

# From Vision to Practice: Transformational Leadership in Aligning Digital Adaptation with Islamic Values in Indonesian Sharia Hotels

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## ABSTRACT

Sharia-compliant hotels in Indonesia are increasingly challenged to maintain religious integrity while embracing digital transformation. This study investigates how transformational leadership supports the integration of digital technologies in accordance with Islamic principles, recognising that although leadership is not explicitly regulated, the operational guidelines provide a normative framework that leaders are expected to interpret and implement in practice. A qualitative observational approach was employed. Data were collected from nine Sharia hotels in Makassar and Malang. The data were analysed using a six-phase thematic analysis framework, which enabled the systematic identification, coding, and interpretation of patterns across the entire dataset. The findings reveal that transformational leadership, which is characterised by visionary direction, motivational influence, and supportive engagement, is crucial in aligning technological adaptation with Sharia values. Hotels with stronger leadership adherence to Islamic ethics were more adherent in implementing digital tools that uphold modesty, halal standards, and moral conduct. Conversely, hotels lacking in consistent leadership practices showed weaker integration of both digital systems and Sharia compliance. Transformational leadership is essential in harmonising innovation and Islamic values. The findings of this study provide practical implications for Sharia hotel managers and policymakers to integrate transformational leadership with digital strategies so that technological innovation can enhance competitiveness without compromising adherence to Sharia principles.

**Keywords:** Digital Technology, Islamic Values, Sharia Hotel, Transformational Leadership

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## INTRODUCTION

Sharia hotels industry in Indonesia have experienced significant growth, driven by increasing demand for services that comply with Islamic value (Manan et al., 2023). This momentum is confirmed by Indonesia's position, alongside Malaysia, at the top of the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) as a leading halal tourism destination, with a score of 76 in 2024 (Iskandar et al., 2024). However, this growth is accompanied by new challenges, particularly the need to address digital disruption and compete with conventional hotels. In this context, recent studies show that digital strategies, such as utilising visual content on Instagram, significantly enhance the image and appeal of Sharia hotels to consumers (Alam et al., 2024; Andespa et al., 2024; Osijo et al., 2024). As a result, digital transformation is no longer an option but an urgent necessity for sharia hotel management to maintain competitiveness and ensure business sustainability.

This trend extends far beyond Indonesia. The development of the sharia-compliant hospitality industry is a rapidly growing global phenomenon. In Europe, America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, Muslim-friendly services are being developed to attract this growing market segment, often through alcohol-free accommodation and halal food offerings (Al-Ansi et al., 2022; Hamdy & Eid, 2024). In Asia, countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Japan, and South Korea are adopting Sharia principles to cater to tourists from the Middle East tourists (Alam, et al., 2024a; Hadasali et al., 2022; Papastathopoulos et al., 2021; Samori et al., 2016). Similarly, although the United States and Canada do not have formal Shariah hotels, a trend towards personalised halal and Muslim-friendly services is emerging in boutique hotels in major cities (Adirestuty, 2019; Kusumaningtyas et al., 2022). Furthermore, North African countries such as Morocco and Tunisia have long practised these principles inherently, and Australia is now beginning to develop halal tourism as part of its cultural inclusion and destination diversification strategy (Blanc & Eyre, 2024; Rizal et al., 2023). These global activities prove that the sharia-compliant hospitality industry is not a niche market, but rather a sustainable international trend, driven by a growing awareness of the diverse needs of Muslim travellers around the world.

Although existing studies have extensively explored the factors that influence consumers repurchase intentions and perceptions of sharia hotels, such as service quality and sharia compliance hotels (Alam, et al., 2024b; Febriandika & Millatina, 2023), there are still significant research gaps. In particular, the role of transformational leadership in facilitating digital technology adoption in this unique sector has been relatively underexplored. The current literature largely ignores how leadership drives digital innovation and organisational adaptation, focusing instead on operational aspects. Furthermore, research on digital transformation has mostly focused on conventional hotels, while sharia hotels have received limited attention as a primary subject.

