Morals of Dress in Islamic Teachings

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Abstract

Dress ethics in Islamic teachings constitute an essential aspect of forming a Muslim personality grounded in faith and devotion to Allah SWT. In Islam, clothing is not merely regarded as a physical necessity, but also as a means of preserving dignity, modesty, and Islamic identity. This article aims to examine the concept of dress ethics in Islam and its relevance in contemporary Muslim society. The study employs a library research method by analyzing primary and secondary sources, including the Qur'an, Hadith, and relevant scholarly literature. The findings indicate that Islamic dress ethics emphasize principles such as covering the awrah, modesty, cleanliness, and the prohibition of excessiveness and tabarruj. Moreover, dressing in accordance with Islamic teachings carries both spiritual and social dimensions, as it fosters a sense of modesty (ḥayā'), safeguards individual morality, and contributes to social harmony. Therefore, Islamic dress ethics are not merely normative rules but also contextual and applicable in addressing the challenges of modern life.

Keywords: Islamic Dress Ethics; Islam; Awrah; Islamic Ethics; Morality.

Abstract

Etika berpakaian dalam Islam merupakan bagian penting dalam pembentukan kepribadian Muslim yang berlandaskan iman dan ketakwaan kepada Allah Swt. Pakaian dalam Islam tidak hanya dipahami sebagai kebutuhan fisik semata, tetapi juga sebagai sarana untuk menjaga kehormatan, kesopanan, dan identitas keislaman. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji konsep etika berpakaian dalam Islam serta relevansinya dalam kehidupan masyarakat Muslim kontemporer. Metode yang digunakan adalah studi kepustakaan dengan menganalisis sumber primer dan sekunder berupa Al-Qur'an, hadis, serta literatur ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa etika berpakaian dalam Islam menekankan prinsip menutup aurat, kesederhanaan, kebersihan, serta larangan berlebih-lebihan dan tabarruj. Selain itu, berpakaian sesuai syariat memiliki dimensi spiritual dan sosial, karena mampu menumbuhkan rasa malu (ḥayā'), menjaga moral individu, serta menciptakan tatanan sosial yang harmonis. Dengan demikian, etika berpakaian dalam Islam tidak hanya bersifat normatif, tetapi juga kontekstual dan aplikatif dalam merespons tantangan modernitas.

Kata kunci: Etika Berpakaian; Islam; Aurat; Etika Islam; Moralitas.

Introduction

Morals are a fundamental aspect of Islamic teachings which function as a basis for the formation of human personality and behavior. Islam does not only regulate human relationships with Allah SWT. (ḥabl min Allāh), but also human relations with each other (ḥabl min al-nās) and with the surrounding environment. In this context, morals are a reflection of the quality of a person's faith which is manifested in their attitudes, words and daily actions. One of the real forms of morals that is most easily observed in social life is the way a person dresses(Rahmanidinie & Faujiah, 2022).

In Islam, clothing is not merely viewed as a biological necessity to protect the body from heat and cold, but also as a symbol of morality, identity, and human dignity. The Quran states that clothing serves as a covering for the private parts and as adornment, as well as a form of piety. Thus, clothing has a spiritual dimension closely linked to a Muslim's faith and religious awareness. The way one dresses reflects how one understands and practices the teachings of their religion in real life.

In Islamic teachings, the concept of clothing is comprehensively regulated through the principles of sharia and morality. Sharia provides normative boundaries regarding the aurat (awrah) that must be covered, while morality emphasizes the values of modesty, simplicity, and shame (ḥayā'). These two aspects cannot be separated, as dressing in accordance with sharia but ignoring moral values can lose its spiritual meaning. Therefore, clothing in Islam must be understood as a unity between legal regulations and ethical values.(Siti Yulinda Nurhalimah et al., 2025).

Over time, the phenomena of globalization and modernization have brought significant changes to people's lifestyles, including how they dress. Modern fashion trends often prioritize aesthetics, popularity, and self-expression. This often leads to a shift in clothing orientation among Muslims, from adherence to Islamic law to simply following fashion. As a result, the moral values inherent in clothing are being diminished.

Social reality shows that some Muslim communities, particularly the younger generation, face a dilemma between the demands of Islamic identity and the pressures of popular culture. Tight, transparent, or revealing clothing is often perceived as a symbol of modernity and freedom of expression. This phenomenon poses a serious challenge to the internalization of ḥayā' values and moral awareness regarding dress. If not addressed wisely, this situation could weaken individual morals and the social fabric of Muslim society.(Srisusilawati et al., 2024).

In the context of Muslim women, the issue of dress is a highly complex and sensitive topic. On the one hand, Islam honors women and grants them the right to develop and play an active role in social life. On the other hand, Islam also establishes dress codes aimed at upholding their honor and protecting them from various forms of exploitation. The tension between Islamic values and modern fashion trends often results in the hijab shifting from a symbol of obedience to a mere lifestyle accessory.

