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Islamic Hospitality in Pakistani Hotels: Identifying the Product and Services



Abstract *Hotel industry in Pakistan is still in the development stages, the laws and regulations are first formulated 40 years ago, need to be updated and enforced. The changes in the hospitality industry is rapidly evolving and recently Muslim tourism ecosystem is adopted in many Muslim and non-Muslim countries. This adaptation must be according to the market trends, hotelier acceptance and aligned to OIC directives. The data was collected from 202 TTH experts to analyze the awareness, attitude and acceptance of the concept of Islamic hotel in Pakistan. The idea of Islamic hotel was acknowledged by the experts during the current studies in Pakistan but needs further awareness at industry level to understand the product and services of this new niche market. The experts also analyzed “25”, categorized in to three priority level as mandatory, optional and add-on for the potential Islamic hotels in Pakistan.*

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Introduction

The STR Global estimates 187,000 hotels, contributing 17.5 mn guestrooms worldwide. A hotel is immobile business with the products i.e. accommodation, food, beverages and ancillary services that cannot move with the tourist (Mohanty, 2008, p. 257). The hotel industry is a major component of the hospitality industry (Brotherton, 2012, pp. 1-252) and serve transient home away from home (Wood, 1994, pp. 65-80). However, hospitality is not free but the payment depends on the comforts, services, the fanciness and affordability of the guests (King, 1995, pp. 219-234). The retail value was US\$600.49 bn and contributed US\$ 8.81 trillion to the global economy in 2018 (Lock, 2019). According to (Alam, 2014) hotel is an establishment engaged in providing lodging or both lodging and boarding facilities on hire and only those establishments having ten or more lettable rooms, have been included with the exception of hotels

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with five or more lettable rooms in areas comprising Abbottabad, Balakot, Kaghan/Naran, Shogran, Murree, Galliat, Swat, Chitral, Ziarat, Northern Areas and Azad Jammu & Kashmir in Pakistan. According to the statistics available, Pakistan stocked 1857 hotels and 42859 guest rooms (Alam, 2005), the figures are based on the govt. registered hotel but the actual hotels are more as un registered. The French word *hôtel grani* is derivation and used for a large house/ townhouse or any other building seeing frequent visitors (Öresland, Lutzén, Norberg, Rasmussen, & Määttä, 2013, pp. 117-126). According to COMCEC (2016), hotel products are consisting of: i. Core services as primary to assist hotel guests' ii). Actual services as additional and iii). the augmented services as add-ons and guarantees. However, the product for standardization while considering MFT standards, the first sector is "Halal Food" equally important major criteria of IH. The Pakistan standards for halal food management systems (PS 3733: 2010) considering OIC general guidelines on halal Food (OIC/SMIIC-1), Pakistan halal authority act, 2015 for the purposes of imports and exports, trade and commerce with foreign countries and inter-provincial trade & commerce. After the 17th amendment, the provincial autonomy also increases the role of provincial department including food authorities. In accordance with food laws, the Govt of Pakistan must show its leading role for other segment of the halal ecosystem and to develop standards including halal travel, halal hotel etc.

Literature Review

Hospitality (*diyafa*) and generosity (*karam*) are the core principles in Islamic culture (Martin, 2016). The Law of hospitality in Islam is receiving and serving guest (s) doing in good intension, generosity, act of charity and kindness (Nasir, 2011). A guest with any religion or social class, traveller or relative need be honoured and treated with kindness, dignity, and respect (Abdul Razak, 2018). According to El-Aswad (2015), hospitality is linked with the core concepts of blessing (*Baraka*); As Allah is cosmic provider (*Al-Razzaq*), host receptive to the divine mercy (*Rahma*) and kindness. To satisfy customer needs, hoteliers work hard to provide a clean, neat and furnished the guestrooms on standards (Lockwood and Medik 2001; Shoemaker and Lewis:1999); (Weidenfeld, 2008, pp. 357-361). However, hoteliers sell the same guestrooms to all tourists regardless of their special desires or preferences of any specific group of tourists (Heo, Jogaratnam, & Buchanan, 2004). Nowadays, it is quite rare to find hotels that accommodate the special needs of religious tourists of any faith (Weidenfeld, 2008, pp. 357-361). The development of Islamic hotel is an attempt to appeal for a specific religious customers (Alserhan, 2010) as a niche market and is a creative, smart, religious hospitality. Religiosity is an acknowledged fact of the niche market for Islamic hotel. (Battour, Ismail, & Battor, 2011) and important for Muslim consumer (Bukhari et al., 2019, pp. 1288-1307). The niche market actually tends to do even better than the standard hotels (Morgan, 2002). Razalli, Abdullah, and Hassan (2012, pp. 1-5) that provide standardized services to all customers. Islam is the basis of society and it is well-ordered in the principles of Islamic law, which directly and indirectly affect leisure, recreation and travel (Ghadami 2012). The researchers consider that the term Islam is a brand of its self with distinct image and moralities (Temporal, 2011, p. 255), (Fatema, Bhuiyan, & Bhuiyan, 2013). Brand is itself a long term commitment of goods and services provision with a specific name, logo to link it to the memory (Farhana, 2012, pp. 223-233); (Guzman, 2005, pp. 30-48). It is compulsory for Muslims to consume halal (Khalek, 2014). The term halal often represents

