

# Legal Integrity in Contemporary Fiqh: An Analysis of Scholars' Responses to Modern Fashion Issues in Indonesia

Harisah – Harisah,<sup>1</sup> Afidah Wahyuni,<sup>2</sup> Sri Astutik Handayani,<sup>3</sup> Kutsiyatur Rahmah,<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Al Adib Habibul Haq<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,3,4</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Madura, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

<sup>5</sup> Institut Bina Madani Bogor, Indonesia

**Corresponding Author:** Harisah; Email: [harisah@iainmadura.ac.id](mailto:harisah@iainmadura.ac.id)

## Abstract

The phenomenon of modern fashion development in Indonesia, particularly in the context of Muslim and Muslimah clothing, has brought about various changes in the social, cultural, and Islamic legal (fiqh) spheres, particularly regarding differing interpretations of the definition of the aurat, principles of modesty, and the use of religious symbols in the fashion industry for commercial purposes. This article examines how Islamic legal integrity is upheld by scholars in their responses to modern fashion trends through a contemporary fiqh approach. By examining fatwas and views from authoritative institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah, this study highlights the debate surrounding the limits of aurat, the principle of modesty, and the commercialization of religious symbols in the fashion industry. It was found that most scholars strive to balance Sharia values with the cultural and economic expression needs of urban Muslim communities. However, challenges arise regarding the consistency of interpretation and social accountability for the issued fatwas, especially in light of the realities of social media, the creative industry, and global market dynamics. This study recommends the importance of dialogue between scholars, fashion industry players, academics, and the wider community as a strategic step to maintain legal integrity in the face of changing times. With a collaborative approach, Islamic law arguably remains relevant, is responsive, and capable of providing solid ethical guidance amid the rapid flow of modernity.

**Keywords:** Contemporary Fiqh, Integrity of Islamic Law, Modern Fashion, and the Response of Islamic Scholars.

## I. Introduction

Indonesia is undergoing a major transformation in visual religious expression, particularly through the growth of Muslim fashion, the rising influence of hijab influencers on social media, and the use of the “Sharia” label in the fashion industry. This trend not only reflects growing religious awareness but also shifts in the lifestyle of the urban middle-class Muslim population. Amid the tide of globalization, religious expression is increasingly influenced by the creative industry, social media, and market-driven trends. In this context, Muslim fashion serves as a medium that blends aesthetics, cultural identity, and spiritual values.<sup>1</sup> Indonesia is now one of the world’s largest markets for Muslim fashion, with projected annual growth reaching billions of dollars<sup>2</sup>. This is driven by the world’s largest Muslim population, strong interest among young people in a halal

<sup>1</sup> Reina Lewis, *Mode Muslim: Budaya Gaya Kontemporer* (Duke University Press, 2015). 12

<sup>2</sup> Thomson Reuters, “Laporan Kondisi Ekonomi Islam Global 2023 DinarStandard,” 2023.

lifestyle, and the growth of digital platforms that support the distribution and promotion of Muslim women's fashion products. Local brands such as Zoya, Elzatta, and Dian Pelangi, as well as Sharia-compliant brands like Rabbani and Meccanism, help shape public taste by incorporating Islamic symbols into modern designs.<sup>3</sup>

However, the evolution of Muslim fashion has also sparked debate about the authenticity of Islamic values. Many question whether so-called Islamic fashion truly reflects Sharia principles or merely serves as a means of commercializing religion. This criticism arises because some Muslim fashion still features tight, sheer, or body-hugging clothing, which is deemed not fully in line with the principles of modesty in classical Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>4</sup> In Indonesia, many Muslim women who wear the hijab interpret modest clothing not only as black, loose-fitting, and plain attire, but also as fashionable clothing featuring bright colors, accessories, or modern styles.<sup>5</sup> This poses a challenge for Islamic jurisprudence in dealing with modern culture. Muslim fashion trends are also influenced by the hijrah movement, which promotes Islamic dress. However, the symbolism of hijrah is often used as a business strategy and for promoting fashion products. As a result, the line between religious values, business, and public image is becoming increasingly blurred.<sup>6</sup> A responsive interpretation of the law does not mean sacrificing principles, but rather strengthening the integrity of Islamic law in an ever-changing world.<sup>7</sup>

In the age of social media and the creative industry, expressions of Islam are no longer merely ritualistic or normative but have evolved into forms of visual communication, lifestyles, and even publicly displayed social identities. One prominent trend is the emergence of the "hijab-wearing" community, which has introduced a modern, fashionable hijab style that remains synonymous with piety. This trend has been popular since the early 2010s, driven by social media platforms like Instagram and fashion blogs. Figures such as Dian Pelangi, Indah Nada Puspita, and Laudya Cynthia Bella have become role models for young Muslim women in terms of fashion. However, this phenomenon also raises the question of whether the trend truly reflects Sharia values or merely uses Islamic symbols as an aesthetic draw and a market commodity.<sup>8</sup>

In this context, Muslim fashion is no longer understood merely as a way of dressing in accordance with Sharia law, but also as a form of visual religious expression on social media.<sup>9</sup> Piety is expressed through OOTDs, endorsements, and lifestyle content that follow the logic of digital capitalism. This raises questions about how Islamic law responds to religious expressions that are visual or aesthetic. Islamic symbols such as the hijab, Arabic calligraphy, and terms like "Sharia," "halal," and "jannah" are now widely used in fashion branding strategies.<sup>10</sup> The term "Sharia-

<sup>3</sup> Eva Fathi Nisa, "Hijab dan Media Sosial: Perempuan, Identitas, dan Ekspresi Estetika di Indonesia Muslim," *Islam Kontemporer* 12, no. 1 (2018): 43–62.

<sup>4</sup> Zainal; N Zainal & M Latiff Abidin, "Busana Islami yang Sopan: Antara Identitas, Kesalehan, dan Komersialisasi di Asia Tenggara," *Jurnal Pemasaran Islam* 13, no. 3 (2022): 75–89

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Syarif Hasyim, "Busana Saleh dan Politik Kesopanan: Busana Wanita Muslim di Indonesia," *Jurnal Islam Indonesia* 14, no. 1 (2020): 25–50.

<sup>6</sup> James Bourk Hoesterey, *Rebranding Islam: Kesalehan, Kemakmuran, dan Seorang Guru Pengembangan Diri* (Stanford University Press, 2016). 70–76

<sup>7</sup> Nurul Mufidah & Mulyani Ani Sari, "Tren Fashion Sederhana dan Kebangkitan Kelas Menengah Muslim di Indonesia," *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 11, no. 2 (2021): 191–210.