Likewise for men, Islam establishes etiquette and clothing limits that require modesty, modesty and cleanliness. However, discussions regarding the morals of men's clothing often receive less attention than women. In fact, both have the same moral responsibility in maintaining their private parts and ethical clothing. This unequal focus shows the need for a more comprehensive study of the morals of clothing in Islam as a whole.

Ethical dress not only impacts individuals but also has broad social implications. The way we dress can influence interaction patterns, social perceptions, and the moral climate within a community. Dressing in an Islamic manner can create a more polite, safe, and respectful environment. Conversely, ignoring ethical dress can trigger various social problems, such as body objectification and a decline in moral sensitivity.(Windra Ilhami, 2024).

Therefore, the study of ethical clothing within Islamic teachings is highly relevant for development, particularly in facing the challenges of modernity and globalization. A comprehensive and contextual understanding is necessary so that

Islamic teachings on clothing are not understood rigidly but remain grounded in fundamental Islamic values and morals. This approach is expected to bridge the gap between the demands of the times and Islamic principles.

Based on this background, this article aims to examine the concept of ethical dress within Islamic teachings and its relevance to contemporary Muslim society. This study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic ethics studies and serve as a practical reference for Muslims in implementing ethical dress values consistently and meaningfully in their daily lives.

Research Methods

The research method used in this study is qualitative research with a library research approach. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on examining the concepts, values, and principles of morality regarding clothing in Islamic teachings, sourced from normative texts and scientific literature. The library study allows researchers to systematically and in-depth explore, analyze, and synthesize the various views of Islamic scholars and thinkers, both classical and contemporary.

Data sources in this research consist of primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Koran and hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. relating to ethics, morals and clothing regulations in Islam. Verses from the Qur'an which discuss aurat, modesty and piety, as well as hadiths which explain manners of dress, are used as a normative basis for the analysis. Meanwhile, secondary sources include tafsir books, books on Islamic morals and fiqh, works by Muslim thinkers such as Ibnu Miskawaih, as well as journal articles and scientific research relevant to the theme of morals in clothing.

Data collection techniques were conducted through a systematic literature search, from both print and digital sources. Researchers identified, classified, and selected literature directly relevant to the research focus. This process was carried out by considering the credibility of the sources, the relevance of the content, and

their contribution to the understanding of Islamic dress code. The collected literature was then recorded and organized thematically to facilitate the analysis process.

The data analysis in this study employed content analysis. This method aims to explore the meanings, concepts, and messages contained in Islamic texts and related scientific literature. The analysis was conducted by reading the texts in depth, interpreting their normative and ethical meanings, and relating them to the social context and contemporary challenges. A descriptive-analytical approach was used to systematically and critically explain the concept of morality in clothing without altering the original meaning of the source.

To maintain data validity, this study employed source triangulation, comparing various references from the Quran, hadith, and the views of scholars and academics. Thus, the conclusions drawn are not subjective but have a strong scientific basis. Through this method, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the ethical principles of dress within Islamic teachings and their relevance to the lives of contemporary Muslim communities.

Results and Discussion

The concept of ethical dress in Islamic teachings is deeply rooted in the primary sources of Islam, namely the Quran and Hadith, and is reinforced by the thoughts of Islamic scholars. In Islam, dressing is not understood as a neutral activity, but rather as part of worship and a manifestation of one's faith. The way one dresses reflects an individual's inner state and moral qualities, thus having interrelated spiritual, moral, and social dimensions.(Ipra Adinata et al., 2023).

The Quran emphasizes the function of clothing as a covering for the private parts, as an adornment, and as a symbol of piety. In Surah Al-A'rāf, verse 26, it is stated that pious clothing is the best, indicating that the primary value of clothing lies not in its luxury or beauty, but in its conformity to the values of piety. This verse emphasizes that ethical dress does not stop at the outward aspect, but is

oriented toward developing spiritual awareness within a person.

The concept of covering the aurat (awrah) is a fundamental principle in Islamic dress. The aurat is understood as a body part that must be covered to maintain human honor and dignity. The requirements for aurat for men and women are clearly stipulated in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), but its implementation cannot be separated from moral values. Covering the aurat is not merely a legal obligation, but also a form of moral awareness to protect oneself from inappropriate views and potential social harm.(Aguskhunaifi, 2019).

Apart from covering the private parts, Islam also emphasizes the principles of modesty and modesty in clothing. Modest clothing reflects a respectful attitude towards oneself and others. Simplicity (i'tidāl) is an important value so that dressing does not become a means of vanity, showing off, or seeking popularity. In this case, Islam prohibits excessive attitudes (isrāf) and tabarruj, because they are contrary to the noble morals taught by religion.