something of a “hygiene factor” & “linked with Islam” thus represent as brand (Wilson & Liu, 2010, pp. 107-123). Fatema et al. (2013, pp. 10-15) described that ‘Islam’ represents a way of life; “Islam” & “Halal” is a global brand for food and the religious events. According to Crescent rating (2015), Malaysia is positioned no;1 among the OIC member’s states in MFT services and grouped in leader cluster. COMCEC (2017) recognised 680 hospitality establishment providing services to Muslim tourist seeking religiosity in travel. A hotel cannot simply proclaimed themselves or to obtain a halal certificate is not effective enough to attract customers (Salleh, Hamid, Hashim, & Omain, 2014, pp. 26-30). The studies of Maghrifani, (2018) cited that novel experience consider hotel’s functional attributes and Sharia as “the way of life” are the major choices of the guests stayed in sharia hotel in Indonesia. The concept of Islamic hotel is a comparatively new which leads to less understanding and misperception on the theme. The concept of halalicity or Islamicity hotel relatively new and not applied just to food but also to the operational aspects of hotels (Samori & Rahman, 2013, pp. 108-124). When the hotel is based on halal and haram principles, the concept is known as sharia compliance hotel or Islamic hotel. The hotel industry in Pakistan is largely composed on small size hotel as compare to international hospitality industry also known as small hotel businesses (SHBs), predominantly consisting of micro-corporations with 1-9 employees (OCDE, 2004) such as B&B, home stay, and guest-house. These special forms of accommodation are regarded as in contrast to conventional hotels, and thus are named as "quasi-hotels" (Slattery, 2002, pp. 19-28). Sharia compliance hotel into three types which is sharia compliant hotels, Islamic hotel and dry hotel or Sharia-Compliant hotel were considered identical (Razalli, Ismail, & Yaacob, 2015, p. 55). The term Islam is ‘a state of peace achieved through surrender to ALLAH, the term applied directly to the faith and its doctrines (Douglass & Shaikh, 2004, pp. 5-18). According Al-Qaradawi Y, (2013); the term Halal is “That which is permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists, and the doing of which the law-giver, ALLAH is allowed.

Methodology

Comparative method has been selected that aimed to compare the practice of Islamic hotel in other countries. The nature of the present study is descriptive and exploratory. The current researcher conducted a cross-sectional survey and data was collected on structured questionnaire through convenience sampling techniques on closed questionnaire and uses the Likert scale (1932) to map the opinion of tourism and hospitality experts on the concept and demand for Islamic hotels in Pakistan. The data was collected from 202 Travel Tourism and hospitality experts. The statistical techniques include frequency distribution, descriptive statistics, and one-way analysis of variance. The data was analysed through SPSS.