<sup>8</sup> Emma Tarlo, *Keterikatan: Kebidupan Rabasia Rambut* (Oneworld Publications, 2016). 30–34

<sup>9</sup> Irfa Amalia, "Komodifikasi Nilai Islam Sebagai Alat Promosi Busana Muslim Di Instagram," *Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses* 5, no. 2 (2022), 321–328 <https://doi.org/10.14421/lijid.v5i2.3806>.

<sup>10</sup> Jiwon Shin, Yong Kyu Lew, and Myengkyo Seo, "Between Fashion and Piety : Hijab In Fl Uencers and Religious Communities in the Consumer Socialization of Indonesian Muslims," *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 43, no. 1 (2025): 3–18, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X231191238>.

compliant clothing” is often used as a moral label, even though its implementation does not always align with the rulings of the majority of Islamic jurists.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, the narrative of “hijrah” is frequently leveraged as a marketing strategy, blurring the line between spiritual experience and commercial interests.

This phenomenon places religious scholars in a dilemma: they must support the religious fervor of the younger generation while safeguarding the sanctity of Islamic teachings from market commodification.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, fatwas on Muslim attire tend to remain general and have not yet addressed the complexities of the modern fashion industry, including promotional practices and digital visual culture. One of the most significant challenges in responding to modern fashion trends is how Islamic law can reformulate dress codes within a contemporary fiqh framework that takes into account the cultural, social, and economic contexts of society. In classical tradition, most scholars agree on the definition of aurat, namely, the parts of the body that must be covered in various public places.<sup>13</sup> However, in modern fashion practice, these boundaries are often reinterpreted within the framework of cultural expression and fashion tastes, which frequently creates friction between fiqh norms and social realities.

In addition, the formulation of Islamic law regarding clothing also faces methodological challenges. Some fiqh approaches adopted by authoritative institutions, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), tend to be textual and grounded in classical ijtihad.<sup>14</sup> However, when addressing phenomena such as Muslim women’s fashion shows, the “The Hijab Is My Crown” campaign, or Ramadan clothing collections, an integrative approach that combines the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), the objectives of Islamic law (maqasid), and even cultural studies is essential. If such an approach is not developed, the resulting legal responses are often reactive, rigid, or inadequate to provide contextually relevant normative guidance.<sup>15</sup> Another issue lies in the relationship between Islamic law and visual culture<sup>16</sup> in the digital age. Therefore, a contemporary approach to fiqh must include the study of public perception and representation as part of legal assessment. This approach is rarely found in fatwas or legal rulings issued by official institutions, even though it is urgently needed to address the current dynamics of Muslim communities.<sup>17</sup>

Traditional fiqh also does not address the ethics of clothing production and distribution in great detail.<sup>18</sup> In the fashion industry, practices such as the exploitation of workers and the use of

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<sup>11</sup> Martin & Timothy Jones Slama, “Kesalehan, Selebriti, Media Sosial: Sebuah Studi tentang Pemuda Muslim di Indonesia,” *South East Asia Research* 25, no. 3 (2017): 265–278.

<sup>12</sup> Timothy Jones, “Wearing Religion: Islam, Identity and Dress in Southeast Asia,” *Religions* 10, no. 10 (2019): 587.

<sup>13</sup> Masri, “Eksistensi Aurat Wanita Dalam Fiqh Masri,” *Jurnal Al-Qadai*, 2019, 15–24.

<sup>14</sup> M. Atho Mudzhar, *Fatwa-Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia: Sebuah Studi Tentang Pemikiran Hukum Islam Di Indonesia 1975–1988* (Jakarta: INIS (Indonesian-Netherlands Islamic Studies), 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Abdullah dan Ali Akbar Saeed, “Pendekatan Kontekstualis dan Interpretasi Al-Qur’an,” *Agama*, 2021, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070527>.

<sup>16</sup> Pingki Indrianti, Oki Kurniawan, dan Faridah Hj Hassan, “ANALISIS VISUAL GAYA PAKAIAN MUSLIMAH DI JAWA ABAD 15-20”, *ELHARAKAH (TERAKREDITASI)* 23, no. 1 (2021): 41–63, <https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v23i1.11709>.

<sup>17</sup> Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Berargumentasi dengan Tuhan: Merebut Kembali Syariah di Zaman Modern* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

<sup>18</sup> Kirana Nur Lyansari, “Belajar Islam Melalui Literatur Visual: Pembentukan Identitas Moderat Anak Muslim Milenial,” *Al-Balagh : Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 4, no. 2 (2019): 293–316, <https://doi.org/10.22515/balagh.v4i2.1821>.

unethical materials,<sup>19</sup> to the point of achieving a distribution monopoly, have become an integral part of the economic system, driving this trend.<sup>20</sup> When Islamic law is seen as irrelevant to their way of life, there is a tendency to seek their own interpretations or even to disregard it entirely.<sup>21</sup>

In situations like this, Muslim scholars and intellectuals are called upon to reconstruct fiqh (tajdid al-fiqh) not only based on classical literature but also on the realities of Muslim communities. This reconstruction does not mean dismantling old laws, but rather reorganizing the framework of thought to make it more inclusive, reflective, and contextual.<sup>22</sup> Fiqh must serve as an ethical tool capable of addressing the challenges of our time, not merely a collection of laws that are insensitive to change.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, Islamic legal rulings regarding Muslim attire cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy of halal versus haram or Sharia-compliant versus non-Sharia-compliant.

In Muslim societies, religious scholars play a crucial role as guardians of values and interpreters of religious teachings. However, in the digital age and with the growth of the creative industry, religious authorities face significant challenges. Fatwas that were once highly influential are now frequently questioned or ignored, particularly by urban Muslim youth who are familiar with technology and global culture.<sup>24</sup> This role is played by fatwa-issuing institutions and Islamic organizations in Indonesia, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama, and Muhammadiyah.

