

# Integrating Ethical Sustainability into Halal Tourism: A Netnographic Analysis of Visitor Experience at Sharia Hotel through *Maqashid al-Shariah*

Arum Yunita<sup>1</sup>, Zulfikar Bagus Pambuko<sup>1\*</sup>, and Lintang Muliawanti<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang, Magelang, Indonesia

**Abstract.** This study evaluates visitor experiences at the Grand Madani Sharia Hotel Mataram by integrating digital sentiment analysis with the *Maqashid al-Shariah* framework. Utilizing a netnographic approach, 69 online reviews from Google Reviews and Agoda (January–October 2025) were analyzed through qualitative content analysis. Results indicate a predominantly positive sentiment, with satisfaction driven by cleanliness, comfort, and sharia-compliant facilities. From a *Maqashid* perspective, the hotel successfully implements *Hifzh an-Nafs* (Protection of Life) through guaranteed comfort, *Hifzh al-Mal* (Protection of Wealth) via price efficiency, *Hifzh ad-Din* (Protection of Religion) through worship accessibility, and *Hifzh an-Nasl* (Protection of Offspring) via a family-friendly environment. Conversely, *Hifzh al-'Aql* (Protection of Intellect) remains underrepresented in guest experiences. This research pioneers the integration of netnography and *Maqashid al-Shariah* in the halal tourism industry, offering strategic insights for hotel managers to enhance sharia compliance and service quality.

## 1 Introduction

The halal tourism industry has garnered significant global attention as a specialized sector of tourism that integrates Islamic values into its services. This industry continues to experience rapid growth, driven by the expanding global Muslim population and a notable shift in consumer behavior. Modern Muslim tourists are increasingly seeking travel experiences that offer more than just basic amenities; they prioritize destinations that harmonize leisure with their religious obligations and ethical values [1]. While the availability of halal food and basic accommodations remains essential, it is no longer the sole focus. Today's Muslim travelers demand a deeper experience that reflects spiritual security and cultural integrity, consistent with their religious identity.

As the country with the world's largest Muslim population, Indonesia possesses immense strategic potential in this sector. The tourism industry significantly bolsters the national economy, contributing approximately 5% to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and

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\* Corresponding author: [zulfikar.bp@unimma.ac.id](mailto:zulfikar.bp@unimma.ac.id)

securing the 40<sup>th</sup> position in the global Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index [2]. According to the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2023, Indonesia further secured the first rank as the best Muslim-friendly destination among 140 countries, excelling in four key areas (access, communication, environment, and services). This achievement highlights Indonesia's capacity to satisfy the diverse needs of global Muslim tourists, which in turn fosters the creative economy, increases foreign exchange, and generates employment.

To capitalize on this, the Ministry of Tourism has designated thirteen provinces as priority halal destinations. Among these, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) stands out due to its predominantly Muslim population, rich natural heritage, and proximity to Bali, making it a primary alternative for halal-conscious travelers [3]. The NTB provincial government solidified this commitment by issuing Regional Regulation No. 02 of 2016 concerning Halal Tourism. This regulation mandates that the tourism industry provide sharia-compliant infrastructure and services. A prominent example in the region is the Grand Madani Sharia Hotel. The hotel explicitly brands itself as a sharia-based establishment, offering facilities and services designed to meet the specific requirements of Muslim guests.

In the digital era, online platforms have become the primary resource for tourists when selecting accommodations. This study focuses on Agoda and Google Review as data sources, as both platforms host extensive and recent user-generated content. Agoda is widely utilized in Asia for comprehensive travel recommendations, while Google Review, integrated with Google Maps, offers real-time ratings and detailed feedback, making it a preferred choice for travelers seeking transparent quality assessments.

The reviews on these platforms reflect visitor perceptions, satisfaction levels, and criticisms regarding hotel performance. Analyzing this digital sentiment through a netnographic approach allows hotel management to gain actionable insights into guest concerns [4]. Sharia hotels differ from conventional ones by emphasizing sharia principles, such as providing prayer facilities, maintaining Islamic moral standards, ensuring gender-segregated facilities where necessary, and strictly prohibiting alcohol and non-halal substances [5]. To evaluate the quality of these services comprehensively, the *Maqashid al-Shariah* framework is essential as a theoretical foundation [6].