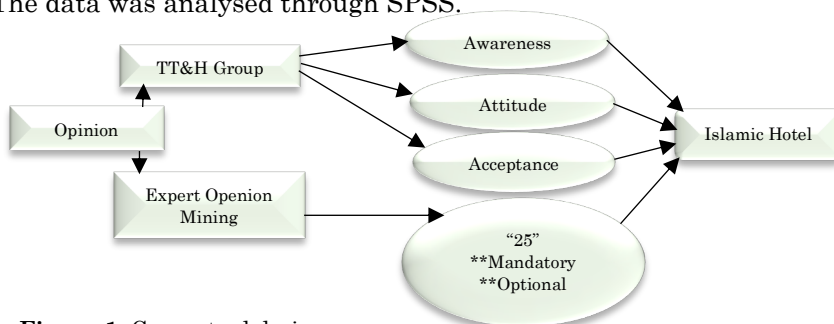


Figure 1: Conceptual design

Practical Implications

The recommendations arising from this research work will be share with the concern quarters to be utilised for training and education in hospitality management. The study will be utilised to create a model hotel or resort on Islamic hotel concept and to include Islamic tourism in the country polices, strategies and action plan to develop this niche market.

Data Analysis

The study -1 TTH group is consisting of dynamic, is multidisciplinary in nature and comprises of different sectors. The demographic information offers the statistics concerning the responded population in the research and it is important to determine the target population for generalization purposes (Salkind, 2010, p. 1779). The demographic features in table 1 indicates male (81.7%) dominant, the respondents were from tourism industry as experts or consultant (52.5%), tour operators & travel agents (14.8%), hospitality owners or managers (13.9%) and working in govt job related to tourism (18.9%).

Table 1. Demographic of TT&H

GENDER		Frequency	Percent
GENDER	Male	165	81.7
	Female	37	18.3
	Total	202	100.0
AGE & EDUCATION	Below 30 Years age	50	24.8
	31-45 Years age	107	52.9
	51 years and above age	45	22.3
	Total	202	100.0
	Intermediate	15	7.4
OCCUPATION	Bachelor Degree	41	20.3
	Masters & above	146	72.3
	Total	202	100.0
	Tourism Expert & Consultant	106	52.5
	Travel Agent & Operators	30	14.8
	Govt Job	38	18.8
	Hospitality Owner/managers	28	13.9
Total	202	100.0	

Table 2. Evaluation of Expert’s Perception for Islamic Hotel

Perception	Statements	Mean	One-way ANOVA Sig	One-way ANOVA Not sig
Awareness	16	3.19	AwIH 1,3-16	AwIH 2
Attitude	22	3.87	AiIH 1-22	Nil
Acceptance	7	3.59	AcIH1-7	Nil

Awareness & Understanding towards Islamic Hotel

To access the awareness and understanding level of the respondents towards Islamic hotel 16 statements were positioned for opinion mining during the research. The mean value and opinion is displayed through bar graph and stack bar chart Figure 2. The one-way ANOVA results are presented in table 2.