This issue becomes even more complex when existing fatwas actually spark controversy. Some fatwas, such as the ban on wearing clothing that resembles non-Muslim attire, or the requirement to wear a hijab in certain contexts, have provoked strong reactions in society because they are perceived as exclusionary, out of context, and even socially harmful. This controversy demonstrates that religious authorities face challenges not only in conveying their messages but also in building public trust.<sup>25</sup>

Studies of Muslim fashion tend to be dominated by approaches from cultural sociology, visual anthropology, and media studies. This is understandable, given that fashion development is closely linked to cultural symbolism, social identity, and consumption practices.<sup>26</sup> These studies have made an important contribution to our understanding of how Muslims, particularly Muslim women, articulate their identities through their clothing choices in the context of globalization. However, this approach often fails to adequately incorporate fiqh, or Islamic law, as a normative framework for analyzing fashion phenomena.<sup>27</sup>

This situation creates a significant knowledge gap. On the one hand, studies that focus too heavily on cultural and identity aspects tend to overlook the normative dimensions of Islam, which

<sup>19</sup> Nurul Elisa Putri, Yuli Andriansyah, dan Fatou Badjie, "Strategi Pengembangan Produk pada Industri Fesyen Muslim Yogyakarta: Inovasi dan Etika," *Jurnal Ekonomi Islam Lariba* 9, no. 2 (2023): 591–620, <https://doi.org/10.20885/jielariba.vol9.iss2.art15>.

<sup>20</sup> Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki & Abdelrahman Abozaid, "Penilaian Kritis terhadap Tantangan Mewujudkan Maqasid Al-Shariah dalam Perbankan dan Keuangan Islam," *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Manajemen IIUM* 15, no. 2 (2007): 143–165.

<sup>21</sup> Syahrul Zainuddin, Nurul Maisarah, Hashim, Roslinda Abas, & Muda, "Fatwa dan Fashion: Analisis Perbandingan Hukum Islam tentang Kode Busana Muslim di Asia Tenggara," *Jurnal Pemasaran Islam* 12, no. 4 (2021): 811–832.

<sup>22</sup> Abdullah Saeed, *Membaca Al-Qur'an di Abad Kedua Puluh Satu: Pendekatan Kontekstualis* (Routledge, 2021).

<sup>23</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Hukum Syariah: Sebuah Pengantar* (Oneworld Publications, 2019).

<sup>24</sup> Nurdayati dkk, "Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia Dan Tantangan Otoritas Keagamaan Baru Di Era Digital," *MAYAH: Jurnal Studi Islam* 3, no. 5 (2021): 6.

<sup>25</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Islam Indonesia dan Pergeseran Konservatif. TRaNS: Studi Trans-Regional dan -Nasional Asia Tenggara" 8, no. 1 (2020): 37–55.

<sup>26</sup> Nisa, "Hijab dan Media Sosial: Perempuan, Identitas, dan Ekspresi Estetika di Indonesia Muslim."

<sup>27</sup> Lewis, *Fesyen Muslim: Budaya Gaya Kontemporer*.

form the primary framework for Muslim dress practices. On the other hand, the classical fiqh approach in many works of Islamic law has not fully addressed contemporary contexts, including issues such as fashion trends, aesthetics, digital performativity, and the commodification of religiosity. This results in a disconnect between the evolution of social realities and the religious normative framework.<sup>28</sup> Most international studies on the hijab tend to discuss it primarily as a social and cultural phenomenon, rather than from the perspective of contemporary *ijtihad* or *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Islamic law is often treated merely as a doctrinal backdrop, rather than as an active analytical framework for understanding social practices. Nevertheless, within Islamic tradition, *fiqh* is understood not only as a legal system but also as a social ethic and a moral guide in public life.<sup>29</sup> This creates an epistemological bias, whereby expressions of Islam are interpreted within a secular or liberal framework without taking into account the framework of Sharia values.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile, Islamic legal studies conducted by fatwa institutions also have their limitations. Fatwas are generally reactive to incoming questions rather than proactive in addressing cultural dynamics. In fact, many fatwas seem to repeat old views without considering the context of social, economic, and cultural changes in society. For example, discussions regarding the *aurat* (parts of the body that must be covered) remain confined to the physical boundaries of the body, rather than addressing how the *aurat* is visualized, exploited, or used as a marketing strategy within the modern Muslim fashion industry.<sup>31</sup> The lack of collaboration among *fiqh* scholars, Islamic studies scholars, fashion industry professionals, and cultural sociologists is also a major cause of epistemological stagnation in the study of Islamic fashion. When *fiqh* is not engaged with the industrial and media sectors, its potential as a normative guide becomes limited. Conversely, when industry practitioners and cultural scholars disregard the values of *fiqh*, Muslim fashion practices become vulnerable to losing their ethical foundation. Therefore, an interdisciplinary approach is needed that integrates the normative sensibilities of *fiqh* with the analytical richness of socio-cultural studies.<sup>32</sup> This highlights the gap between industrial development and the strengthening of Islamic legal epistemology.<sup>33</sup>

Previous studies examining the relationship between Islam and fashion have tended to focus on the Middle East or Muslim diasporas in the West, such as in the United Kingdom, France, and the United States. Very few have explored these dynamics in depth in the Southeast Asian context, particularly through a critical and contextual *fiqh* approach. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by highlighting how Indonesian scholars respond to modern fashion trends within the framework of Islamic legal integrity, with an analysis grounded in contemporary *fiqh* and *maqashid*.

This study also aims to bridge the two main poles in the study of Muslim fashion: first, the pole of expression, namely identity, culture, and performativity; second, the pole of norms, namely *fiqh*, ethics, and Islamic legal guidelines. By fostering a dialogue between these two poles, it is hoped

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<sup>28</sup> Saeed, *Membaca Al-Qur'an di Abad ke-21: Pendekatan Kontekstualis*.

<sup>29</sup> Fadl, *Berdialog dengan Tuhan: Merebut Kembali Syariah di Zaman Modern*.

<sup>30</sup> Asaad K Abdullah, "Kerangka Perbandingan Kode Busana Islami dan Busana Sopan dalam Industri Mode Malaysia," *Prosiding Konferensi Internasional*, no. Agustus 2019 (2020).

<sup>31</sup> Zainuddin, Nurul Maisarah, Hashim, Roslinda Abas, & Muda, "Fatwa dan Fashion: Analisis Komparatif Hukum Islam tentang Kode Busana Muslim di Asia Tenggara."

<sup>32</sup> Putri, Andriansyah, dan Badjie, "Strategi Pengembangan Produk Industri Fesyen Muslim Yogyakarta: Inovasi dan Etika."