To understand this gap, it is important to consider the operational framework of Sharia hotels. These facilities operate based on strict Islamic principles, which go beyond halal food and beverages to include ethical employment practices, codes of conduct, and overall moral compliance. Guidelines for this framework are provided by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), primarily through Fatwa No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016 (DSN-MUI, 2016). This fatwa mandates compliance with Sharia principles, including ethical business practices and the prohibition of forbidden items such as alcohol, thereby ensuring the authenticity of Sharia compliance in the hospitality sector. However, there are critical limitations to these guidelines. MUI fatwas still focus on traditional operational standards, such as halal certification, gender segregation, and prohibition of haram activities, and do not explicitly address the challenges and opportunities of digitalisation. Therefore, this study aims to fill this regulatory gap by proposing transformational leadership as a vital normative mechanism. This form of leadership can guide the ethical and effective adoption of digital technology in a manner consistent with broader Islamic values.

Furthermore, the role of the MUI, which was established in 1975, has been very important for the growing halal tourism market. Through fatwas on halal products, ranging from food and beverages to cosmetics, the MUI ensures compliance with Islamic law (Abdul & Khokhar, 2023; Alam, et al., 2023; Alanazi et al., 2024; Mas'ud et al., 2025). This regulatory foundation not only helps sharia hotels maintain a strong ethical identity but also provides a significant competitive advantage in the global halal tourism sector (Adirestuty, 2019; Saladin et al., 2024). Therefore, the application of a leadership perspective in digital adoption directly complements the MUI's existing efforts to ensure holistic sharia compliance.

In the context of Sharia hotels, transformational leadership is crucial to facilitating digital transformation that remains in line with Sharia law principles (Hamdy & Eid, 2024; Papastathopoulos et al., 2021). As defined by Bass & Avolio (1994), transformational leaders inspire their followers to exceed expectations, embrace innovation, and adapt to change. Although the impact of this type of leadership has been widely documented in the context of general organisations, its specific role in guiding digital adoption within the unique constraints of Shariah hotels, such as avoiding haram

practices and promoting ethical values, remains under-explored (Alam et al., 2024a; Alfianto et al., 2023; Wimmel, 2024).

The integration of digital technology from mobile applications and online booking systems to digital marketing has revolutionised the hospitality industry. For hotels that comply with Sharia law, this challenge is twofold: they must implement this technology while ensuring strict compliance with Sharia law. For example, although digital marketing on platforms such as Instagram has proven to be highly effective in increasing visibility (Nasir et al., 2022), all content must be selected to be free of haram elements and comply with Islamic standards of decency (Bekkin & Shnyrkova, 2022; Hanafi et al., 2024; Rachmiatie et al., 2022; Sulaiman et al., 2022; Windasari et al., 2024). This delicate balance highlights the critical need for leadership that can bridge technological advancement with religious integrity. Existing research shows that transformational leaders can promote the adoption of technologies that improve service delivery while respecting religious values (Alam, et al., 2024a; Batubara et al., 2024; Rizal et al., 2023). However, these studies often stop at general correlations, failing to explore the strategic mechanisms these leaders use to negotiate the inherent tension between innovation and compliance. This study addresses this gap by arguing that transformational leadership is not only a driver of change but also a critical normative mechanism for maintaining religious compliance and ethical standards throughout the digital transformation process.

This study makes an original contribution with a specific focus on the Indonesian context, combining leadership theory with digital transformation in a Sharia-compliant environment. Although recent contributions have begun to highlight the intersection between leadership and digitalisation in the hospitality sector (Hamdy & Eid, 2024; Rizal et al., 2023; Wimmel, 2024), they rarely discuss value-based Islamic institutions directly. Furthermore, although transformational leadership theory originates from a Western context (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Roth, 2023), its core values, such as ethics, visionary guidance, and individual consideration, demonstrate strong conceptual alignment with Islamic leadership principles such as amanah (trustworthiness), 'adl (justice), and shura (consultation) (Beekun & Badawi, 1999). This compatibility reinforces the theory's relevance to Shariah-based organisations.