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reinforces the concept of ethical dress by providing practical examples and clear etiquette. The Prophet (peace be upon him) encouraged his followers to dress cleanly and neatly, yet modestly. He also condemned clothing behavior based on arrogance, such as hanging out clothes with the intention of showing off. This demonstrates that intention in dressing is a crucial factor in assessing a person's morals.

Shame (ḥayā') is a fundamental moral value closely linked to one's attire. In Islam, ḥayā' is viewed as a branch of faith. Sharia-compliant clothing helps cultivate and maintain this sense of shame, both toward God and toward others. Conversely, clothing that reveals the body or excessively exposes the body has the potential to weaken the value of ḥayā' and damage an individual's moral sensitivity.(Fitri Halimah Lubis et al., 2024).

Ibn Miskawaih, a key figure in Islamic moral thought, viewed morality as a mental state that drives a person to act spontaneously without the need for lengthy rational consideration. In the context of clothing, this view suggests that a person's

attire is a reflection of their established character and inner habits. Once the values of modesty and piety are ingrained, Islamic dress will emerge naturally.

The thoughts of fiqh scholars also emphasize that clothing should not resemble the opposite sex or symbols typical of non-Muslims which are contrary to Islamic values. This prohibition on tasyabbuh aims to maintain Islamic identity and clarity of social roles. From a moral perspective, maintaining this identity is a form of moral consistency and commitment to religious teachings.

Ethical dress in Islam is also closely related to the principles of cleanliness and tidiness. Islam places great emphasis on cleanliness as part of faith. Clean and appropriate clothing reflects a responsible personality and respect for the social environment. Therefore, ethical dress is not only measured by how covered one's clothing is, but also by its condition and appropriateness.(Fauzi, 2016).

The social dimension of ethical dress is evident in its influence on interactions between individuals. Modest and sharia-compliant clothing creates a healthy, safe, and respectful social environment. Islam views individual behavior, including dress, as having a direct impact on the collective morality of society.

In the context of women, ethical dress aims to maintain honor and protect them from various forms of exploitation. The Quran and Hadith provide guidance for women to dress in a way that covers their aurat (aura), avoids attracting undue attention, and maintains a respectful demeanor. However, these provisions are not intended to restrict women's roles, but rather to ensure their safety, dignity, and freedom within the framework of Islamic values.

Meanwhile, for men, ethical dress requires responsibility, modesty, and humility. Covering one's private parts, avoiding arrogance, and maintaining cleanliness are all part of implementing these ethical standards. This demonstrates that moral responsibility in dress applies to all Muslims, regardless of gender.

The concept of ethical dress also emphasizes the importance of intention. In Islam, every action is judged based on its intention. Dressing as an act of obedience to Allah and maintaining one's dignity is considered an act of worship. Conversely,

dressing motivated by showing off, arrogance, or lust loses its spiritual value, even if it appears to conform to Islamic law.(Frandita Juwika et al., 2024).

Thus, the concept of ethical clothing in Islamic teachings is a combination of normative rules and ethical values. The Quran, Hadith, and the thoughts of Islamic scholars emphasize that clothing must be based on faith, moral awareness, and social responsibility. Ethical clothing not only regulates what is worn but also shapes the overall character and personality of a Muslim.

Overall, the morals of clothing in Islam reflect the integration of spiritual, moral and social dimensions in human life. By fully understanding this concept, Muslims are expected to be able to use clothing as a means of forming noble morals and practicing Islamic values in everyday life.

The relevance of ethical dress within Islamic teachings is growing stronger amidst the rapid and massive development of globalization and modern fashion trends. Globalization not only brings advances in technology, communication, and information, but also spreads new cultural values that are often at odds with Islamic moral principles. In the context of dress, this global trend is driving a shift in orientation, from clothing as a means of worship and protection of honor to clothing as a symbol of lifestyle and an expression of individual freedom. This situation demands that Muslims have a strong foundation of values to avoid losing their Islamic identity.(Kamba, 2022).

Modern fashion trends generally prioritize aesthetics, design creativity, and visual appeal. Tight-fitting, transparent, or revealing clothing styles are often promoted as a sign of progress and modernity. In social reality, these trends are slowly shaping new standards of appropriate clothing that tend to conflict with Islamic values of modesty and covering the genitals. Consequently, the implementation of Islamic dress code faces serious challenges, as sharia norms are often deemed irrelevant to current developments.

The influence of social media is further strengthening the dominance of global fashion trends among the younger generation of Muslims. Digital platforms

like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have become primary platforms for the dissemination of clothing styles displayed by celebrities and influencers. These figures are often used as role models without a critical eye for the appropriateness of the values they portray. In many cases, popular dress standards on social media emphasize popularity and self-image over moral and spiritual values.(Hanisya Hairidha et al., 2025).