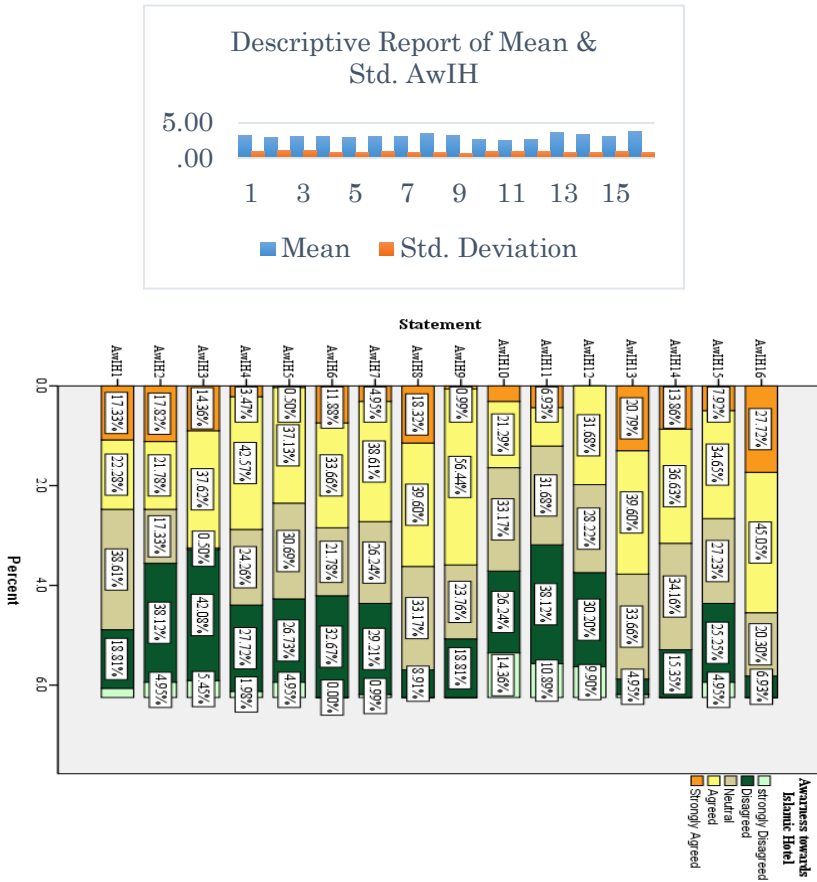


Fig 1: AwIH 1-16 Mean Value & Stack Bar Chart of Attitude Towards Islamic Hotel

The data on awareness and understanding of Islamic hotel represent average mean value is 3.19 show a modest understanding. The lowest value was 2.6 AWIH11 (*I have experienced staying in Islamic Hotel*) and 3.94 for AwIH16 (*I will support Islamic hospitality industry*) is highest. The most aware group was hospitality owners' average value 3.7 and least were travel agents 2.7 indicating that majority of the respondents were on agreement but their awareness & understanding level is modest represents low awareness and understanding on the statement AwIH1-16. The analysis signifies the opinion that audience are not fully aware on the product and services or appropriate product knowledge.

Attitude towards Islamic Hotel (AtIH)

Attitude towards halalism is strictly affiliated to the conception of beliefs, the hoteliers declares that guests usually demand religious services. When families visit the destination they demand for safe, secure, private and reputed hotel with friendly and respectable for place for stay. Muslim parents travelling with children like to avoid exposing their children to the situations where inappropriate actions are taking place (Battour et al., 2011). To access the attitude of the respondents towards Islamic hotel

twenty-six statement were asked from the respondents recorded in figure 3. The total values was visualised through stack bar Figure 3 & Table 2. The statement criteria for the attitudes “AtIH6” & “AtIH7” is below the average value 3.87 and the statement mean value 2.63 & 2.66 respectively. The details shows that the respondents were not agreed with the statement AtIH6 “I believe that utilizing the Islamic hotel services conflicts with my religious beliefs” and AtIH7 “I believe that utilizing the Islamic hotel services conflicts with my social class”. The Highest mean value 4.84 by Govt official group for AtIH9, 2.3 for AtH7 by tourism experts group.