The current regulatory landscape further reinforces this focus. Fatwas and guidelines from institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) mostly address operational standards including halal food, gender segregation, and prohibition of haram activities, but do not provide clear guidance on leadership models for digitalisation. Therefore, this study adopts a field-based approach: first, identifying how sharia hotels align with religious values in practice, and then exploring how transformational leadership influences their digital transformation, ensuring that technological innovation does not compromise religious integrity. Therefore, this study aims to explore how transformational leadership influences the digital transformation process in Islamic hotels in Indonesia. This research seeks to enrich the academic discourse on change management and leadership in the emerging field of value-based Islamic business.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the role of transformational leadership in facilitating digital transformation in sharia hotels in Indonesia. The main objective of this study is to reveal how leaders in these institutions encourage digital innovation while ensuring strict compliance with Islamic principles. The research locations included nine sharia hotels in the cities of Makassar and Malang.

**Table 1** Key Informants Profile

No.	Name
1.	Al-Badar Hotel Syariah Makassar
2.	De Capitol Hotel Syariah Makassar
3.	Urbanview Hotel Wollangi Syariah Panakkukang Makassar
4.	Hotel O Pondok Dian Syariah Makassar
5.	99 by VRV Syariah Hotel
6.	Hotel Radho Syariah Malang
7.	Sofia Residence Syariah Malang
8.	RedDoorz Syariah near RRI Malang
9.	Permata Jingga Aa 19 Boutique Syariah Malang

**Noted:** Compiled by Authors

These hotels were selected based on three main criteria: their status as officially sharia-certified institutions, their representativeness across various market segments (from budget to boutique categories), and their popularity among the local Muslim community, as evidenced by their

online visibility and recommendations from the community. This sampling strategy was designed to capture a variety of leadership practices and digital adaptation strategies. It should be noted that many of the hotels observed primarily serve specific internal communities or organisations, an operational focus that explains the scarcity of research on such facilities compared to general hotels in the broader tourism literature.

Primary data was collected through non-participant observation, focusing on managerial meetings, guest service operations, and staff interactions. These observations were guided by structured instruments based on transformational leadership theory (Avolio et al., 1991) and digital transformation theory (Philip 2021), focusing on key themes such as Vision and Strategic Direction, Leader-Follower Interactions, Use of Digital Tools, Support for Innovation, and Customer Digital Experience.

**Table 2** Observational Instruments

No.	Name	Items
1.	Vision and Strategic Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presence of Sharia-compliant mission/vision statements visibly posted (e.g., in lobby, meeting rooms)</li> <li>- Management uses presentation tools (e.g., digital boards, slides) in meetings that mention strategic or digital goals</li> <li>- Visible alignment between digital content (e.g., banners, screens) and Sharia values (modesty, no haram elements)</li> </ul>
2.	Leader-Follower Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managers regularly interact with staff in a coaching or guiding manner (e.g., giving instructions, feedback)</li> <li>- Leaders are seen giving motivational talks or recognition to employees in public settings</li> <li>- Observed body language of managers during team discussions is encouraging/supportive (smiling, nodding, inclusive gestures)</li> </ul>
3.	Use of Digital Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff use tablets or mobile devices in service delivery (check-in, housekeeping, restaurant orders)</li> <li>- Hotel facilities include digital signage, e-menus, or QR code systems for guest interactions</li> <li>- Use of internal digital communication tools during operations (e.g., group chats on-screen, hotel management systems visible on devices)</li> </ul>
4	Support for Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noticeable placement of suggestion boxes, innovation boards, or digital feedback screens for staff or guests</li> <li>- Staff are seen testing or using new devices/apps (e.g., training on a new platform, unfamiliar tools in use)</li> <li>- Display of visual campaigns or posters encouraging improvement, creativity, or technology use.</li> </ul>
5	Customer Digital Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guests interact with digital tools easily (e.g., self-check-in, QR-based ordering, mobile keys)</li> <li>- Clear signage or assistance available to help guests use digital tools (in multiple languages if needed)</li> <li>- Hotel social media content visible on public displays or promoted (e.g., Instagram handles, digital walls with guest posts)</li> </ul>
6	Sharia Compliance in Digital Context	Official staff from the Department of Industry and Trade of Pamekasan, providing information about halal <i>fatwa</i> related halal certification

**Source:** Avolio et al. (1991) and Philip (2021)

To ensure the validity of the findings, a data triangulation process was applied. The insights gained from observation were confirmed through semi-structured interviews with hotel managers and staff, reviews of secondary sources such as industry reports and academic literature, and analysis of regulatory documents, particularly Sharia hotel fatwas issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). This multifaceted approach ensures that the study's conclusions are robustly supported by converging evidence from multiple independent sources.