The shift in meaning is also evident in the practice of wearing the hijab among Muslim women. The hijab, which in Islamic teachings serves as a symbol of obedience, modesty, and honor, is now often diminished in meaning. It is often paired with tight-fitting clothing or styles that emphasize the body. This situation demonstrates the tension between the demands of Islamic law and the logic of the fashion industry, which prioritizes visuals and market trends.

The challenges of globalization are felt not only by women but also by Muslim men. Modern men's clothing styles often emphasize luxury, famous brands, and social status symbols. Clothing is then used as a means of proving one's existence and prestige in the public sphere. This orientation contradicts the principles of modesty, humility, and self-control that are integral to Islamic dress.

However, Islam does not position itself as a religion that opposes modernity and change. Instead, Islam allows ample room for creativity and innovation as long as they do not violate the basic principles of sharia. This flexibility demonstrates that Islamic dress codes are dynamic and adaptive, not rigid and static. Therefore, the primary issue lies not with fashion trends themselves, but rather with how Muslims respond to them wisely.

The principle of al-muḥāfaẓah 'alā al-qadīm aṣ-ṣāliḥ wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadīd al-aṣlaḥ serves as a strategic guideline in dealing with modern fashion trends. This principle emphasizes the importance of maintaining good old values, such as covering the genitals, modesty, and simplicity, while simultaneously opening oneself to new, better and more beneficial values. With this approach, modern fashion can be adapted without sacrificing moral values and Islamic

identity.(Lathifah et al., 2024).

Implementing Islamic dress code in the modern era also depends heavily on the critical awareness of individual Muslims. Muslims are expected to avoid consumerism and blind imitation of emerging trends. Being selective in choosing clothing is a form of moral and spiritual responsibility. With this awareness, one can maintain a neat, attractive, and professional appearance without violating Islamic values.

Education plays a strategic role in instilling an understanding of ethical dress. Family education forms the initial foundation for children's attitudes and clothing habits. Furthermore, formal and non-formal educational institutions have a responsibility to reinforce the understanding that dress is not merely a matter of aesthetics, but also relates to faith and morals. Continuing education will shape a generation of Muslims capable of responding to trends intelligently and morally.

The social and cultural environment also determines the success of implementing Islamic dress codes. A society that upholds modesty and ethics will exert positive social pressure on individuals to dress according to religious norms. Conversely, a permissive environment that tends to ignore moral values will weaken an individual's commitment to dress codes. Therefore, the formation of an Islamic collective culture is crucial in maintaining ethical dress codes.

Consistently implementing Islamic dress code positively impacts social life. Modest, sharia-compliant clothing helps foster healthier and more dignified interactions. This can reduce body objectification and encourage social relationships based on respect, not solely physical assessment. In the long term, this contributes to a more civilized society.(Ahmadi & Dewi Murni, 2025).

Amidst the challenges of globalization, Islamic dress also holds great potential as a cultural and spiritual identity for Muslims. When properly understood and practiced, Islamic dress can reflect elegance, modesty, and profound spiritual values. This identity is not exclusive but can be a positive contribution of Islam to a diverse global civilization.

Thus, the relevance of ethical dress in Islamic teachings remains intact despite the ever-evolving dynamics of modern fashion trends. Implementing these values requires individual awareness, ongoing educational support, and a conducive social environment. Through a contextual approach based on ethical values, Muslims can utilize dress as a means of maintaining identity, morality, and obedience amidst the challenges of the times.

Conclusion

According to Islamic teachings, proper dress is an integral part of practicing faith and piety, reflected in a Muslim's daily behavior. Dressing is not only understood as a physical necessity, but also as a form of worship with spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. The Quran, Hadith, and the thoughts of Islamic scholars emphasize that the main principles of proper dress include covering the genitals, modesty, simplicity, cleanliness, and prohibition of excess and arrogance. All of these principles aim to maintain human dignity and develop a personality with noble character.

In the context of contemporary life, Islamic dress code remains strongly relevant despite the challenges of globalization and modern fashion trends. Global cultural trends and the influence of social media often drive a shift in clothing orientation from adherence to Islamic law toward expressing lifestyle and popularity. However, Islam does not reject developments; instead, it provides guidance for its followers to be selective and critical. The principle of preserving good old values and embracing better new ones serves as the foundation for integrating modern fashion with Islamic dress code.

Thus, implementing ethical dress code within Islamic teachings requires individual awareness, ongoing educational support, and a conducive social environment. When these values are understood and consistently practiced, Islamic dress code serves not only as a safeguard for personal morals but also as a means of building a harmonious and dignified social order. Ethical dress code ultimately

becomes a concrete manifestation of the practice of Islamic teachings, leading humans to a better life in this world and salvation in the afterlife.

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