Previous studies have explored service quality through traditional metrics [7], marketing strategies for hotel positioning [8], and compliance with DSN-MUI fatwas [9]. However, a significant gap remains, as these studies often fail to integrate the direct customer perspective captured via online reviews. There is an urgent need for research that bridges real-time digital sentiment with the holistic ethical dimensions of *Maqashid al-Shariah*. Therefore, this research fills this gap by analyzing visitor reviews of the Grand Madani Sharia Hotel using a sentiment analysis approach combined with the *Maqashid al-Shariah* framework. Furthermore, the implementation of *Maqashid al-Shariah* in the hospitality sector aligns with the global agenda of ethical sustainability. By prioritizing human welfare (*maslahah*) over mere profit, sharia-compliant hotels contribute to sustainable development goals, particularly in fostering social well-being. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of sharia compliance and service quality based on genuine guest experiences, ultimately offering strategic recommendations for the advancement of sharia hotel management.

## 2 Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the netnographic method, a branch of ethnography that adapts consumer behavior analysis through cultural and individual interactions on digital platforms or online forums. This approach is utilized to explore the in-depth perceptions and experiences of Grand Madani Sharia Hotel visitors naturally through digital media. Netnography was specifically chosen because the analyzed data consists of user-generated content, which reflects the real-time and authentic experiences of hotel guests.

Given that the review data is comprised of massive and unstructured text, this research integrates sentiment analysis as a core analytical tool to process the information effectively [10].

The data were collected from online reviews published by visitors on Google Review and Agoda, representing public data that can be accessed openly without violating user privacy [11]. Data collection was performed using a crawling technique to systematically retrieve review texts within a specific timeframe. Within the netnographic framework, this stage serves as a form of non-participant observation in the digital space, where the researchers do not intervene with the subjects in any way. The final dataset consists of 69 public reviews (40 from Google Review and 29 from Agoda) gathered between January and October 2025.

The data analysis process was conducted through five systematic stages, beginning with Data Crawling to harvest reviews from both primary platforms. Following the collection, the Pre-processing stage involved cleaning the data by removing irrelevant punctuation and symbols to normalize the text into its basic form, thereby enhancing the quality of sentiment classification. The third stage involved Feature Selection using the TF-IDF (Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency) approach to identify significant words that describe visitor experiences while reducing the influence of meaningless common terms.

Subsequently, Classification was performed using a lexicon-based approach to group the reviews into positive, neutral, and negative sentiment categories. The final stage was Evaluation, where qualitative validation was conducted by comparing the classification results with the original review texts to ensure analytical accuracy. In this stage, theoretical triangulation was also applied by mapping the sentiment analysis results onto the *Maqashid al-Shariah* framework, which includes *hifzh an-nafs* (protection of the soul), *hifzh al-mal* (protection of wealth), *hifzh al-'aql* (protection of intellect), *hifzh an-nasl* (protection of offspring), and *hifzh ad-din* (protection of religion). All findings were then interpreted through a descriptive-analytical lens to map how sharia values are implemented based on the actual experiences of visitors at the Grand Madani Sharia Hotel.

## 3 Results and discussion

### 3.1 Visitor experiences

Grand Madani Sharia Hotel stands as a pioneering sharia-compliant establishment in Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, currently maintaining a 4.0 rating on its official platform. This study utilizes netnographic techniques to conduct a comprehensive comparison of recent visitor experiences across two major digital sources: Google Review and Agoda, covering the period from January to October 2025 [12]. A total of 69 reviews were systematically analyzed, consisting of 40 entries from Google Review and 29 from Agoda, to capture the authentic sentiment of hotel guests in a natural digital environment.

To provide a holistic view of the visitor journey, the data were consolidated into a sentiment matrix that categorizes feedback into positive, neutral, and negative experiences. This classification not only maps overall satisfaction but also identifies specific operational touchpoints that influence guest perceptions.