<sup>33</sup> Muhammad Ahsanul Amal, "Sinergitas Stakeholder Pengembangan Halal Fashion Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam* 9, no. 3 (2023): 4572, <https://doi.org/10.29040/jiei.v9i3.10106>.

that a more comprehensive, critical, and contextual analytical framework will emerge to address the socio-religious issues faced by urban Muslims today. The modern fashion phenomenon among Indonesian Muslims demonstrates how religious practices are no longer static but continue to interact with popular culture, the creative industry, and digital media.<sup>34</sup> In this context, Islamic law faces the challenge of maintaining its integrity while responding to rapidly changing social dynamics. Unfortunately, fiqh studies on fashion remain limited, both in methodology and in the scope of issues addressed.<sup>35</sup>

This study is important because it offers a contemporary fiqh approach to analyzing scholars' responses to issues of modern fashion, particularly in upholding Sharia principles such as modesty, decency, and ethical consumption.<sup>36</sup> By focusing on religious authorities such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah, this study aims to examine the extent to which fatwas and religious views address the challenges of aesthetics and commodification in the Muslim fashion industry in Indonesia. This study employs a qualitative, exploratory case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the responses of religious scholars and institutions to issues of modern fashion within the framework of contemporary fiqh. Primary data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with religious scholars, Islamic law academics, and Muslim fashion industry practitioners selected purposively based on their scholarly credibility and direct involvement in religious and popular cultural issues. Secondary data were drawn from official documents, such as fatwas issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the results of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) bahtsul. This study draws on the perspectives of the Muhammadiyah Tarjih Council, as well as academic articles, online media, and narratives from digital platforms, to examine the debate surrounding Muslim attire. The study is grounded in the view that the phenomenon of dress in Islam is not merely normative but also a complex, contextual form of cultural communication.<sup>37</sup>

Data analysis was conducted using a phenomenological-hermeneutic thematic approach, which includes the stages of data reduction, open and axial coding, contextual interpretation, and cross-source triangulation. Interpretation was conducted by linking field findings with contemporary fiqh principles and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah to assess how the integrity of Islamic law is maintained amidst the pressures of aesthetics, cultural capitalism, and the mediatization of religiosity. Data validity is strengthened through source triangulation and informant confirmation (member checking), while the researcher's reflexivity is maintained by critically documenting the interpretive process and personal engagement with the issues under study.

## II. Contemporary Fiqh and Maqashid Shariah in Social Response

Contemporary fiqh is a dynamic effort to understand and apply Islamic law (Sharia) contextually to an ever-changing social reality. In this approach, scholars not only refer to classical texts (turāth) but also consider the social, cultural, economic, and political conditions of the ummah. One important framework in contemporary fiqh is maqāṣid al-sharī'ah (the objectives of Sharia), which emphasizes the protection of five main aspects: religion (dīn), life (nafs), intellect ('aql), property

<sup>34</sup> Ahmad Arif Widiyanto, "Sosiologi Refleksi," *Sosiolo Refleksi* 12, no. 1 (2018): 87–118.

<sup>35</sup> Sasiana Gilar Apriantika, "Religiusitas versus Eksistensi Kelas: Konsumsi Mode Kelas Menengah Muslim Indonesia di Instagram," *Simulacra* 6, no. 1 (2023): 45–61, <https://doi.org/10.21107/sml.v6i1.19034>.

<sup>36</sup> Mona Eliza dan Afifi Fauzi Abbas, "Fikih Perempuan Tentang Aurat Dan Busana Muslimah," *AL-IMAM: Jurnal Studi Islam, Peradaban dan Masyarakat Pembelajaran* 4 (2023): 95–102, <https://doi.org/10.58764/j.im.2023.4.51>.

<sup>37</sup> Saeed, *Membaca Al-Qur'an di Abad ke-21: Pendekatan Kontekstualis*.

(māl), and lineage (nasl).<sup>38</sup> In the context of modern fashion, the concept of maqāṣid is employed to assess ethical considerations regarding clothing, dignity, and the balance between religious identity and the expectations of visual culture.<sup>39</sup>

The maqāṣid approach also allows Islamic law to respond more flexibly to issues such as the commercialization of religious symbols, fashion aesthetics, and performativity on social media, without neglecting the normative principles of Sharia. Some contemporary scholars even call for interdisciplinary ijtihad to formulate laws applicable to the realities of the creative industry, including Muslim fashion.<sup>40</sup> Contemporary fiqh not only questions the textual boundaries of aurat but also interprets aurat in the context of visualization, consumption intentions, and ethical narratives in digital society.

The integrity of Islamic law concerns maintaining consistency and unity between its normative principles and their application in a changing social context. In this theory, Islamic law is understood not only as a set of rules (fiqh) but also as a living, evolving system of values shaped by social, cultural, and contextual interpretations.<sup>41</sup> This is important to ensure that Islamic law remains relevant, socially accountable, and morally authoritative amid the challenges of the times.<sup>42</sup>

When dealing with modern fashion issues, legal integrity is tested on two fronts: first, consistency with classical texts and rules; second, responsiveness to new realities involving cultural symbolism, gender expression, and the medialization of religiosity. Scholars who uphold legal integrity are required to remain grounded in Sharia principles while being open to adaptive and contextual approaches, including the use of fatwas based on maqāṣid or maslahah mursalah. This is where the importance of a “reasoned interpretation” or ijtihad jadid approach comes in, which takes into account public morality, local culture, and the visual literacy of the people.<sup>43</sup>

In the view of the maqashid Sharia, this study draws on the views of Islamic community organization figures and institutions that issue fatwas, focusing on Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama figures, as well as DSN-MUI. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah, as Indonesia’s mainstream religious institutions, have long served as authorities on Islamic law, including matters of dress. Although the MUI has issued fatwas on Muslim women’s attire, the concept of aurat, and dress codes, the narratives they construct tend to be normative and do not address the visual cultural framework that has developed within the modern fashion industry.<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, NU and Muhammadiyah have largely expressed their views through individual leaders rather than through comprehensive institutional fatwas.

In the age of social media, the authority of religious scholars is no longer vertical and one-sided. Authority has become more fragmented and open to public challenge. Influencers, hijab-wearing Instagram celebrities, and Muslim women content creators now have an equal and even greater role in shaping public opinion and perceptions of religion. This has shifted the authority of religious scholars from a dominant position to just one of many voices in the digital public sphere.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Kamali, *Shariab Law: An Introduction*.

<sup>39</sup> Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, *Fiqh Al-Awlawiyyat* (Maktabah Wahbah, 2010).

<sup>40</sup> Yusuf Al-Qaradawi.

