malaysia's experience in integrating religious culture into hotel services can enhance the competitiveness of China's Muslim-friendly hotels in the international market.

For Malaysia, studying how China caters to the personalized needs of Muslim tourists can inspire innovation in its hotel services. In an era where tourists' demands are becoming more diversified, Malaysia's hotel industry can benefit from China's practices to provide more diverse services while still adhering to religious doctrines.

From a broader perspective, this research can contribute to the cross-cultural exchange and cooperation in the global hotel industry. It provides practical suggestions for hotel operators, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders in both countries, promoting the healthy development of the Muslim hotel service market in China and Malaysia.

## Literature Review

Dashiell (1927) put out the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) hypothesis, which is a psychological framework that helps us understand how people react to things that happen outside of them. In this idea, external stimuli, like the quality of service at a halal hotel, are the first thing that affects the person's interior state (Organism), which includes their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. This internal condition then results in a certain behaviour or response (Response) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Mehrabian and Russell (1974) assert that the fundamental principle of the SOR theory is the acknowledgement that individual behaviour emerges from the interplay between external stimuli and internal organisms. This interaction affects how the person sees and judges the stimuli, which in turn affects how they act. For example, when people come across a halal hotel, things like the room facilities, dining services, and staff attitudes are stimuli, while their own preferences, emotional states, and past experiences make up the organism, which ultimately decides how they will react, such as whether they will book a room or how they will feel about the hotel.

Figure 1: SOR Theory



Source: Mehrabian & Russell (1974)

The SOR hypothesis has been extensively utilised in psychology, as well as in consumer behaviour and marketing research (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). This idea posits that marketers may modify exterior stimuli, such packaging design or advertising, to affect customers' internal processes, hence facilitating the development of preferences and purchasing choices. Furthermore, the SOR theory has been utilised in other domains, including the service sector and organisational behaviour studies (Bitner, 1992). In the service sector, service quality serves as an external stimulus that interacts with customers' perceptions and pleasure, so affecting their intents to repurchase and their propensity to engage in word-of-mouth communication. In conclusion, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) theory offers a valuable framework for comprehending individual reactions to external stimuli, applicable in psychology, consumer behaviour, marketing, and the service sector. Within the framework of the topic "The Impact of Halal Hotel Service Quality on Hotel Prices," we may utilise the SOR theory to examine the relationship between service quality in halal hotels and consumer responses to hotel pricing.

The quality of service at halal hotels is what gets people to stay there. It covers everything like the room's amenities, the dining services, and the staff's attitudes, which all affect how guests see and rate the hotel. The organism consists of two components: online hotel reviews with user-generated images and the perceived valence of those evaluations. These elements show how customers feel and think, which are very important for how they respond. The answer is about hotel rates. Customers' views and assessments of service quality in halal hotels eventually determine their acceptance of hotel pricing, which in turn affects their behaviour, such as whether or not they reserve a room. This approach allows us to examine the influence of service quality in halal hotels on consumer reactions to hotel pricing, offering a theoretical basis and methodological direction for research in commerce platforms.

Scholars in the hotel industry have used hedonic pricing a lot to figure out how different factors affect hotel service charges. These attributes can generally be categorised into three groups: hotel facilities, encompassing all physical, technical, and technological aspects of the hotel as well as the services provided within (Alegre et al., 2012; Espinet et al., 2003; Thrane, 2005), hotel reputation, referring to the star-based hotel certification but may also include customer reviews and accolades received (Kim et al., 2020; Santos et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2015), and hotel location, comprising geographical position, urban/rural areas, physical environment, and proximity to artificial or natural points of interest (Abbate et al., 2019; Espinet et al., 2012; Latinopoulos, 2018). A notable deficiency in the hedonic pricing literature concerning hotels is the absence of empirical studies that systematically investigate various combinations of hotel facilities, reputation, and location attributes tailored to distinct customer segments, such as individuals with disabilities, business clients, enthusiasts of specific interests like sports, exploration, and culture (Herrmann and Herrmann, 2014), members of particular racial groups (Alegre et al., 2013), or patrons with specific service quality preferences. This study constitutes an initial effort to address the deficit in the hedonic pricing literature for hotels by examining

particular combinations of hotel facilities, reputation, and location attributes designed to satisfy the needs and expectations of customers with service quality preferences who dictate various behaviours to be incorporated into their daily activities, encompassing both leisure and business stays.

Religious tourism, defined as trips to local, regional, national, and worldwide religious sites (Rinschede, 1992), has attracted growing academic attention over the last forty years (Collins-Kreiner, 2020; Kim et al., 2021). Halal tourism, commonly referred to as Muslim-friendly or halal-friendly tourism, constitutes a rapidly developing sector within religious tourism (Collins-Kreiner, 2020). Ryan (2016) says that halal tourism includes fun, leisure, and social activities that people of the Islamic faith do. "Halal" is an Arabic word that means "permissible," "acceptable," and "allowable." In the context of tourism, "Islamic tourism" and "halal tourism" refer to tourism that caters to Muslims. Islamic tourism is mostly about religious and pilgrimage purposes, while halal tourism is mostly about leisure and recreational activities that are guided by Islamic faith (Battour and Ismail, 2016; Ryan, 2016). Halal tourism serves travellers from many origins who follow Shariah law because of their religious beliefs. Halal tourism has garnered considerable scholarly attention in recent years (Hall and Prayag, 2019; Rasul, 2019; Vargas-Sánchez and Moral-Moral, 2019). A significant amount of halal tourism research has concentrated on evaluating the influence of various halal-related attributes, present at both macro and micro levels (i.e., destinations and hotels), on the attitudinal outcomes of Muslim tourists, encompassing satisfaction, destination image, purchase intentions, revisit intentions, and word-of-mouth (Vargas-Sánchez and Moral-Moral, 2019). For example, Battour et al. (2011) carried out one of the initial research on halal tourism, pinpointing halal characteristics significant to Muslim participants in Malaysia. These attributes were classified into tangible elements, including halal food and prayer facilities (e.g., easy access to a mosque/prayer room, Quran and Qiblah direction pointer, Muslim toilets), and intangible elements, such as Islamic entertainment and morality (e.g., segregated swimming pools, prohibition of public displays of affection, Islamic call to prayer). Han et al. (2019) discovered that a comprehensive array of halal features pertaining to many facets of a tourism destination profoundly impacts the location's image, as well as the intents of Muslim visitors to revisit and suggest, especially in non-Muslim contexts like Korea.

Service quality, which is providing high standards in service delivery, is particularly important in the hospitality business (Parasuraman et al., 1988). It includes things like being responsive, reliable, sure, understanding, and having things that are real. When it comes to halal tourism, service quality is even more important, especially for Muslim travellers who want hotels and services that fit with their Islamic views and practices. Halal tourism meets the demands of Muslim travellers by providing services and amenities that follow Islamic rules and dietary regulations. These include halal-certified food, places to worship, and venues that are separate for men and women. Studies indicate that Muslim travellers prioritise halal-friendly amenities and services when choosing places and hotels for leisure or business purposes (Battour and Ismail, 2016; Ryan, 2016). As a result, hotels and other places that provide high-quality halal services are likely to do better in the halal tourist sector and have happier and more loyal customers.