This study utilised six-phase thematic analysis framework developed by Braun et al. (2021) to systematically identify, code, and interpret patterns in the dataset. This analytical process combines inductive and deductive approaches: themes are generated inductively from raw observation notes and are also based deductively on the core theoretical constructs of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994) and Sharia compliance. Special analytical attention was given to the four dimensions of transformational leadership, including strategic vision (ideal influence), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration.

To ensure the integration of Islamic principles, this analysis uses Fatwa No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016 from the Indonesian Ulema Council (DSN-MUI) as the main normative framework. This fatwa sets operational standards for the sharia-compliant hospitality industry, including the prohibition of haram elements (e.g., alcohol, gambling), the obligation to provide halal-certified food and worship facilities, and guidelines for gender segregation in certain services. Although this fatwa

does not explicitly mention leadership or digital transformation, it implicitly requires that all operational and managerial practices comply with Islamic ethics.

Therefore, this study interprets transformational leadership through a Sharia-compliant lens. Each observed leadership behaviour and digital innovation is evaluated not only based on its effectiveness but also on its ethical compatibility with the principles outlined in the fatwa. This involves cross-checking these practices against a framework to ensure their conformity with expectations of decency, ethical service, and religious sensitivity, so that the drive for digital innovation remains within the bounds of Sharia principles.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Six-Phase Thematic Result

This study employs a structured observational framework, designed around the principles of transformational leadership and digital transformation, to assess the integration of digital technology within Sharia-compliant hotels. The framework consists of six key dimensions:

1. Vision and Strategic Direction includes publicly displaying the Sharia mission/vision statement; using digital presentation tools (e.g., slides, digital boards) in meetings that refer to strategic digital objectives; aligning digital content (e.g., banners, information screens) with Sharia values (simplicity, absence of prohibited elements). The results of the study show that hotels that have a clear Sharia vision and communicate it well are more successful in aligning digital technology with Islamic principles. A prime example is the 'Ramadan Halal Staycation' campaign, which effectively combines religious values with targeted digital marketing strategies.
2. Leader-Follower Interaction reflects routine interactions between managers and staff (guidance, instructions, feedback); public recognition and motivational practices by leaders; supportive body language (smiles, nods, inclusive gestures) during team discussions. The results show a leadership style based on Islamic values such as justice (al-'adl) and trust (al-amanah) characterised by motivation and support, has a significant positive impact on staff engagement and satisfaction. Conversely, an authoritarian leadership approach is associated with decreased morale and indifference.
3. Use of Digital Tools includes the application of tablets or mobile devices for services (check-in, housekeeping, food ordering); the availability of digital facilities (digital menus, QR codes, digital information boards); and the use of internal digital communication tools (e.g., chat groups, hotel management systems). It was found that although all hotels observed had adopted basic digital tools such as QR codes and WhatsApp, the level of integration and functional utilisation varied significantly. Some facilities used digital technology symbolically rather than as a core and functional component of their operations.
4. Support for Innovation includes the existence of innovation channels (suggestion boxes, innovation boards, digital feedback screens); staff being observed trying out new devices or applications; visual campaigns or posters that encourage creativity and the use of technology. The results of the study show that although hotels display symbolic support for innovation (e.g., posters stating 'Innovation is Worship'), concrete follow-up and experimental initiatives by staff remain limited. Effective innovation support requires a fundamental organisational culture that encourages risk-taking and provides staff with a degree of autonomy.
5. Customer Digital Experience is demonstrated through the ease of guest interaction with digital tools (self-check-in, booking via QR code); the availability of guides or assistance for digital interfaces; promotional digital content and social media within the hotel that is in line with Sharia values. Some hotels have implemented sophisticated digital guest experiences, including mobile key systems and dedicated guest applications. However, not all ensure that these digital touchpoints are fully compliant with Sharia principles, such as marriage status verification for room bookings or consistent integration of religious content.
6. Sharia Compliance in a Digital Context is demonstrated through the alignment of digital content and services with Islamic values (provision of halal information, prayer times); avoidance of inappropriate elements (promotion of haram products, inappropriate content); and integration of religious support features (qibla direction indicator, prayer time notifications via applications or digital screens). Most hotels make coordinated efforts to align their digital offerings with Sharia principles. Notable practices include displaying digital prayer times and ensuring content modesty. However, implementation is inconsistent across the locations studied, indicating a lack of standard protocols.