<sup>41</sup> Ngainun Naim, “Islamic Jurisprudence for Diversity: From Theological-Normative Reason to Progressive Contextual Reasoning,” *Al-Adalah* 15, no. 1 (2019): 51, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v15i1.2621>.

<sup>42</sup> Fadl, *Reasoning with God: Reclaiming Shari’ah in the Modern Age*.

<sup>43</sup> Kamali, *Shariab Law: An Introduction*.

<sup>44</sup> Nurdayati dkk.

<sup>45</sup> Gary R Bunt, *Hashtag Islam: Bagaimana Lingkungan Siber-Islami Mengubah Otoritas Keagamaan*. (UNC Press, 2018).

As a result, fatwas issued by religious scholars are often ineffective in regulating the social practices of Muslims. Some urban Muslim women view fatwas on modesty as too conservative and irrelevant to modern life. They are more receptive to religious perspectives offered by popular figures who are seen as modern yet still devout. In this context, the authority of traditional religious scholars is being supplanted by the power of imagery, visuals, and emotional narratives on digital media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram.<sup>46</sup> In this situation, religious scholars face an epistemological dilemma. On the one hand, they must uphold the authenticity of Islamic law; on the other hand, they must adapt their preaching methods and issuance of fatwas to the communication patterns of the digital generation.<sup>47</sup>

Clothing styles are often associated with certain identities and ideological affiliations.<sup>48</sup> This demonstrates that fashion is not merely a matter of aesthetics, but also of identity and ideology.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, a new, more responsive approach is needed to understand religious expression within visual culture and digital consumption.<sup>50</sup> Islamic law, as an ethical and normative framework, must make room for discourse that is inclusive, collaborative, and grounded in an understanding of cultural context. Therefore, contemporary fiqh studies need to engage critically with the phenomenon of Muslim fashion. Fiqh must not distance itself from the cultural realities of the Muslim community.

### III. Religion, Popular Culture, and Symbolic Authority

In modern cultural studies, religion expression is closely connected to popular culture. Muslim fashion is one of the most tangible forms of the intersection of religiosity and aesthetics, of identity and consumption, of spirituality and image.<sup>51</sup> Popular culture theory emphasizes that religious symbols such as the hijab, gamis, or syar'i clothing are not only expressions of faith but also cultural products produced, commodified, and distributed in the global market.<sup>52</sup>

As a result, religious authority has become more fluid, as it is no longer solely held by formal religious scholars, but also by Muslim influencers, hijab-wearing social media stars, and online content makers.<sup>53</sup> This model of authority is supported by social media algorithms, visual aesthetics, and easily digestible spiritual narratives. In such a situation, Islamic law must contend with market logic and visual algorithms that sometimes conflict with the normative principles of

<sup>46</sup> Jones, "Mengenakan Agama: Islam, Identitas, dan Pakaian di Asia Tenggara."

<sup>47</sup> Noor Hasan, "Kesalahan Digital: Munculnya Influencer Muslim dan Tantangan Otoritas Keagamaan di Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 29, no. 1 (2022): 1–30.

<sup>48</sup> Yusa Farchan, "Tren Hijrah: Konstruksi Baru Identitas Muslim Milenial Perkotaan di Indonesia" 2814, no. 2 (2021).

<sup>49</sup> Qurrota A'yun and Nurul Istiani, "Epistemologi Fikih Di Media Sosial (Konstruksi Epistemologis Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia Tentang Bermuamalah) Fiqh Epistemology in Social Media (Epistemology Construction of Fatwa of Indonesian Moesling Scholar About Mu'Amalah)" 7, no. 2 (2021): 279–94, [https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal\\_Risalah](https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal_Risalah)[https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal\\_Risalah](https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal_Risalah).

<sup>50</sup> Qurrota A'yun and Nurul Istiani, "Epistemologi Fikih Di Media Sosial (Konstruksi Epistemologis Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia Tentang Bermuamalah) Epistemologi Fikih di Media Sosial (Konstruksi Epistemologi Fatwa Ulama Indonesia Tentang Mu'Amalah)" 7, no. 2 (2021): 279–94, [https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal\\_Risalah](https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal_Risalah)[https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal\\_Risalah](https://jurnal.faiunwir.ac.id/index.php/Jurnal_Risalah).

<sup>51</sup> Lewis, *Muslim Fashion: Contemporary Style Cultures*.

<sup>52</sup> Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice (5th Ed.)* (SAGE Publications, 2016).

<sup>53</sup> Bouziane Zaid et al., "Digital Islam and Muslim Millennials: How Social Media Influencers Reimagine Religious Authority and Islamic Practices," *Religions* 13, no. 4 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13040335>.

Sharia. Therefore, understanding the relationship among religion, media, and consumer culture is crucial for interpreting contemporary Muslim fashion practices.<sup>54</sup>

Because it is not uncommon, there is a significant gap between religious scholarship and industry practices. Many Muslim clothing brands use the label “Sharia-compliant” as part of their marketing strategy; however, these claims are often not supported by formal consultation with religious scholars or widely recognized certification mechanisms.<sup>55</sup> As a result, there are commercial practices that conflict with Sharia principles in terms of design, promotion, and distribution. Conversely, many scholars do not understand how the fashion industry operates, so their fatwas are normative and impractical. A space for dialogue between these two sides is needed so that fatwas and real-world practices can work in synergy.<sup>56</sup>

In this situation, religious institutions need to redefine their approach to authority. One strategic step is to establish interdisciplinary thematic fatwa councils that involve scholars, fashion designers, academics, and creative industry professionals. This model has been implemented in several countries, such as Malaysia and Turkey, with more responsive and practical results.<sup>57</sup> Through a collaborative approach, fatwas are not merely legal instruments but also a form of public discourse that shapes society’s ethical and aesthetic consciousness.

Religious scholars must establish a presence in the digital space by using language that is easy to understand, engaging visuals, and narratives that address the community’s spiritual and social needs. This is where the integration of textual and visual authority becomes crucial in maintaining the continued legitimacy of Islamic law in the digital age.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the challenge facing scholars today is not only about the substance of fatwas, but also about how to articulate Islamic law in a digitalized and fragmented society.