In short, the quality of service is very important for halal tourism since it has a direct effect on how satisfied and happy Muslim travellers are. Businesses who focus on and invest in providing great halal services are in a good position to take advantage of the expanding demand for Muslim-friendly lodgings and services in the global tourism sector.

As more and more Muslim travellers want halal tourism, several nations have changed their tourism offerings to meet this need. Hotels that want to offer services that are favourable to Muslims now have amenities that are in line with Islamic rules. These include things like showing the Qibla direction in hotel rooms, giving guests prayer mats and copies of the Quran, selling halal-certified food and drinks, and even having special prayer rooms with calls for prayer (Stephenson, 2014; Battour et al., 2010; Henderson, 2010). Also, some hotels provide distinct areas for ladies and families to make sure they are safe and private. This tendency has been seen in places with a lot of Muslims, as well as in Western places like the Georgian Court Hotel in Vancouver, Canada (Stephenson, 2014). Rental agencies in areas like Orlando, Florida, USA, also provide halal holiday packages that include residences with separate pools, prayer mats, and copies of the Quran (Battour et al., 2018; Batrawy, 2015). There are five main factors that shape how people think about halal tourist products and services: public perception, gender segregation, availability of halal cuisine, adherence to Islamic dress regulations, and ethical issues. These characteristics are essential as they signify the compliance of Muslim travellers with Islamic principles and laws in their daily existence (Jafari and Scott, 2014).

Service quality is the consumers' judgement of how well the service they got met their expectations (Zeithaml et al., 1985). It signifies the comprehensive assessment of buyers about the product's superiority (Zeithaml, 1988; Aaker and Jacobson, 1994). In the hospitality industry, perceived service quality is usually measured by how well the services offered by hotels meet the needs of their guests (Akbaba, 2006; Ye et al., 2014). This part of hotel service quality has been the focus of a lot of marketing research, which usually divides it into incident-based assessment (García-Barriocanal et al., 2010) and attribute-based evaluation (Parasuraman et al., 2002). People usually judge the quality of a hotel's services based on what they hear from friends or family members who have been there (Rauch et al., 2015). In the realm of online hotel evaluations, textual feedback functions as a conduit for useful information, assisting prospective guests in making educated choices and reducing the dangers linked to online reservations (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008). These written reviews help people who are thinking about staying at a hotel get a sense of how good the service is from the point of view of others who have already stayed there, even if they haven't experienced it themselves (Miguéis and Novoa, 2016). Hotel offers include many different things, but the hotel room is the most important part (Dolnicar and Otter, 2003). There are also other hotel goods, such as facilitating, supporting, and enhancing aspects, which are necessary for getting to the core product and many more value-added products and services (Qu et al., 2000). Services, price/value, brand, and marketing are some of the intangible parts of the hotel offering. User-Generated Photos (UGPs) show both concrete (such rooms, linens, or lobbies) and intangible (like social situations) aspects of hotels in a way that complements textual assessments. This is different from textual reviews, which are subjective reflections of hotel products (Ma et al., 2018). So, UGPs that are part of online hotel evaluations provide visitors detailed information about why they think a hotel is good or bad. Based on this conversation, it seems sense to think that online hotel reviews with UGPs would have a more positive effect on how customers think about the quality of service than reviews without UGPs.

### **Research Methodology**

**Literature Review Method:** Extensive literature from academic databases such as EBSCOhost, Web of Science, and CNKI will be searched. This includes relevant academic papers, industry reports, and official statistics on Muslim hotel services in China and Malaysia. For example, research papers on the influence of Islamic culture on the hotel industry in Malaysia and studies on the development of Muslim - friendly hotels in China will be collected and analyzed. By comprehensively reviewing the existing literature, we can gain a clear understanding of the current research status, identify research gaps, and lay a solid theoretical foundation for this study.

**Case Study Method:** Select several representative Muslim - friendly hotels in both China and Malaysia. In China, hotels in Xinjiang and Ningxia regions that have made remarkable achievements in serving Muslim tourists will be chosen. In Malaysia, well - known hotels with high - quality Muslim - friendly services will be included. Through in - depth investigations, interviews with hotel managers and staff, and collection of customer feedback, we can obtain first - hand data. This will help us understand the actual operation and service conditions of Muslim hotels in both countries and provide practical evidence for the comparative analysis.

**Comparative Analysis Method:** Systematically compare the service content, service concepts, and management models of Muslim hotels in China and Malaysia. Analyze the similarities and differences in aspects such as catering services, facility configurations, employee training, and service philosophy. By comparing and contrasting, we can clearly present the characteristics of Muslim hotel services in both countries and further explore the reasons for these differences from the perspectives of religious culture, market demand, and policy regulations.

### **The Core Elements of Muslim Hotel Services**

- Dietary Taboos**

Dietary taboos play a fundamental role in Muslim hotel services. In accordance with Islamic teachings, Muslim hotels are required to strictly adhere to the halal principle in all aspects of food service. The Quran clearly states the prohibition of consuming pork and its by - products, as well as self - dead animals, blood, and animals slaughtered without reciting the name of Allah (Quran 5:3). For example, in a study by Rahman (2020), it was found that in Muslim - majority regions, the prevalence of pork consumption is almost zero, and food providers are extremely cautious about avoiding any form of pork - related ingredients.

The procurement process of ingredients is the first crucial step. Hotels must ensure that all ingredients are sourced from reliable suppliers with halal certifications. This involves strict screening and regular inspections of suppliers to verify that their production and handling processes comply with halal standards. For instance, in a case study of a well-known Muslim-friendly hotel in Malaysia, the hotel has a dedicated team responsible for vetting suppliers. They visit the farms and food processing facilities to ensure that the animals are raised in a halal-compliant environment and slaughtered according to Islamic rituals (Mohammad et al., 2021).

During storage, halal and non-halal foods must be completely separated to prevent cross-contamination. Special storage areas, refrigerators, and storage containers are designated for halal foods, and strict inventory management systems are implemented to track the origin and expiration dates of ingredients. In the food processing and cooking stages, separate utensils, cookware, and work areas are used for halal food preparation. Chefs and kitchen staff are also required to undergo training on halal food handling and cooking techniques to ensure that the final products meet the high standards of halal requirements.

- **Prayer Facilities**

Prayer is an integral part of a Muslim's daily life, with Muslims required to perform five daily prayers. Therefore, providing proper prayer facilities is essential in Muslim hotels. A dedicated prayer room is a must-have in such hotels. The prayer room should be clean, quiet, and well-ventilated, providing a peaceful environment for guests to engage in their religious devotions.