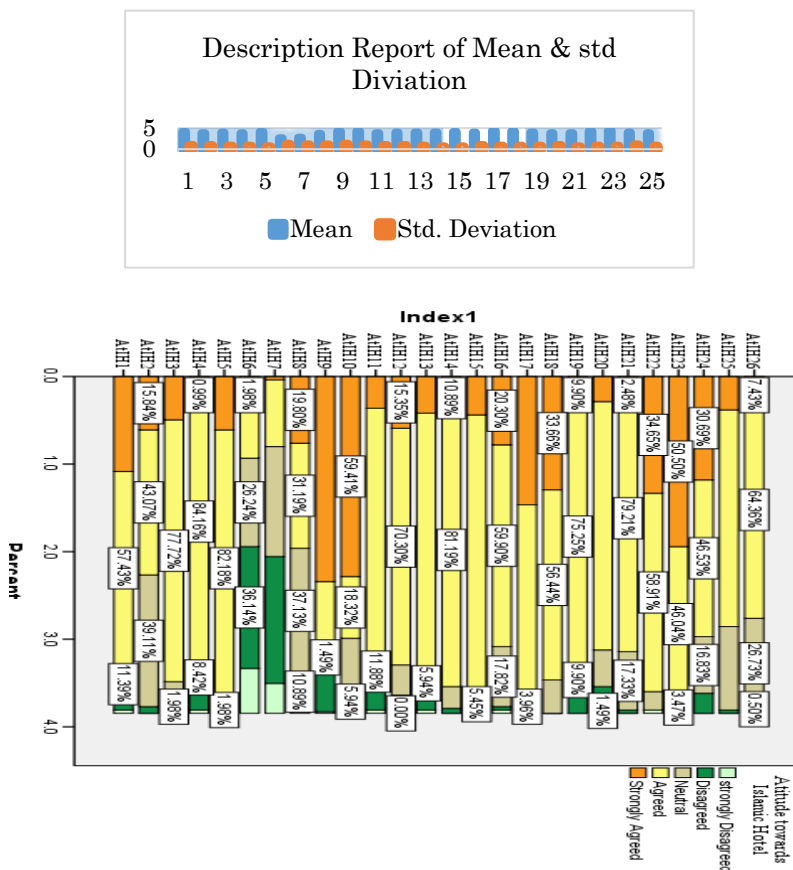


Fig 2: AtIH1-26 Mean value & stack bar chart of Attitude towards Islamic hotel

These demands generate a genuine Islamic hotel market where some guests avoid to take traditional hotel stay due to gender mixing in floor, considers hotel environment especially in commercial areas and destination towns are culturally and ideologically unethical. Islamic hotel will be a solution to many doubts of religious travellers, individuals and families.

Acceptance towards Islamic Hotel

To inquire the acceptance towards Islamic hotels of the respondents towards Islamic hotel seven statements were logged during the research. The data is presented for

simultaneous comparison in Figure showing the mean value, the trends of agreement is graphed in stack bar chart figure 4 and table 2. The respondents show the Acceptance towards Islamic hotel. The mean value from the hospitality group was 3.94 is the highest and the minimum was 3.24 by the hotel consultants. The lowest rated statement was AcIH5, the respondents oppose the statement to give little extra to purchase the services of IH and highest AcIH2 supporting the idea is applicable in Pakistan. The conclusion on the acceptance on IH shows that utilization of IH in destination is matter of availability by keeping best interests of the customers in mind.

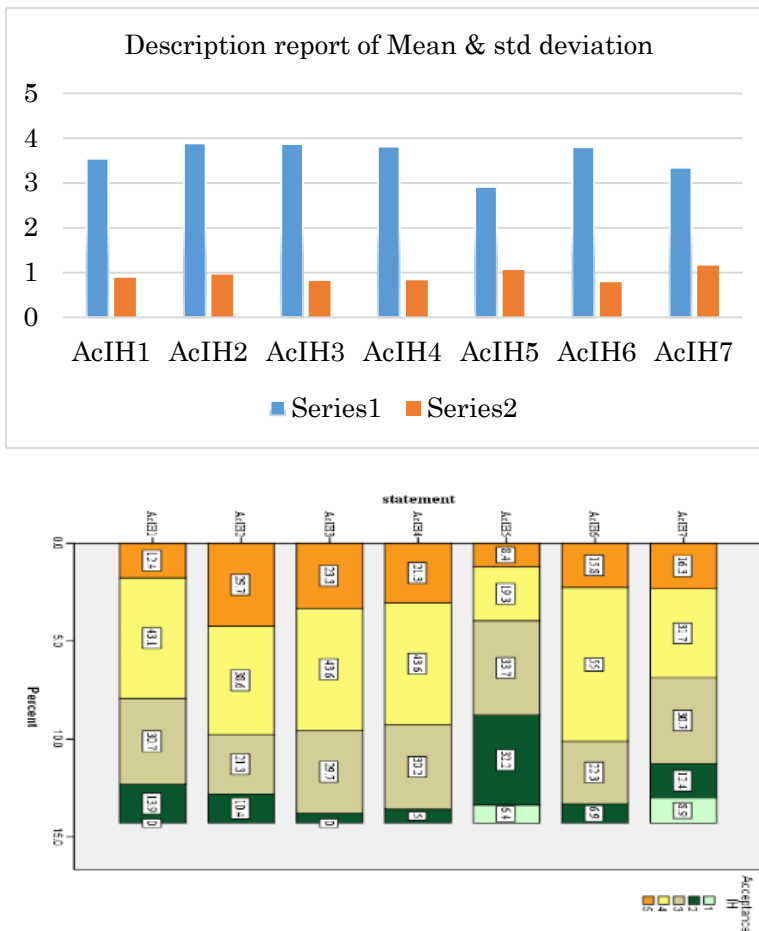


Figure 3: AcIH 1-7 Mean & Stack Bar of Acceptance Towards Islamic Hotel

Standardizing Islamic Hotel Product & Services

Islamic hotel is an innovation and creation of new product and services in the hotel industry. The Muslim’s customers value the Islamic ethics and standards (Albattat, et al 2018). The respondent evaluates twenty-five items on five points Likert scale, the mean value and trends of agreement on the priority on 25 items for Islamic hotel are

elevated. The criteria standards for Islamic Hotel is based on mean value and agreement.