#### **IV. The Response of Islamic Scholars and the Dynamics of Islamic Law in Modern Fashion Trends in Indonesia**

The development of Muslim fashion in Indonesia over the past two decades has become one of the most striking social phenomena in the modern Muslim public sphere.<sup>59</sup> With the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has become a major market for the Muslim fashion industry, as well as a battleground for discourse between religious values and the tide of cultural globalization. Muslim fashion is no longer interpreted solely as a form of religious observance in covering the aurat, but also as a representation of identity, an expression of social class, digital aesthetics, and even a symbol of performative piety. In this context, religious scholars and institutions face a major challenge in maintaining the integrity of Islamic law, particularly in issuing fatwas and guidelines on dress that are not only normatively valid but also socially and culturally contextual.

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<sup>54</sup> Apriantika, “Religiosity versus Class Existence: Indonesian Muslim Middle Class Fashion Consumption on Instagram.”

<sup>55</sup> Rohit K. Dasgupta dan Nazlı Alimen, “Mengonsumsi dan Menjual Fesyen: Diaspora Asia Selatan Menegosiasikan Praktik Pakaian, Identitas, dan Pembentukan Komunitas di Glasgow,” *Identitas Sosial* 30, no. 4 (2024): 306–30, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2024.2382865>.

<sup>56</sup> Abidin, “Busana Islami yang Sopan: Antara Identitas, Kesalehan, dan Komersialisasi di Asia Tenggara.”

<sup>57</sup> Abidin.

<sup>58</sup> Nabil Echchaibi, “Perempuan Muslim dan Politik Visual. Dalam Memvisualisasikan Sekularisme dan Agama,” *Bloomsbury Academic*, 2017, 123–140.

<sup>59</sup> Nessa Ahsani Arizka et al., “Analisis Perkembangan Budaya Terhadap Busana Muslimah Di Indonesia” 9 (2025): 1425–32.

In religious practice, Fatwas on the limits of modesty and women's clothing in Islam are still heavily influenced by traditional fiqh approaches, with a tendency to focus on textual and positive law aspects. Although the basic principle remains consistent, namely covering the aurat according to gender, not being transparent, and not being tight, problems arise when the clothing is designed and presented in the context of popular culture. This is where the contemporary fiqh approach and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah become relevant: Islamic law not only regulates what is worn, but also how and for what purpose it is worn. As stated by an official of the Nahdlatul Ulama Organization:

“Covering the aurat is a requirement, but modesty is broader than that. It is not only about wearing long clothes, but also about how the way of dressing does not cause tabarruj or the intention to show off. This is often misunderstood in the fashion industry.”<sup>60</sup>

This statement indicates that the meaning of modesty in Islam is not static and is open to cultural reinterpretation as long as it remains within the framework of maqāṣid. In this context, modesty is not only understood as an ethical value but is also visually represented in how a Muslim woman dresses, namely in how she conducts herself in a hyper-visual, highly representative world. The theory of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, as proposed by Saeed, emphasizes the importance of protecting spiritual values, dignity, and honor in social interactions.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, aspects such as intention, context, and the social impact of appearance are important factors in assessing the appropriateness of modern Muslim women's clothing. Trends such as fashionable hijabs, tight Sharia pants, trendy gamis, and the niqab as a political identity are often responded to with prohibitions or excessive caution.

There are significant differences in the current understanding of the concept of aurat, particularly regarding which parts of the body are considered aurat, the legal status of the face and hands, and the permissibility of wearing tight or slightly transparent clothing.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, simply covering the body is not always considered sufficient from a Sharia perspective. In fact, some contemporary scholars, such as Abu Ziyad<sup>63</sup> and M. Quraish Shihab,<sup>64</sup> emphasize that the principle of modesty is more important than simply covering one's private parts.<sup>65</sup> However, when this principle is pitted against the logic of the fashion industry, which pursues trends and aesthetics, a dilemma arises between Sharia as a moral principle and fashion as popular culture. This has widened the gap between Islamic legal authorities and the needs of the people. The Aisyiyah Muhammadiyah leadership stated:

“We cannot simply ban all modern Muslim fashion. However, we remind you that Sharia should not just be a symbol on the catwalk, without spirit, and that Sharia should not just be a mask to earn income.”<sup>66</sup>

This statement reflects a growing awareness among academics that contemporary Muslim fashion practices cannot be separated from the logic of industry and cultural capitalism. Islamic

<sup>60</sup> Wawancara, Bapak Azhar Pengurus NU Pamekasan Madura, 14 Mei 2025

<sup>61</sup> Saeed, “Contextualist Approaches and the Interpretation of the Qur'an.”

<sup>62</sup> Zaleha Arshad dkk., “Pakaian Wanita Islami Sesuai Syariah AHCS: Sebuah Tinjauan Umum” 5, no. 2 (2024): 9–16.

<sup>63</sup> Abu Ziyad, *Aurat Wanita: Batasan Yang Memuliakan* (Yogyakarta: Elementa Media, 2022). 215-220

<sup>64</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Jilbab: Pakaian Wanita Muslimah* (Tangerang: PT Lentera Hati, 2018). 38-41

<sup>65</sup> Mohamed Sulthan Ismiya Begum, “Hijab (Cadar) dari Perspektif Islam: Analisis Interpretatif dari Al-Quran dan Pandangan Ulama,” *MAQOLAT: Jurnal Studi Islam* 3, no. 2 (2025): 211–26, <https://doi.org/10.58355/maqolat.v3i2.145>.

<sup>66</sup> Wawancara, Mitra Sami Ghultom Tokoh Perempuan Aisyiah Muhammadiyah Jakarta, 22 April 2025

symbols have become visual commodities controlled by trends, markets, and social media algorithms. This aligns with Rizal's view that, in global Muslim culture, the performativity of piety is largely determined by aesthetics and symbolic consumption.<sup>67</sup> In this context, religious fatwas and guidelines that fail to understand these dynamics will easily lose their social relevance.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, some statements place particular emphasis on the commercialization of the term "Sharia" in the Muslim fashion industry. Criticisms have highlighted that the term has been widely used in product branding without any valid theological or fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) reference. In an interview, one figure stated:

"The label 'Sharia' should be based on Sharia standards, not just aesthetics. Nowadays, the term is being sold, but its content is not necessarily in accordance with Islamic law. This has become a special concern and subject of study among scholars so that they can keep up with the times without violating Sharia rules. As a result, people often need fatwa studies on fashion trends in accordance with the groups they follow and that do not stray from Islam."<sup>69</sup>