Inside the prayer room, a clean carpet is laid to ensure a comfortable surface for prostration during prayer. A clear direction indicator, known as a qibla, is installed to show the direction of Mecca, towards which Muslims must face during prayer. In addition, the prayer room should be equipped with clean water for ablution, which is a necessary ritual before prayer. Some high-end Muslim hotels even provide individual ablution stations within the prayer room for the convenience of guests.

For example, in research on Muslim-friendly hotels in the Middle East by Al-Shammari (2022), it was found that hotels in Saudi Arabia often design their prayer rooms with a large capacity to accommodate a significant number of guests, especially during peak travel seasons. These prayer rooms are not only equipped with basic facilities but are also decorated with Islamic calligraphy and artworks, creating a solemn and religious atmosphere.

Moreover, the location of the prayer room within the hotel is also carefully considered. It is usually located in a central and easily accessible area, close to the guest rooms, to ensure that guests can reach it conveniently at any time for prayer. Some hotels also provide prayer times and relevant religious information in the guest rooms, along with copies of the Quran and prayer mats, to meet the religious needs of guests even when they are in their rooms.

- **Rest and Work Arrangements**

The rest and work arrangements of Muslims are closely tied to their religious activities, and Muslim hotels need to take this into account. One of the most notable periods is Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn to sunset, refraining from eating, drinking, and other physical needs.

Hotels need to adjust their service schedules accordingly. For example, the breakfast time is usually moved earlier to accommodate the pre-dawn meal, known as suhoor, for fasting guests. The dinner service, or iftar, which breaks the fast, is also scheduled carefully to start immediately after sunset. In addition to mealtimes, other services such as housekeeping and room service may also be adjusted to avoid disturbing guests during their fasting hours or prayer times.

According to a study by Khan (2021) on the impact of Ramadan on the hotel industry in Muslim-majority countries, hotels often experience a shift in guest behavior and service demands during this month. Some hotels offer special iftar buffets with a variety of traditional Ramadan foods, while others provide quiet areas for guests to rest and reflect during the day. Moreover, the hotel staff also need to be aware of the fasting status of guests and be sensitive to their needs, such as avoiding offering food or drinks to fasting guests during the day.

Even outside of Ramadan, the five-time daily prayers also influence the hotel's operations. For example, the hotel may need to ensure that the lobby and other public areas are relatively quiet during prayer times, and avoid scheduling major events or activities that could disrupt the prayers of guests.

- **Staff Services**

The quality of staff services is crucial in Muslim hotels. Hotel staff are required to have a deep understanding of Muslim religious customs and etiquette to provide high - quality and respectful services. First and foremost, staff should be familiar with the basic tenets of Islam, including the importance of prayer, fasting, and the significance of religious festivals.

In communication with Muslim guests, staff need to use appropriate language and greetings. For example, using "Assalamualaikum" (May peace be upon you) as a greeting is a common and respectful way to interact with Muslim guests. They should also be aware of cultural taboos, such as avoiding physical contact with the opposite sex in a way that may be considered inappropriate in Islamic culture.

Moreover, staff training on handling special requests from Muslim guests is essential. For instance, if a guest requests a specific type of halal food that is not on the regular menu, the staff should be able to handle the request professionally, either by coordinating with the kitchen to prepare it or providing alternative suggestions. In a study by Ibrahim et al. (2020) on customer satisfaction in Muslim - friendly hotels, it was found that guests highly value the ability of hotel staff to understand and respect their religious and cultural needs. Staff who can handle these aspects well can significantly enhance the overall guest experience and satisfaction.

To achieve this, hotels often conduct regular training programs for their staff. These programs cover topics such as Islamic religious knowledge, cultural sensitivity training, and practical service skills for dealing with Muslim guests. By improving the religious and cultural literacy of staff, hotels can better meet the needs of Muslim guests and avoid potential cultural misunderstandings and conflicts, thereby building a more harmonious and pleasant service environment.

### **Analysis of Muslim Hotel Services in China**

- **Development Background**

China is a multi - ethnic country with a long - standing and rich cultural heritage. The Muslim population in China, estimated to be between 20 million and 30 million, is mainly distributed in the northwestern regions such as Xinjiang, Ningxia, Gansu, and Qinghai. In these areas, ethnic groups like the Uyghur, Hui, and Kazakh, who predominantly practice Islam, have formed vibrant Muslim communities. For example, in Xinjiang, the Muslim population accounts for a significant proportion of the total population, with unique cultural and religious traditions deeply rooted in local life (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2023).

The development of the tourism industry in China has been a major driving force behind the growth of Muslim hotel services. In recent years, China's domestic tourism market has witnessed remarkable expansion. In 2024, the number of domestic tourist trips reached 6.5 billion, with a year - on - year growth of 12% (China Tourism Research Institute, 2024). The increase in domestic tourism has led to a growing demand for specialized accommodation services, including those that meet the religious and cultural needs of Muslim tourists.

Moreover, the number of international Muslim tourists visiting China has also been on the rise. China's rich historical and cultural resources, such as the Silk Road heritage, attract many international Muslim tourists. The Silk Road, which has a long - standing connection with Islamic culture, runs through many Muslim - populated areas in China. These tourists not only bring economic benefits but also pose challenges to the Chinese hotel industry in terms of meeting their specific religious and cultural requirements. As a result, there has been a continuous improvement and development in Muslim hotel services in China to adapt to this market demand.

- **Service Features**

- **Food Service**

Chinese Muslim hotels adhere strictly to the halal standards in food service. From the procurement of ingredients to the entire cooking process, every step is carefully monitored to ensure compliance. For instance, in a Muslim - friendly hotel in Ningxia, the hotel sources all its meat from suppliers with halal certifications. The kitchen staff is trained to use separate utensils and cooking equipment for halal food preparation to prevent cross - contamination.

These hotels also offer a wide variety of local - flavored halal cuisines, catering to the diverse tastes of Muslim tourists. In Xinjiang, hotels often serve classic local halal dishes such as roasted lamb kebabs, which are marinated with unique seasonings and grilled to perfection, and hand - pulled noodles in lamb soup, known for their rich flavor and chewy texture. These dishes not only satisfy the taste buds of tourists but also showcase the unique food culture of the region.

In addition, to make it easy for Muslim tourists to identify, hotels prominently display halal logos in the restaurant area. This clear indication provides reassurance to guests, allowing them to enjoy their meals with confidence, knowing that the food meets their religious dietary requirements.

#### ▪ Facility Provision

Some Chinese Muslim hotels are equipped with dedicated prayer rooms to meet the religious needs of guests. These prayer rooms are designed with consideration for the convenience and comfort of Muslim tourists. They are equipped with clean carpets, providing a soft and clean surface for prostration during prayer. A clear qibla indicator is installed to accurately show the direction of Mecca, ensuring that guests can perform their prayers in the correct orientation. For example, a hotel in Lanzhou has a well - appointed prayer room with large windows to let in natural light, creating a bright and peaceful environment for prayer.