## Sharia Values

The implementation of Sharia values in the sharia hospitality industry is operationalized through several key aspects, as mandated by Fatwa DSN-MUI No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016 (DSN-MUI, 2016). These values are manifested across product offerings, service delivery, and operational management. Hotels are obligated to provide food and beverages that are certified halal. They must provide clean prayer facilities, equipped with Qibla direction indicators and dedicated areas for ablution (wudhu) (Munfarida & Arida, 2023). Then, in terms of Sharia-Based Financial Management Financial operations must avoid any transactions involving usury (interest). Institutions are required to partner with sharia-financial institutions, not conventional ones. Procedures must also be in place to verify the marital status of cohabiting guests (Ichsan, 2024). Gender Interaction and Privacy: Policies must ensure that interactions between non-mahram genders and guest privacy are maintained in accordance with Sharia principles syariah. On the other hands, employees are required to conduct themselves in accordance with Islamic ethics when serving guests. The adoption of digital technology must support and enhance Sharia principles.

The findings of this study reveal that Sharia values in syariah hotels are realized through a multi-layered approach, encompassing both tangible symbols and integrated operational systems.

- a. Symbolic Commitment and Certification. Several hotels employ visual markers, such as displaying official Sharia logos and certifications, to signal their commitment to Islamic principles and build trust with consumers.
- b. Sharia-Centric Operational Policies. A key operational policy is the implementation of guest verification systems, for instance, by requesting marriage certificates for couples, to ensure adherence to Islamic law regarding cohabitation.
- c. Provision of Worship Facilities and Digital Integration. Hotels provide adequate worship facilities, including prayer rooms and Qibla directions. Furthermore, digital systems are leveraged to support Sharia principles, such as using QR codes for accessing halal menus or check-in applications designed to protect guest privacy.
- d. Islamic Communication and Branding. The use of Islamic language and symbolism is consistently applied in both internal communications (staff training, manuals) and external marketing materials to reinforce the hotel's religious identity.
- e. Technology for Enhanced Sharia-Compliant Service. Technology, including digital key systems, dedicated guest applications, and WhatsApp-based communication, is strategically adopted to improve service efficiency and convenience while rigorously upholding Sharia guidelines.

The implementation of Sharia values in the hospitality industry extends far beyond mere products and services. It encompasses a holistic framework that includes financial management, leadership ethos, work ethics, and technological integration. Ultimately, successful implementation requires genuine, top-down commitment from management and the cultivation of a strong organizational culture that embodies these principles, moving beyond symbolic gestures to achieve deep, operational integration.

## Transformational Leadership and Digital Transformation

Digital transformation in sharia hotels is manifested through the application of various technologies, such as QR codes to display halal menus and product information, digital check-in that simplifies the process without compromising privacy and sharia principles, and the use of WhatsApp for internal communication and staff coordination. Some hotels have even adopted more sophisticated systems, such as mobile keys and special guest applications that facilitate booking and access to service information. However, the depth of this transformation varies; some are symbolic without full integration, while hotels with greater resources have implemented more functional and integrated solutions.

Challenges in digital transformation include staff readiness in using technology, financial constraints on investment, and a lack of integration between technology and sharia values. Variations in implementation are evident, with budget hotels tending to rely on simple technologies, while hotels with greater capital are able to adopt more advanced innovations. Therefore, a strategic approach is needed to ensure that digital transformation not only improves efficiency but is also in line with Islamic principles.

Regarding Transformational Leadership in Sharia Hotels, there are four main dimensions: idealised influence (exemplary behaviour), inspirational motivation, individualised consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Leaders set an example by being directly involved in operational work and reflecting Islamic values such as humility and patience. Inspirational motivation is provided by linking organisational goals with spiritual values, such as the slogan 'Innovation is Worship'. Individualised consideration is demonstrated by personally guiding employees, including in technology training, while intellectual stimulation is realised through the provision of creativity spaces and suggestion

boxes. The impact of this type of leadership is significant, including increased employee engagement, performance, and satisfaction, as well as success in technology adoption. However, its implementation faces a number of challenges, such as commercial pressures that limit profitability due to the sharia brand, a lack of leadership training integrated with Islamic values, and a rigid hierarchical structure that hinders innovation and feedback from subordinates.