As illustrated in Table 1, the visitor experience at Grand Madani Sharia Hotel is predominantly positive, with Google Review recording a high satisfaction rate of 82.5%. Guests consistently highlighted the cleanliness of the facilities and the availability of complete prayer equipment as primary strengths that reinforce the hotel's sharia identity. However, a significant disparity is observed on the Agoda platform, where negative feedback reaches 20.7%. These complaints are largely centered on pain points such as unmaintained swimming pools and inconsistent air conditioning performance. This contrast suggests that

while the hotel successfully fulfills the spiritual expectations of its guests, there is a critical need for operational consistency and technical maintenance to ensure that the physical service quality matches the excellence of its sharia branding.

**Table 1.** Consolidated sentiment matrix and visitor experience themes

Experience Category	Key Themes and Attributes	Google Review (40)	Agoda (29)
Positive (Strength)	Clean and spacious rooms, complete prayer facilities, hot water, strategic location, and friendly staff.	82.5%	72.4%
Neutral (Improvement)	Standard breakfast variety, moderate room interior, and functional issues (TV channels).	7.5%	6.9%
Negative (Critical)	Green/unmaintained pool, inconsistent AC performance, dirty bathrooms, and unresponsive staff service.	10.0%	20.7%

### 3.2 *Maqashid al-Shariah* perspective

Following the sentiment analysis, the next step involves evaluating the application of *Maqashid al-Shariah* within the hotel's operational activities. This framework is essential for assessing the halal tourism industry, as it ensures that services and facilities align with Islamic values aimed at human welfare [13]. In the context of sharia-compliant hospitality, *Maqashid al-Shariah* is reflected through management systems and facilities that provide peace and comfort, allowing guests, particularly Muslims, to fulfill their religious obligations seamlessly during their stay [14].

As the first three-star halal-certified establishment in Mataram, Grand Madani Sharia Hotel explicitly offers sharia-based services, including halal-certified dining and adequate worship facilities. To test its sharia compliance, visitor experiences from Google Review and Agoda were mapped onto the five pillars of *Maqashid al-Shariah*. The comparative results of this classification are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Comparative analysis of *maqashid al-Shariah* pillars

No	Pillars of <i>Maqashid al-Shariah</i>	Review Focus and Visitor Experience	Google Review (%)	Agoda (%)
1	<i>Hifzh an-Nafs</i>	Dominant focus on cleanliness, room comfort, and physical safety. Reflects mental and physical well-being.	55.0%	74.5%
2	<i>Hifzh al-Mal</i>	Highlights affordability, reasonable pricing, and strategic location contributing to cost-efficiency.	26.9%	18.0%
3	<i>Hifzh ad-Din</i>	Availability of prayer kits, Qur'ans, and proximity to the Islamic Center Mataram. Includes wake-up calls for Fajr prayer.	8.0%	5.1%
4	<i>Hifzh an-Nasl</i>	Suitability for families and children, ensuring a safe and harmonious social environment.	8.0%	2.6%
5	<i>Hifzh al-'Aql</i>	Minimally mentioned; relates to training experiences or educational/meeting facilities.	1.6%	0.0%

The data indicates that *Hifzh an-Nafs* (Protection of the Soul) is the most prominent pillar across both platforms, with Agoda showing a higher concentration at 74.5%. This suggests that visitors primarily evaluate Grand Madani Sharia Hotel based on the comfort and physical

serenity it provides. *Hifzh al-Mal* also appears frequently, as guests appreciate the value for money and strategic location which prevents financial and time waste.

In terms of religious observance (*Hifzh ad-Din*), guests specifically noted the convenience of having prayer equipment in-room and the hotel's proximity to the Islamic Center Mataram (UIC/Hubbul Wathan), which facilitates communal worship. Meanwhile, *Hifzh an-Nasl* is reflected in the hotel's reputation as a safe, family-friendly destination. However, the pillar of *Hifzh al-'Aql* (Protection of Intellect) shows the lowest frequency, particularly on Agoda (0%). This reveals an opportunity for the hotel to enhance its value proposition by introducing intellectual or spiritual development programs, such as Islamic studies or educational workshops, to fully realize the holistic goals of *Maqashid al-Shariah*.

### 3.3 Discussion

The sentiment analysis of visitor experiences across Google Review and Agoda reveals a consistent pattern of high satisfaction, primarily driven by the hotel's ability to provide a clean, comfortable, and spiritually supportive environment. The dominance of positive sentiment (ranging from 72.4% to 82.5%) underscores that Grand Madani Sharia Hotel has successfully established its core identity as a reliable sharia-compliant accommodation [15]. However, the presence of negative feedback, particularly on Agoda (20.7%), highlights critical pain points regarding technical maintenance, such as unmaintained swimming pools and inconsistent air conditioning. These findings suggest that while the hotel's sharia branding is strong, operational consistency remains the final hurdle in achieving total guest loyalty.