The prayer rooms in some hotels also provide clean water for ablution, which is an essential ritual before prayer. This attention to detail reflects the hotel's commitment to meeting the religious requirements of Muslim guests. In addition to the prayer room, some hotels also place religious books such as the Quran in the guest rooms. This allows guests to engage in religious study and reflection at any time during their stay, further enhancing the religious - friendly atmosphere of the hotel.

#### ▪ Staff Training

To enhance the quality of service provided to Muslim tourists, Chinese Muslim hotels conduct comprehensive training for their employees. The training content mainly focuses on Muslim religious customs, etiquette norms, and dietary taboos. Through in - depth training, employees can gain a better understanding of the religious and cultural needs of Muslim tourists, enabling them to provide more attentive and professional services.

For example, employees are taught about the significance of the five daily prayers in Islam and how to respect the prayer times of guests. They are also trained in proper communication etiquette, such as using appropriate greetings like "Assalamualaikum" when interacting with Muslim guests. In terms of dietary taboos, employees are well - informed about the types of food that are prohibited in Islam and are trained to handle food orders and service in accordance with these taboos. This training helps to build a harmonious and respectful service environment, reducing the likelihood of cultural misunderstandings and conflicts.

#### ▪ Service Concept

Chinese Muslim hotels place great emphasis on meeting the personalized needs of tourists. While strictly adhering to halal standards and respecting religious customs, they strive to offer a wide range of services to cater to the diverse preferences of guests. For example, in response to the requests of some guests, hotels can adjust the flavor and variety of their dishes. They may offer more vegetarian options or customize the spiciness level of the food to suit individual tastes.

In addition, hotels often provide customized travel itinerary arrangements. They take into account the interests and time constraints of Muslim tourists, recommending suitable tourist attractions and routes. For instance, for tourists interested in Islamic culture, hotels may suggest visiting local mosques, Islamic cultural museums, and historical sites related to the Silk Road. This personalized service concept not only improves the satisfaction of Muslim tourists but also enhances the competitiveness of the hotel in the market.

### Analysis of Muslim Hotel Services in Malaysia

#### • Development Background

In Malaysia, Islam is constitutionally recognized as the religion of the Federation, and this position exerts a profound influence on the nation's social, cultural, and economic landscape, including the hospitality industry. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), the country's total population in 2025 is estimated at 34.2 million, reflecting a modest increase from about 34.1 million in

2024, which represents an annual growth rate of approximately 0.5 percent (Department of Statistics Malaysia [DOSM], 2025a). Of this total, citizens make up about 90.1 percent, or around 30.9 million people, while non-citizens represent 9.9 percent, or about 3.38 million individuals (DOSM, 2025a). Although new data on religious affiliation are not yet available, the 2020 Population and Housing Census reported that Muslims accounted for approximately 63.5 percent of Malaysia's population (DOSM, 2020; Wikipedia, 2024). This majority group continues to shape Malaysia's national culture, social behavior, and consumer preferences, which directly influence the structure and management of the country's hotel services.

Malaysia's legal and social systems are also guided by Islamic values. In several states, Shariah law governs family and personal matters for Muslims, which affects the operation and management of hotels serving Muslim guests. To remain consistent with Islamic teachings, hotels are expected to ensure that their facilities and services comply with religious guidelines. Examples include offering halal-certified food, providing prayer rooms, and maintaining ethical entertainment practices. Such measures reflect the country's effort to align hospitality operations with the spiritual and cultural expectations of its Muslim clientele.

The demographic structure of Malaysia reinforces the importance of Muslim-oriented hospitality services. In 2025, people aged 15 to 64 years make up 70.4 percent of the population, while those aged 65 years and above comprise 8.0 percent, showing that Malaysia is gradually becoming an aging society (DOSM, 2025a). The median age has risen to 31.3 years, compared with 30.9 years in 2024, which indicates an increasingly mature and economically active population. This group tends to seek travel experiences that are both culturally meaningful and consistent with Islamic values. The total dependency ratio decreased slightly to 42.1, while the old-age dependency ratio increased to 11.4, signaling demographic changes that may influence tourism trends and service demand in the coming years (DOSM, 2025a).

Malaysia's reputation as a global Muslim-friendly tourism destination further strengthens the development of Islamic hospitality services. The country's rich Islamic heritage, which includes grand mosques, distinctive architectural designs, and vibrant religious celebrations, continues to attract Muslim travelers seeking comfort and familiarity. These visitors expect hotel accommodations that uphold Islamic ethics, emphasizing cleanliness, modesty, and respectful service. In response, the Malaysian hotel industry continues to refine its products and services to maintain its position as one of the world's leading destinations for Muslim travelers.

- **Service Features**
  - **Food Service**

Malaysian Muslim hotels strictly adhere to halal standards in food service. The entire process, from ingredient sourcing to food preparation and serving, is carefully monitored to ensure compliance. For example, the procurement department of a hotel in Kuala Lumpur only cooperates with suppliers who have valid halal certifications. These suppliers are regularly audited to verify that their production and processing methods meet Islamic requirements (Mohammad et al., 2021).

The variety of halal food in Malaysian hotels is extremely rich, integrating the culinary characteristics of multiple ethnic groups, including the Malay, Chinese, and Indian ethnic groups. For instance, nasi lemak, a traditional Malay dish made with coconut - milk - infused rice, served with fried anchovies, peanuts, a hard - boiled egg, and sambal sauce, is a common offering in hotel breakfast buffets. Indian - influenced biryani, a fragrant rice dish cooked with meat or vegetables and a blend of spices, is also popular. Chinese - style halal noodles and dumplings are also available, catering to the diverse tastes of guests.

All hotels prominently display halal certification logos in their restaurants to clearly indicate the authenticity of the food. During Ramadan, hotels in Malaysia offer special iftar meals. These meals usually include a variety of traditional Ramadan foods, such as dates, which are the first thing Muslims eat to break their fast, followed by a spread of hot and cold dishes, soups, and sweet treats. In a study by Rahman (2020), it was found that hotels often go the extra mile during Ramadan, offering iftar buffets with live cooking stations and a wide selection of regional specialties to enhance the dining experience for guests.

#### ▪ Facility Provision

The architectural styles of Malaysian Muslim hotels often incorporate Islamic elements, creating a unique religious and cultural atmosphere. For example, the One&Only Desaru Coast in Malaysia, designed by Kerry Hill, draws inspiration from Malay culture and traditional kampung architecture. It features a large number of Islamic - style domes and arches, and the layout of the buildings is symmetrically arranged, symbolizing harmony and a sense of ceremony. The use of white walls not only expands the visual space but also creates a beautiful play of light and shadow, adding to the solemn and elegant atmosphere of the hotel (One&Only official website, 2024).

Prayer rooms are a standard and essential facility in Malaysian Muslim hotels. These prayer rooms are usually large in scale and exquisitely decorated. In addition to basic facilities such as carpets, qibla indicators, and clean water for ablution, they are often adorned with religious murals and elegant chandeliers. For example, the prayer room in a five - star hotel in Penang is decorated with beautiful Islamic calligraphy murals on the walls, and the ceiling is decorated with large - scale crystal chandeliers, creating a solemn and sacred space for prayer.