Transformational leadership and digital transformation in sharia hotels are interrelated. The success of digital transformation is greatly influenced by an inspirational, ethical leadership style that is in line with Islamic values (Al-Jayyousi et al., 2022; Ahsan, 2024; Alhitmi et al., 2023; Aysan & Syarif, 2025; Qizam et al., 2025). However, commercial challenges and resource constraints remain obstacles. With the right leadership training and innovation strategies that are aligned with sharia, sharia hotels can improve their performance and competitiveness without compromising Islamic values. To improve transformational leadership and digital transformation, several recommendations can be implemented. First, integrate leadership training with Islamic ethics to equip managers with relevant competencies. Second, develop Sharia-based innovations, such as halal food ordering applications and virtual tours of worship facilities. Third, diversify revenue sources through halal tourism packages and collaborations with Sharia financial institutions. Fourth, create a supportive organisational culture by giving employees more autonomy. Finally, periodic evaluations are needed to ensure that the technology adopted is functional and not merely symbolic, and that it is in line with Sharia values.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of sharia values in the operations of sharia hotels in Indonesia still shows significant variation and inconsistency. Although guided by Fatwa DSN-MUI No. 108/DSN-MUI/X/2016, its application in the field is often still symbolic. This is reflected in inadequate worship facilities, lax verification of guest status, and continued involvement with conventional financial services in the name of practicality. Meanwhile, digital transformation has begun with the adoption of basic technologies such as QR codes and digital check-in. However, this implementation is not yet uniform and is often not fully integrated. More advanced technologies, such as mobile key systems and specialised applications, are only accessible to large capital hotels. More importantly, the integration between technology and sharia values is still very limited. In the context of human resources, the research findings confirm that transformational leadership plays a crucial role. Hotels led by figures who set an example, provide Islamic motivation, and support innovation demonstrate better employee engagement and technology adaptation. Conversely, authoritarian leadership styles dampen employee enthusiasm and initiative. Behind the operational challenges lies a fundamental tension between commercialisation and Shariah compliance. Some managers view the Shariah label as a constraint on profitability because it prevents the sale of high-margin services such as alcohol. This perception has led some hotels to lack substantive commitment to Shariah values. Furthermore, leadership development in Shariah hotels must integrate Islamic ethical foundations with digital competencies. Managers need to be encouraged to go beyond symbolic implementation by embedding digital tools that enhance service quality while preserving Islamic values in the guest experience. This can be achieved through: Leadership Training that integrates Islamic values and innovation strategies, the Development of more detailed Operational Guidelines to ensure consistency in guest verification, Sharia financial management, and technology use, and Service Diversification through halal tourism packages, collaboration with Sharia fintech, and the development of creative Sharia-compliant digital services.

This study has implications for policymakers, particularly the Ministry of Tourism and the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), to develop specific guidelines for the digitisation of sharia hotels. These guidelines should cover technical aspects such as sharia-compliant digital check-in systems, the visibility of halal certification on online platforms, sharia-compliant payment methods, and the integration of Islamic values into guest applications. In addition, periodic certification and auditing by independent institutions are needed to ensure substantive compliance, joint programmes such as sharia digital leadership training and standardised indicators for sharia-based digitalisation, and government support to facilitate access to financing and supporting technology without violating sharia principles.

This study has several limitations. First, the methodology used is based on thematic observation, so the analysis produced is an interpretation of observed practices and not a normative assessment. Second, the limited scope to nine Shariah hotels in Makassar and Malang limits the transferability of findings to other regions or types of Islamic hospitality businesses. Third, the absence of interviews or quantitative data limits the depth of insight into leadership dynamics and employee perspectives.

To enrich understanding, future research should adopt a mixed-methods design combining interviews and surveys, and conduct comparative research between regions with different socio-

economic characteristics and between sharia and conventional hotels to see how religious values shape digital innovation strategies. Quantitative studies to measure the extent to which transformational leadership and digital transformation influence operational performance and guest satisfaction. In addition, further exploration of employee experiences and guest perspectives to enrich the interpretation of the practical impact of leadership styles in this context.

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