These findings indicate serious concerns about the degradation of the meaning of Islamic law in the public sphere due to the capitalization of religious symbols. From the perspective of Islamic legal integrity theory,<sup>70</sup> this phenomenon creates fragmentation between form and substance, between law as a norm and law as a means of social expression. When the term *syar'i* becomes merely a consumerist identity, Islamic law is vulnerable to desacralization in the logic of the market.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, this study also found that the authority of religious scholars is no longer singular or exclusive in the digital age. Textual authority based on classical texts, sanad, and sharia scholarship now has to contend with digital authority built through engagement, virality, and visual influence. A professor of fiqh stated critically:

"Many people now learn about Islam from Instagram. However, the people they follow are not scholars, but celebrities. Sharia literacy has become very superficial, and it is not uncommon for the experiences of people who do not fully understand Islamic Sharia to become trends that are considered acceptable, which are then developed into viral trends in society. In this situation, scholars must play a role in developing media to follow the trends in preaching to counterbalance the developing fashions."<sup>72</sup>

This view reflects the theory of liquid authority, in which religious authority is no longer rooted in scientific knowledge and validity, but rather in representation, communication style, and personal charisma in the media space. Ulama as authoritative figures face narrative disruption, especially from young urban Muslim women who believe more in popular models of da'wah than

<sup>67</sup> Rizal Faturahman Purnama, "THE AESTHETIC RECEPTION OF THE QURAN IN INSTAGRAM: Variations, Factors, and Religious Commodification," *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 21, no. 2 (2020): 237–68, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v21i2.9528>.

<sup>68</sup> M Taufiq Ulinuha, "Tren Fashion Muslimah: Antara Syariat Dan Gaya Hidup Modern" (Jawa Tengah, 2025), <https://pwmjateng.com/tren-fashion-muslimah-antara-syariat-dan-gaya-hidup-modern/>.

<sup>69</sup> Wawancara, Rahmat Dahlan Tokoh Muhammadiyah Tagerang Selatan, 29 Maret 2025

<sup>70</sup> Fadl, *Reasoning with God: Reclaiming Shari'ah in the Modern Age*.

<sup>71</sup> Muh Rizki Zailani and Roma Ulinuha, "Komodifikasi Agama Sebagai Identitas Kesalehan Sosial," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 3, no. 1 (2023): 248–65, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v3i1.23519>.

<sup>72</sup> Wawancara, Makmun Hafidz Tokoh Ketua NU Kramat Tlanakan Pamekasan Madura, 3 Mei 2025

in formal fatwas.<sup>73</sup> In such conditions, it is not only Islamic law that is challenged, but the entire traditional epistemological structure of the ummah. However, this study also found promising dialogical initiatives between ulama, Muslim fashion industry players, and creative Muslim women's communities. In several major cities, such as Bandung, Jakarta, and Malang, discussion and training spaces have emerged that feature religious scholars as resource persons rather than judges. In these spaces, Islamic law is no longer a tool of control, but a source of ethical values and inspiration for creative industry players. A Muslim woman designer explained:

“We actually want to provide constructive guidance, not just prohibitions. In our view, the role of scholars today is very important, especially in providing guidance that is relevant to the times. The world today is developing rapidly, and the challenges facing society are increasingly complex. Therefore, we feel that it is not enough for scholars to give advice from the podium or pulpit simply.<sup>74</sup>

This approach is in line with the idea of participatory and responsive fiqh, namely the process of ijtihad that does not originate solely from texts but also from social experiences and cross-disciplinary collaboration. Within the framework of maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah, this reflects the spirit of tahqīq al-maslahah, seeking the greater good through means appropriate to the community's needs. Islamic law, in this context, is not only a moral guardian but also a dialogical partner in shaping an ethical, aesthetic, and contextually aware Muslim society.<sup>75</sup> In addition to serving as a space for negotiating identity and piety, modern Muslim fashion also reflects the tension between spiritual values and the demands of a creative industry driven by competition and capital. In some cases, clothing that formally covers the aurat is still criticized by scholars because it is considered to have a tabarruj effect through its visual presentation, color choices, and context of appearance.<sup>76</sup> This criticism arises not only from a legal perspective, but also from concerns that an obsession with outward appearance will erode the meaning of piety. A female leader of Nahdlatul Ulama who is active in a girls' Islamic boarding school stated:

“Nowadays, many Islamic boarding school students are more interested in learning sharia-compliant makeup than studying fiqh in depth. They believe that as long as they wear a hijab and do not expose their aurat, everything is fine. However, I think this is a misconception that needs to be corrected. As students at an Islamic boarding school, we are taught to study religious teachings thoroughly rather than rely solely on physical appearance. Of course, wearing a hijab and covering the aurat are part of our obligations, but the essence of piety does not lie solely in the cloth that covers our bodies, but rather in our inner attitudes, which must

<sup>73</sup> Fahrudin Fahrudin and Mohammad Rindu Fajar Islamy, “Da’i (Muslim Preachers) Idols, Fatwas, and Political Constellations: Empirical Study of Millennial Generation Perspective,” *Jurnal Dakwah Risalah* 33, no. 2 (2022): 132, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v33i2.19042>.

<sup>74</sup> Wawancara, Desainer Bandung, 19 April 2025

<sup>75</sup> Herdiansyah Herdiansyah and Sri Hidayati, “Peran Maqashid Syari’Ah Dalam Ijtihad,” *Jurnal Hukum Das Sollen* 6, no. 2 (2021): 125–34, <https://doi.org/10.32520/das-sollen.v6i2.1831>.

<sup>76</sup> Dasgupta and Alimen, “Consuming and Retailing Fashion: South Asian Diaspora Negotiating Clothing Practices, Identities and Community Making in Glasgow.”

be improved first. How sincere we are in fulfilling our religious obligations, how deep our understanding of the profound teachings of religion is, and how we treat others.”<sup>77</sup>

The transformation of religious practices that emphasize symbols more than substance shows a shift in understanding the main objectives of Islamic law, in which religious symbols, in the era of media and consumerism, undergo desubstantialization: they remain visible, but lose their original depth of meaning<sup>78</sup>. In the context of fashion, this is reflected in the emergence of the term “modest fashion,” which is promoted internationally, not always grounded in Islamic values but in an ideologically neutral aesthetic of modesty.<sup>79</sup> This raises a fundamental question: is Islamic law ready to engage with flexible global norms, or will it continue to maintain strict normative boundaries? Some young scholars answer this question with an adaptive approach. They reject the dichotomy between law and culture, and seek to incorporate maqāṣid logic into their da’wah and educational strategies on social media. One of Muhammadiyah’s young preachers who is active in da’wah said:

“I cannot simply say ‘it is forbidden’ in my preaching. Nowadays, people, especially the younger generation, need a more constructive narrative that can provide a deeper understanding. In my opinion, if you say something is forbidden without giving a clear explanation, it will only create confusion and possibly even rejection. People today are very open to information, but they also look for reasons that are reasonable and relevant to their lives.”<sup>80</sup>

This strategy demonstrates the importance of a semiotic-functional approach in Islamic legal preaching: that the law must not only be methodologically valid, but also communicative and personally beneficial. The integrity of the law lies in the courage to link the eternal values of Islam with the complexities of contemporary humanity, without losing moral and scientific authority.<sup>81</sup> Meanwhile, from the perspective of the Muslimah fashion industry, most express their readiness to follow Sharia standards, but often find it difficult to obtain applicable and communicative legal references. A Muslim fashion boutique entrepreneur in Surabaya revealed:

“We really want to follow Sharia principles in business, but in reality, when we ask religious scholars, the answers are often very general or even seem accusatory. Instead of gaining clarity, we feel confused or sometimes even intimidated. What we need is a clear fatwa with practical, easy-to-understand, easy-to-implement guidelines for business owners. Sharia is not just about what is haram and halal in a simplistic sense, but rather about how we can run a business that is not only profitable but also brings blessings and does not violate religious principles.”<sup>82</sup>

The need for contextual and solution-oriented fatwas should be the focus of religious institutional reform in Indonesia. Several efforts have already been initiated, such as the publication

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<sup>77</sup> Wawancara, Mitra Sami Gulthom, Toko Perempuan Muhammadiyah Tagerang, 12 April 2025

<sup>78</sup> Sahal Hanafi et al., “Safinah : Indonesian Journal of Sharia and Islamic Sciences Islamic Law and Social Change : Contemporary Applications of Fiqh in Muslim Societies,” *Safinah: Indonesian Journal of Sharia and Islamic Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2026): 19–27.

<sup>79</sup> Samia Ali, “Modest Fashion: Styling Bodies, Mediating Religion,” *In Cultural Studies Review* 22, no. 1 (2016): 74–91.

<sup>80</sup> Wawancara, Yusuf Syakir, Tokoh Muhammadiyah Tagerang Selatan, 20 Mei 2025

<sup>81</sup> Fadl, *Reasoning with God: Reclaiming Shari’ah in the Modern Age*.

<sup>82</sup> Wawancara, Farid Mawardi Tokoh NU Madura Pemilik Butik di Surabaya, 6 Mei 2025

of guidelines on Islamic dress by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the establishment of a sharia discussion forum within the Muslim entrepreneurial community. However, these steps are still sporadic and have not been integrated at the national level. There needs to be a fatwa mechanism that is responsive, participatory, and transdisciplinary, in which industry players, scholars, and academics can learn from one another and jointly formulate applicable guidelines. In this space, Islamic law is no longer seen as a tool of control but rather as a value that guides, embraces, and builds collective consciousness. This affirms the integrative theory of “ethics-driven fiqh,” a model of fiqh grounded not only in texts but also in values of social justice, ecological awareness, and gender sensitivity.<sup>83</sup> With this approach, Muslim fashion should not be seen as a threat, but as a new field for productive and dignified Islamic preaching.

The statements of these scholars and Muslim fashion industry players demonstrate a fundamental shift in society’s relationship with Islamic law in the contemporary era. The authority of Islamic law today is no longer solely determined by the normative accuracy of a legal provision, but also by its ability to be communicated rationally, contextually, and relevantly to the needs of modern society. This finding demonstrates that society no longer passively accepts Islamic law based solely on religious authority but instead demands arguments that explain the substantive rationale behind a legal provision.

## V. Conclusion

The phenomenon of modern Muslim fashion in Indonesia shows a dialectic between classical legal texts and dynamic social practices. In this context, scholars from various religious authorities, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah, have offered diverse responses, but with one goal: to maintain the integrity of Islamic law while adapting to social change. The MUI, for example, emphasizes that dressing in accordance with Islamic law is not enough to formally cover the aurat (parts of the body that must be covered), but also requires avoiding tabarruj (excessive appearance) and the intention to show off. Meanwhile, NU, in the Bahtsul Masail forum, highlights the importance of preserving the spirit of Sharia amid the massive symbolic visualization in the fashion industry. Muhammadiyah, through the Tarjih Council, highlights the exploitation of the term “sharia” in the commercial world without a clear fiqh basis, and calls for a deeper understanding of the ethical meaning of Muslim women’s clothing.

All of this indicates that Islamic law must be upheld not only in the apparent sense, but also in the senses of spirit, maqasid, and social ethics. Theoretical studies by thinkers such as Mohammad Hashim Kamali and Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im further reinforce the urgency of methodological renewal in fiqh’s response to popular culture. The maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah approach, as proposed by Kamali (2019), encourages scholars not only to rely on legal formalities but also to consider the practice’s intentions, social context, and moral impact. An-Na’im even emphasizes the importance of cultural ijtihad, in which religious texts are interpreted within the framework of an ever-changing pluralistic society. In this case, Muslimah fashion is not just clothing, but a social practice that contains meaning, identity, and spiritual claims. Therefore, scholars are not enough to serve as guardians of boundaries; they must also act as facilitators of dialogue between sharia values and the reality of the ummah, equipping themselves with a multidisciplinary approach and social sensitivity.

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<sup>83</sup> Thahir Jamal Kiliyamanni, “Developing an Ethic of Justice: Maududi and the Solidarity Youth Movement,” *American Journal of Islam and Society* 39, no. 1–2 (2022): 115–45, <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v39i1-2.3000>.

As a follow-up, it is recommended that fatwa institutions establish consultative forums that bring together industry players, academics, Muslim women's communities, and visual ethics activists. This is important in order to produce fatwas and dress codes that are not only normative and valid, but also communicative and applicable in the midst of the rapidly changing digital reality. Additionally, strengthening Islamic legal literacy and popular culture in Islamic boarding schools, religious study circles, and creative Muslim women's communities is an urgent need. Finally, Islamic higher education needs to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum that bridges fiqh, cultural studies, and fashion design, so that future Muslim scholars and intellectuals can maintain legal authority while also becoming strategic partners in shaping a dignified, aesthetic, and ethical Muslim society. Thus, Islamic law will not only remain relevant in the midst of modernity but also become a living and guiding source of values.

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