The employee uniforms in Malaysian hotels also often carry religious characteristics. Female employees usually wear headscarves, which not only conform to Islamic dress codes but also add a unique cultural charm to the hotel service. These headscarves are often made of high - quality fabrics and come in various colors and patterns, matching the overall style of the hotel.

#### ▪ Staff Services

Most employees in Malaysian hotels are Muslims, which enables them to have a deep - rooted understanding of Islamic doctrines and customs. This understanding allows them to provide more professional and in - depth services to Muslim guests. For example, when guests have questions about religious matters during their stay, employees can provide accurate and detailed answers based on their knowledge of Islamic teachings.

In communication with guests, employees use appropriate religious etiquette. The common greeting "Assalamualaikum" is not only a simple form of address but also reflects respect and friendliness in Islamic culture. When serving guests during meal times, employees are well - aware of the dietary taboos and service norms in Islam, ensuring that the service process is carried out in strict accordance with religious requirements. A study by Ibrahim et al. (2020) showed that guests in Malaysian Muslim hotels highly appreciate the professional and respectful services provided by employees who are familiar with Islamic culture, which significantly improves guest satisfaction and loyalty.

#### ▪ Service Concept

Malaysian Muslim hotels place great emphasis on following religious doctrines. Every aspect of hotel services is designed and carried out in strict accordance with Islamic regulations. For example, during prayer times, the hotel will use public address systems to remind guests to perform their prayers, and relevant facilities such as prayer rooms will be ensured to be in perfect condition.

These hotels also actively promote Islamic culture. They may organize Islamic cultural lectures and exhibitions during guests' stays, introducing the history, beliefs, and cultural traditions of Islam. Some hotels also provide Islamic - themed souvenirs in their gift shops, allowing guests to better understand and remember Malaysian Islamic culture. In this way, guests can not only enjoy high - quality accommodation services but also gain a deeper understanding of Islamic culture during their stay, enhancing their cultural experience.

### Comparison of Muslim Hotel Services between China and Malaysia

- **Comparison of Service Content**
  - **Similarities**

Both Chinese and Malaysian Muslim hotels attach great importance to providing catering services that meet halal standards. In China, Muslim hotels ensure the strict implementation of halal food regulations from the source of ingredients. For example, in Xinjiang, hotels carefully select suppliers with halal certifications to guarantee the authenticity of ingredients (Li, 2022). In Malaysia, the halal food supply chain is even more strictly regulated. According to a study by Mohammad et al. (2021), Malaysian hotels conduct regular audits of suppliers to ensure that all food products comply with halal requirements, and the entire production process is closely monitored.

Prayer facilities are also a common feature in Muslim hotels of both countries. Chinese Muslim hotels, such as those in Ningxia, are equipped with prayer rooms with basic facilities like carpets and qibla indicators. These facilities provide a convenient place for Muslim guests to perform their religious rituals. In Malaysia, prayer rooms are not only standard in hotels but are often designed with high - end decorations and a large capacity to accommodate more guests. For instance, in a five - star hotel in Kuala Lumpur, the prayer room is decorated with beautiful Islamic art, creating a solemn and religious atmosphere (Al - Shammary, 2022).

- **Differences**

In terms of food characteristics, Chinese Muslim hotels focus on local - flavored halal cuisines. In Gansu, for example, beef noodle soup is a popular local halal dish in Muslim hotels. These dishes reflect the unique food culture of the region. In contrast, Malaysian Muslim hotels integrate the culinary features of multiple ethnic groups. The nasi lemak, a traditional Malay dish, and the Indian - influenced biryani are commonly served in Malaysian hotels, offering guests a more diverse taste experience (Rahman, 2020).

The religious characteristics of facilities in Malaysian hotels are more prominent. The architectural styles of Malaysian hotels often incorporate Islamic elements such as domes and arches, like the One&Only Desaru Coast. The employee uniforms also carry religious characteristics, with female employees usually wearing headscarves. In comparison, Chinese Muslim hotels are relatively simpler in architectural design and employee dress. They mainly focus on meeting the basic religious needs of guests, such as providing clean and quiet prayer rooms.

During religious festivals, Malaysian hotels have more characteristic services. During Ramadan, hotels in Malaysia offer elaborate iftar meals, which are an important part of the Ramadan tradition. These meals usually include a variety of traditional Ramadan foods and are served in a festive atmosphere. In China, although some Muslim hotels also provide corresponding services during Ramadan, the scale and variety are relatively smaller. They may adjust the dining time and offer some simple Ramadan - related food according to the needs of guests.

- **Comparison of Service Concepts**

Chinese Muslim hotels emphasize meeting the personalized needs of tourists. They strive to provide a wide range of services to meet the diverse preferences of guests. For example, they may customize travel itineraries according to the interests of Muslim tourists, recommend local Islamic - related cultural attractions, and adjust the flavor of dishes according to individual taste requirements. This service concept is based on the understanding that different tourists have different needs, and by meeting these personalized needs, the hotel can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty (Zhang, 2023).

Malaysian Muslim hotels, on the other hand, focus on following religious doctrines. Every aspect of hotel services is designed and carried out in strict accordance with Islamic regulations. During prayer times, the hotel will remind guests to perform their prayers through various means, such as public address systems. The hotel also actively promotes Islamic culture, organizing cultural lectures and exhibitions to introduce the history, beliefs, and cultural traditions of Islam to guests. This service concept aims to create a religious - compliant environment for guests and help them better practice their religious beliefs during their stay (Ibrahim et al., 2020).

- **Comparison of Management Modes**

The management mode of Chinese Muslim hotels is mainly influenced by market demand and industry norms. In the face of fierce market competition, Chinese hotels need to continuously adjust their service content and business strategies to improve their competitiveness. For example, with the increase in the number of international Muslim tourists, some Chinese Muslim hotels start to introduce international service standards and management experience to meet the needs of high - end customers. They also pay attention to cost - control and service quality improvement to achieve a balance between economic benefits and service quality (Wang, 2022).

Malaysian Muslim hotels are deeply influenced by religious culture and national policies. The government in Malaysia has strict regulations on Muslim hotel services, such as the requirement for hotels to obtain halal certifications to provide halal food and related services. The hotel management must also comply with Islamic teachings in all aspects, from facility configuration to service operation.

The government also conducts regular supervision of hotel facilities, employee training, and service quality to ensure that hotels meet religious and regulatory requirements (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, 2021).

### **Reasons for the Differences in Muslim Hotel Services between China and Malaysia**

- Different Religious and Cultural Backgrounds**

China is a multi - religious country with a long - standing and rich cultural heritage. Although there is a certain number of Muslim populations, Islam is not the state religion, and the influence of religious culture on social life is relatively limited. In China, the development of Muslim hotel services is mainly driven by market demand. For example, in the process of the rapid development of domestic tourism, the increasing number of Muslim tourists, both domestic and international, has led to the emergence and growth of Muslim - friendly hotels. These hotels aim to meet the needs of this special group of tourists in a market - oriented way, rather than being strictly restricted by religious culture.