When analyzed through the *Maqashid al-Shariah* framework, the visitor experience provides a practical reflection of Islamic ethical values in a hospitality context [14]. The pillar of *Hifzh an-Nafs* (Protection of the Soul) is most evident, as guests frequently correlate the hotel's cleanliness and peaceful atmosphere with their own physical and mental well-being. In Sharia hospitality, providing a dignified and comfortable space is not merely a service standard but a fulfillment of the obligation to preserve the human soul. Similarly, *Hifzh al-Mal* (Protection of Wealth) is reflected in the hotel's strategic location and affordable pricing. By offering value for money and proximity to economic and religious hubs like the Islamic Center Mataram, the hotel helps guests avoid wastefulness (*israf*) and achieve time and cost efficiency, key components of wealth preservation in Islam.

The religious dimension, or *Hifzh ad-Din* (Protection of Religion), is seamlessly integrated into the daily operations, as evidenced by the appreciation for in-room prayer facilities and Sahur wake-up calls. These features demonstrate that the hotel does not only provide a place to stay but actively supports guests in maintaining their religious obligations. Furthermore, the hotel's suitability for families and its safe environment align with *Hifzh an-Nasl* (Protection of Offspring), fostering social and family harmony.

However, a significant analytical finding is the underperformance of the *Hifzh al-'Aql* (Protection of Intellect) pillar. The near-absence of mentions regarding intellectual or spiritual development, save for a single review concerning training facilities, indicates that the hotel's potential as a center for learning has not been fully realized. To truly embody a holistic *Maqashid al-Shariah* approach, management should consider implementing programs such as routine Islamic studies, spiritual workshops, or providing educational resources for guests. This study demonstrates that a netnographic approach to digital reviews allows for a contextual and profound identification of Sharia dimensions, moving beyond theoretical compliance to a lived experience within the Grand Madani Sharia Hotel.

## 4 Conclusion

The sentiment analysis conducted through a netnographic approach on Google Review and Agoda reveals that the visitor experience at Grand Madani Sharia Hotel is predominantly positive. From the *Maqashid al-Shariah* perspective, this research demonstrates that the hotel has successfully implemented four out of five key pillars. *Hifzh an-Nafs* is achieved through a serene and safe environment; *Hifzh al-Mal* is reflected in affordable pricing and a strategic location that ensures cost-efficiency; *Hifzh ad-Din* is well-supported by easy access to worship facilities and proximity to the Islamic Center Mataram; and *Hifzh an-Nasl* is evident in the hotel's family-friendly atmosphere. Conversely, *Hifzh al-'Aql* remains the least developed dimension, as it has not yet become a significant part of the visitor experience.

This study contributes to the literature as a pioneer in integrating netnographic methods with the *Maqashid al-Shariah* framework within the halal tourism industry. Practically, these findings provide sharia hotel managers with actionable insights to bridge the gap between religious branding and operational excellence. To achieve a holistic implementation of *Maqashid al-Shariah*, it is recommended that management not only focuses on physical and spiritual comfort but also introduces initiatives for intellectual development, such as spiritual workshops or educational resources, to fully enrich the guest experience.

Despite these insights, this study has limitations that offer opportunities for future research. First, the data were exclusively drawn from digital reviews on Google Review and Agoda, which may not capture the perspectives of guests who do not use online platforms. Future studies could integrate primary data through in-depth interviews or surveys to gain a more nuanced understanding of visitor motivations. Second, this research focused solely on the Grand Madani Sharia Hotel in Mataram. Expanding the scope to include a comparative analysis between multiple sharia-compliant hotels across different regions in Indonesia would provide a more generalized overview of how *Maqashid al-Shariah* is perceived in the national halal tourism industry. Lastly, future researchers could employ advanced natural language processing (NLP) or machine learning algorithms to analyze larger datasets over a longer period to track the evolution of visitor sentiment regarding sharia hospitality standards.

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