- Group 1 need to have: at least 3.5 above mean value with 20% strongly agreed and 10% agreement.
- Group 1 need to have: at least below 3.5 and above 3.00 mean value
- Group 1 need to have: at least below 3.00 mean value

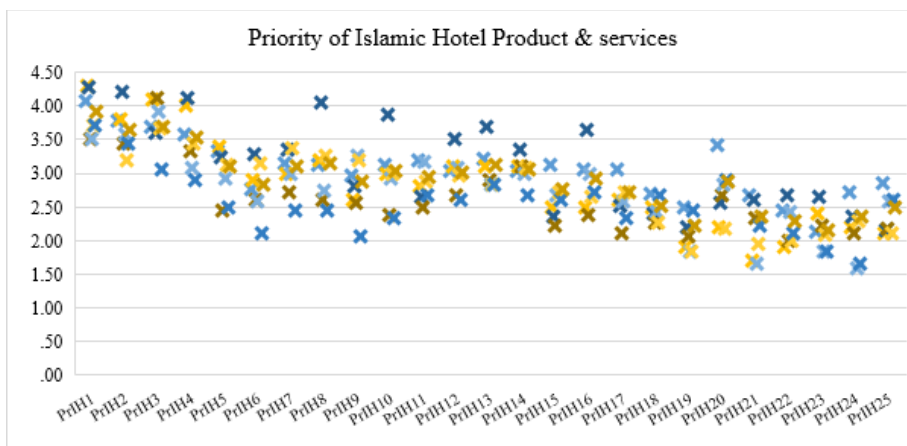


Fig 4: Priority of Items on IH

The trends of stack bar show that the level of agreement for PrIH – “Islamic hotel products & services” were shown in Figure 5 and table4 indicates the items with more than 3.5 means values are group of “04 priority products & services”, the mean value of the more than 3.5 above are grouped into as “mandatory” as “Need to have”. The “07 priority products & services” are grouped in to a criterion as good “Good to have”.

While ad-on “14 priority products & services”, with mean value is less than 3.00 were group in are the products and services on priority list for group “3” are “Nice to have”

Conclusion

Islamicity and halalicity is the application of Islamic regulations for the provision of Islamic hospitality in hotel with product and services compliance to Islamic sharia and societal needs. The experts accepted the idea of Islamic hotel as per religious needs and market demand. The inspirational idea of Islamicity are exited as mixed MFT non certified businesses but the majority of the hoteliers not fully aware of the concept. The experts see Islamic hotel as new competitive brand against the conventional hotel. Islamic hotel with specific theme is marketable and requirement of societal needs of Pakistan. The respondents of the currents study quantified and suggested “ 25 items on priority” as products and services in to three priority level as mandatory, good as optional and nice as ad-On services see table 4 includes the halal food, no alcoholic beverages, Masjid /prayers facility/Azan, ablution facilities, Quran prayer mats, Muslim showers were rated high for creating criteria also mentioned in the researcher studies. All Products and services in Islamic hotel must be designed according to Islamic principles and certified from the national or international accreditation body.

Table 3. Standardize on Priority Islamic Hotel Products & Services

“NEED”, “GOOD” &” NICE” TO HAVE		
1	Halal Menu	MANDITORY NEED TO HAVE
2	Halal Kitchen	
3	No Alcohol Permitted	
4	Prayer mattes/Quran, Qiblah direction	
1	Prayer time	Optional GOOD TO HAVE
2	Ramadan service Iftar	
3	Ramadan service Sehar	
4	Code of conduct for employee	
5	Finance & Operations on Sharia	
6	Architectural orientation of toilet	
7	Bidet & Muslim hand shower	
1	Congregational Prayer prayers	
2	Separate spa, gym pool time	
3	Separate floor male & female	
4	Male & Female dress code	Add-On NICE TO HAVE
5	Non halal activities, no disco, No dance party	
6	No Music	
7	No Human figures, painting etc	
8	All staff to be Muslim	
9	All amenities must be halal	
10	Currency exchange rate is same	
11	Free internet or only pay for usage	
12	Babysitting facility	
13	Hotel near to the proximity of Islamic activity area	
14	Islamic Financial management system	

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