In contrast, Malaysia is a predominantly Muslim country where Islam is the state religion. Islamic culture permeates every aspect of social life, and the hotel service industry is no exception. The religious culture has a profound impact on the design, operation, and service concept of hotels. For instance, in Malaysia, the architecture of Muslim hotels often incorporates Islamic elements such as domes and arches, which is not only a reflection of religious aesthetics but also a way to show respect for the dominant religious culture. The hotel service must strictly follow Islamic teachings and regulations to meet the religious needs of most Muslim guests.

- Different Market Demands**

The market for Muslim hotel services in China is composed of both domestic and international Muslim tourists. The domestic Muslim tourists in China has diverse needs. They not only have religious requirements but also attach great importance to the comfort and personalization of travel. They hope to have a unique travel experience that combines religious elements with modern travel services. International Muslim tourists come from different countries and regions with various cultural backgrounds and needs. Some may focus on experiencing China's unique historical and cultural heritage, while others may be interested in business - related travel. Therefore, Chinese Muslim hotels need to provide a wide range of services to meet the diverse needs of different tourists.

In Malaysia, the market for Muslim hotel services mainly consists of domestic Muslim tourists and Muslim tourists from neighboring countries. These tourists generally have relatively consistent religious beliefs and cultural backgrounds. Their demands for hotel services are more concentrated on religious aspects. They expect hotels to provide services that are in line with Islamic teachings, such as strict halal food, complete prayer facilities, and religious - compliant service processes. As a result, Malaysian hotels can focus more on providing services that meet religious doctrines to better serve this relatively homogeneous customer group.

- Different Policies and Regulations**

The Chinese government implements the policy of freedom of religious belief, protecting the religious rights of citizens while also regulating and managing religious activities. In the hotel service industry, the government has formulated relevant regulations on halal food management to ensure the quality and safety of halal food. For example, in Xinjiang, the local government has issued detailed regulations on the production, processing, and sales of halal food to protect the legitimate rights and interests of Muslim consumers. However, for other hotel services, such as prayer facilities and employee uniforms, there are no mandatory regulations. Hotels mainly make decisions based on market demand and their own business strategies.

Malaysia, on the other hand, has strict policy and regulatory constraints on Muslim hotel services. Hotels must obtain halal certifications to provide halal food and related services. The government also conducts strict supervision over the religious facilities, employee training, and service quality of hotels. For example, the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia is responsible for formulating and implementing relevant regulations and standards and regularly inspects and evaluates hotels to ensure that their services comply with Islamic teachings and regulatory requirements. This regulatory approach ensures the high - quality development of Muslim hotel services in Malaysia and reflects the important position of religion in the country's social and economic life.

## Conclusions and Revelations

### Conclusion

In conclusion, through the in-depth comparative analysis of Muslim hotel services in China and Malaysia, it is evident that there are significant differences between the two countries in terms of service content, service concepts, and management models.

In service content, although both countries' Muslim hotels attach importance to halal catering and the provision of prayer facilities, there are still distinctions. Chinese Muslim hotels focus on local-flavored halal cuisines, highlighting the unique food culture of different regions. For example, in different parts of China, such as Xinjiang, Ningxia, and Gansu, hotels offer local-style halal dishes that are deeply loved by local and visiting Muslim tourists. In contrast, Malaysian Muslim hotels integrate the culinary features of multiple ethnic groups, presenting a more diverse food culture. Their halal food not only includes traditional Malay dishes but also incorporates elements from Chinese and Indian cuisines, catering to the tastes of a wider range of guests.

In terms of facility configuration, the religious characteristics of Malaysian hotels are more prominent. Their hotel architecture often features Islamic-style domes, arches, and other elements, creating a strong religious and cultural atmosphere. The prayer rooms in Malaysian hotels are usually large-scale and exquisitely decorated, with additional religious murals and chandeliers, providing a more solemn and sacred space for prayer. In comparison, Chinese Muslim hotels are relatively simpler in architectural design and facility decoration. They mainly focus on meeting the basic religious needs of guests, such as providing clean and quiet prayer rooms with basic facilities like carpets and qibla indicators.

During religious festivals, especially in Ramadan, Malaysian hotels offer more elaborate and characteristic services. They provide sumptuous iftar meals with a variety of traditional Ramadan foods, creating a festive atmosphere for guests to break their fast. In China, while some Muslim hotels also provide corresponding services during Ramadan, the scale and variety are relatively smaller, mainly adjusting dining times and offering some simple Ramadan-related food according to guests' needs.

Regarding service concepts, Chinese Muslim hotels place a strong emphasis on meeting the personalized needs of tourists. They strive to provide customized services, such as tailoring travel itineraries based on guests' interests, adjusting the flavor of dishes according to individual preferences, and offering various value-added services. This service concept aims to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty by meeting the diverse needs of different tourists. Malaysian Muslim hotels, on the other hand, focus on following religious doctrines. Every aspect of hotel services is designed and carried out in strict accordance with Islamic regulations. They actively promote Islamic culture, organizing religious lectures, exhibitions, and other activities to help guests better understand and practice their religious beliefs during their stay.

In terms of management models, the management of Chinese Muslim hotels is mainly influenced by market demand and industry norms. In the face of a highly competitive market, hotels need to continuously adjust their service content and business strategies to improve their competitiveness. They pay attention to cost-control, service quality improvement, and the balance between economic benefits and service quality. Malaysian Muslim hotels are deeply influenced by religious culture and national policies. The government has strict regulations on hotel services, such as the requirement for halal certifications, and conducts regular supervision of hotel facilities, employee training, and service quality to ensure compliance with religious and regulatory requirements.

Overall, Chinese Muslim hotel services are more inclined to meet the diverse and personalized needs of tourists, providing a wide range of services. Malaysian Muslim hotel services, on the other hand, are more focused on religious doctrine compliance, with a strong religious flavor in all aspects of service. These differences are the result of the combined influence of religious and cultural backgrounds, market demands, and policy regulations in the two countries.

### Revelations

- **Strengthening Cultural Exchange and Cooperation**

There is great potential for strengthening cultural exchange and cooperation between China and Malaysia in the field of Muslim hotel services. China can learn from Malaysia's rich experience in integrating religious culture into hotel services. For example, China can draw inspiration from Malaysia's

architectural design, incorporating more Islamic elements into hotel construction in areas with a large Muslim population. This can not only enhance the religious - friendly atmosphere of the hotel but also provide Muslim tourists with a more immersive religious and cultural experience. In addition, China can also learn from Malaysia's practices in promoting Islamic culture in hotels, such as organizing religious lectures and cultural activities, to improve the religious and cultural experience of guests.

Malaysia, on the other hand, can learn from China's approach to meeting the personalized needs of tourists. China's practice of customizing travel itineraries and adjusting service content according to the preferences of different tourists can be a valuable reference for Malaysia. By introducing more personalized services, Malaysian hotels can attract a wider range of tourists and improve customer satisfaction. For instance, Malaysian hotels can provide more diverse dining options to meet the different taste preferences of guests, or offer customized tour packages based on guests' interests, such as cultural exploration tours, adventure tours, or relaxation - focused tours.

The two countries can also jointly develop tourism products that integrate the characteristics of both sides. For example, a joint tourism product can be designed that combines China's historical and cultural heritage, such as the Silk Road culture, with Malaysia's unique Islamic and tropical island cultures. This kind of product can attract more international tourists, promoting the development of the tourism and hotel industries in both countries.

- **Paying Attention to Market Research and Analysis**

Hotel enterprises in both China and Malaysia should attach great importance to market research and analysis. In China, with the continuous growth of the international Muslim tourist market, hotels need to closely monitor the development trends of this market. They should understand the changing needs and preferences of international Muslim tourists, such as their requirements for hotel facilities, service quality, and cultural experiences. For example, through online surveys, interviews with international tourists, and analysis of travel agency data, hotels can gain in - depth insights into the specific needs of international Muslim tourists. Based on this understanding, hotels can adjust their service content and operating strategies to meet international standards. This may include improving the international communication skills of hotel staff, providing more language - friendly services, and introducing international - standard service processes and management systems.

In Malaysia, as the domestic and regional tourist markets are constantly evolving, hotels need to pay attention to the changing needs of local and neighboring - country tourists. They should conduct regular market research to understand how the religious and cultural needs of these tourists are changing, as well as their emerging demands for personalized services. For example, with the development of the digital age, tourists may have higher requirements for hotel digital services, such as high - speed Wi - Fi, mobile - friendly booking systems, and digital information dissemination about hotel services and local attractions. Malaysian hotels can also analyze the market segments within the Muslim tourist group, such as differences in needs between business travelers and leisure travelers and develop targeted service strategies.

By conducting in - depth market research and analysis, hotel enterprises can better meet the needs of different market segments, improve service quality, and enhance market competitiveness.

- **Strengthening Staff Training**

Staff training is a crucial factor in improving the quality of hotel services. Hotel enterprises in both China and Malaysia should strengthen the training of their employees to enhance their religious and cultural literacy and service skills.

The training content should include in - depth knowledge of Islamic doctrines and customs. Employees need to have a comprehensive understanding of the five daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, and other important religious rituals. They should also be familiar with Islamic cultural taboos, such as appropriate behavior during religious festivals and interactions between the sexes. For example, in China, hotel employees can participate in training courses on Islamic culture offered by local religious institutions or professional training organizations. In Malaysia, hotels can organize regular internal training sessions led by Islamic scholars or experienced employees to deepen employees' understanding of religious knowledge.

In addition to religious knowledge, employees should also be trained in halal food management norms. This includes understanding the entire process of halal food procurement, storage, processing,

and cooking, as well as the importance of preventing cross - contamination. Employees need to be able to identify and handle halal food - related issues professionally. For example, they should know how to source halal - certified ingredients, how to store them properly to maintain their halal status, and how to handle customer inquiries and requests regarding halal food.

Service etiquette training is also essential. Employees should learn proper communication skills, such as using respectful language, maintaining good eye contact, and showing patience when interacting with guests. They should also be trained in handling different types of customer requests and complaints effectively. For example, through role - playing exercises, employees can practice how to respond to difficult customer situations in a professional and polite manner.

By strengthening staff training, hotel employees can provide more professional, attentive, and respectful services, thereby enhancing the overall image and reputation of the hotel.

- **Improving Policies and Regulations**

The government departments of both China and Malaysia should play an active role in improving the policies and regulations related to Muslim hotel services and strengthening market supervision.

In China, the government should further standardize the certification and management of halal food. Currently, although there are some regulations on halal food management, there is still room for improvement in terms of the standardization and transparency of the certification process. The government can establish a unified and strict halal food certification system, clarify the certification standards and procedures, and strengthen the supervision of certification bodies. This can ensure that the halal food provided by hotels meets high - quality standards and guarantees the dietary safety of Muslim tourists. For example, the government can regularly inspect halal food production and processing enterprises and revoke the certifications of those that do not meet the standards.

In Malaysia, while the government has strict regulations on Muslim hotel services, it can also create a more relaxed policy environment for the innovation and development of hotel services. For example, the government can encourage hotels to introduce new service concepts and technologies within the framework of complying with religious doctrines. It can provide policy support and incentives for hotels that invest in digital transformation, sustainable development, or the development of new service models. This can promote the continuous improvement and innovation of the hotel service industry in Malaysia.

In addition, both countries can strengthen cooperation in policy - making and regulatory experience sharing. They can learn from each other's successful practices in policy - making and market supervision to jointly promote the healthy development of the Muslim hotel service market.

## References

Agag, G., Durrani, B. A., Abdelmoety, Z. H., Daher, M. M., & Eid, R. (2024). Understanding the link between net promoter score and e-WOM behavior on social media: The role of national culture. *Journal of Business Research*, 170, 114303. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.114303>

Agag, G., Durrani, B. A., Shehawy, Y. M., Alharthi, M., Almoudi, H., El-Halaby, S., Hassanein, A., & Abdelmoety, Z. H. (2023). Understanding the link between customer feedback metrics and firm performance. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 73, 103301. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103301>

Ahmed, S., Al Asheq, A., Ahmed, E., Chowdhury, U. Y., Sufi, T., & Mostafa, M. G. (2023). The intricate relationships of consumers' loyalty and their perceptions of service quality, price and satisfaction in restaurant service. *The TQM Journal*, 35(2), 519-539. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-06-2021-0158>

Barten, M. (2024, March 24). Hospitality trends: The latest trends in the hospitality industry for 2024. *Revfine*. <https://www.revfine.com/hospitalitytrends/#:~:text=Key%20trends%20in%20the%20hospitality,local%20and%20authentic%20travel%20experiences>

Buhalis, D. (2019). Technology in tourism-from information communication technologies to eTourism and smart tourism towards ambient intelligence tourism: A perspective article. *Tourism Review*, 75(1), 267-272. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-06-2019-0258>

Chanda, R. C., Vafaei-Zadeh, A., Syafrizal, S., Hanifah, H., & Singh, K. S. D. (2023). Investigating the determinants of mobile shopping applications continuance usage intention in the post-COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Applied Management Science*, 15(4), 326-351. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJAMS.2023.134426>

Chang, R., Chanda, R. C., Vafaei-Zadeh, A., Hanifah, H., & Gui, A. (2024). Assessing green practices on eco-friendly hotel customer loyalty: A partial least squares structural equation modeling and fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis hybrid approach. *Sustainability*, 16(9), 3834. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16093834>

Cossío-Silva, F. J., Revilla-Camacho, M. Á., & Vega-Vázquez, M. (2019). The tourist loyalty index: A new indicator for measuring tourist destination loyalty? *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 4(2), 71-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jik.2017.10.003>

Dai, F., Wang, D., & Kirillova, K. (2022). Travel inspiration in tourist decision-making. *Tourism Management*, 90, 104484. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104484>

Darvidou, K., & Siskos, E. (2024). Efficiency of International Tourism Marketing for the Promotion of Tourist Products of Greek Companies in the European Market. *Journal of Economic Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 81(1), 22-39. <https://doi.org/10.61640/jestp.2024.81.01.02>

Dodds, R., & Butler, R. (2019). *Overtourism: Issues, realities and solutions* (Vol. 1). DeGruyter.

Dominici, G., & Guzzo, R. (2010). Customer satisfaction in the hotel industry: A case study from Sicily. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2(2), 3-12. [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1961959](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1961959)

Ferreira, F., Ferreira, F., & Bode, O. R. (2024). Sustainability and hotel room pricing strategies. *Journal of Tourism & Development*, 47, 631-647. <https://doi.org/10.34624/rtd.v47i0.38802>

Ferreira, S., Martins, I., & Vareiro, L. (2021). Environmental sustainability in hotels and the role of employees in implementing green practices. *Journal of Tourism & Development*, 36(2), 259-276. <https://doi.org/10.34624/rtd.v36i2.9127>

Fuchs, M., Fossgard, K., Stensland, S., & Chekalina, T. (2021). Creativity and innovation in nature-based tourism: A critical reflection and empirical assessment. In P. Fredman, & J. V. Haukeland (Eds.), *Nordic perspectives on nature-based tourism* (pp. 175-193). Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789904031.00022>

Górská-Warsewicz, H., & Kulykovets, O. (2020). Hotel brand loyalty—A systematic literature review. *Sustainability*, 12(12), 4810. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12124810>

Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2020). Pandemics, tourism and global change: A rapid assessment of COVID-19. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(1), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1758708>

Gretzel, U., Fuchs, M., Baggio, R., Hoepken, W., Law, R., Neidhardt, J., Pesonen, J., Zanker, M., & Xiang, Z. (2020). e-Tourism beyond COVID-19: A call for transformative research. *Information Technology & Tourism*, 22, 187-203. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40558-020-00181-3>

Gursoy, D. (2019). A critical review of determinants of information search behaviour and utilisation of online reviews in decision-making process (invited paper for 'luminaries' special issue of International Journal of Hospitality Management). *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 76, 53-60. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.06.003>

Haghghi, M., Dorosti, A., Rahnama, A., & Hoseinpour, A. (2012). Evaluation of factors affecting customer loyalty in the restaurant industry. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6(14), 5039-5046. <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJBM11.2765>

Higgins-Desbiolles, F., Carnicelli, S., Krolkowski, C., Wijesinghe, G., & Boluk, K. (2019). Degrowing tourism: Rethinking tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27(12), 1926-1944. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2019.1601732>

Islam, M. T., Kumar, J., Hussin, S. R., & Wong, F. Y. (2024). Embarking on virtual journeys: The evolutionary dynamics of travel vlogs and the integration of virtual reality. In J. Kumar, M. Arora, & G.

Erkol Bayram (Eds.), Exploring the use of metaverse in business and education (pp. 235–255). *IGI Global Scientific Publishing*. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-5868-9.ch013>

Iyengar, M. S., & Venkatesh, R. (2024a). A brief communication on the Top Ten Trends in the Hospitality Industry for 2024: World Scenario. *SCT Proceedings in Interdisciplinary Insights and Innovations*, 2, 254-254. <https://doi.org/10.56294/piii2024254>

Iyengar, M. S., & Venkatesh, R. (2024b). Customer preferences while booking accommodation in hotels: Customer behavior and hotel strategies. *Management* (Montevideo), 2, 31. <https://doi.org/10.62486/agma202431>

Kang, E. M., & Lee, S. K. (2022). The impact of monetary benefits in a pandemic situation -navigating changes in customer loyalty through negative switching barriers in the hotel industry. *Sustainability*, 14(13), 8079. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14138079>

Koo, B., Yu, J., & Han, H. (2020). The role of loyalty programs in boosting hotel guest loyalty: Impact of switching barriers. *International journal of hospitality Management*, 84, 102328. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2019.102328>

Lee, J. S., Kim, J., Hwang, J., & Cui, Y. G. (2021). Does love become hate or forgiveness after a double deviation? The case of hotel loyalty program members. *Tourism Management*, 84, 104279. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104279>

Leiba, Y., Shirokopetleva, M., & Gruzdo, I. (2023). Research on methods of determining customer loyalty and assessing their level of satisfaction. *Innovative Technologies and Scientific Solutions for Industries*, 2(24), 104-117. <https://doi.org/10.30837/ITSSI.2023.24.104>

Leitão, C. F., Gomes, J. V., Santos, D. C., & Maia, B. M. (2023). Leadership, innovation and performance in Portuguese hotel sector. *Journal of Tourism & Development*, 41, 551-570. <https://doi.org/10.34624/rtd.v41i0.30618>

Lentz, M., Berezan, O., & Raab, C. (2022). Uncovering the relationship between revenue management and hotel loyalty programs. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 21, 306-320. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41272-021-00331-0>

Saura, J. R., Palos-Sánchez, P., & Blanco-González, A. (2019). The importance of information service offerings of collaborative CRMs on decision-making in B2B marketing. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 35(3), 470-480. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-12-2018-0412>

Thu, H. N., Minh, T. T., Ngoc, T. N., Nguyen, B. G., & Ngoc, L. N. (2021). Measuring satisfaction and loyalty of guests based on Vietnamese hotel online reviews. *International Journal of E-Entrepreneurship and Innovation (IJEEI)*, 11(2), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJEEI.2021070101>

UNWTO. (2020). UNWTO world tourism barometer (Vol. 18(2)). UNWTO.

Vidyanata, D. (2022). The mediating role of customer satisfaction on the relationship between service quality and consumer loyalty on the hospitality industry. *E-Bisnis: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi dan Bisnis*, 15(1), 179-185. <https://doi.org/10.51903/e-bisnis.v15i1.768>

World Economic Forum. (2022). Travel & tourism development index 2021. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/travel-and-tourism-development-index-2021/>

World Health Organization. (2022). Imagining the future of pandemics and epidemics: A 2022 perspective. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240052093>

Xiang, Z. (2018). From digitization to the age of acceleration: On information technology and tourism. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 25, 147-150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2017.11.023>

Xiang, Z., & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2020). Travel information search. In Z. Xiang, M. Fuchs, U. Gretzel, & W. Höpken (Eds.), *Handbook of e-tourism* (pp. 921–940). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48652-5\\_55](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48652-5_55)

Xiang, Z., Fuchs, M., Gretzel, U., & Höpken, W. (2021). *Handbook of e-tourism*. Springer International Publishing.

Yuan, Y., Tseng, Y. H., & Ho, C. I. (2019). Tourism information technology research trends: 1990-2016. *Tourism Review*, 74(1), 5-19. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-08-2017-0128>.