

## Women's Islamic Shariah Compliant Dress: An Overview

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30880/ahcs.2024.05.02.002>

### Article Info

Received: 15 August 2023

Accepted: 10 April 2024

Available online: 30 June 2024

### Keywords

Shariah Compliant Dress, Islamic fashion, awrah, dress code, religious clothing

### Abstract

Fashion and religion are often said to be interlinked because of the rise of modest dress trends for Muslim women. However, many Muslim women dress in Muslim trends not dictated by religious requirements; as a result, the Muslim clothes they wear do not match the standards for appropriate Muslim attire. The reason is clothing has a purpose for a Muslim in that it is a tool that may be used to hide "awrah", which are areas of the body that should not be seen by anybody other than members of the same family in line with religious orders. In short, Muslims may only wear clothes that are according to the Islamic dress code, which is a Sharia rule that determines what forms of clothing are allowed (i.e., Halal) and prohibited (i.e., Haram). Increases in the media's portrayal of important persons dressed in Islamic clothing and the size of the market for Islamic apparel have helped to elevate Islamic clothing to the status of a major fashion trend. Modern forms of communication, especially the Internet and social networking sites, have helped bring Islamic feminism into the mainstream. Since modesty is a maqasid al-shari'ah, one might achieve it by covering *awrah*.

## 1. Introduction

A person's fashion choice is impacted by their desire to project an image consistent with their social context (Kartajaya, Iqbal, Alfisyahr, Devita, & Ismail, 2019). Thus, people tend to dress according to what they have learned, seen, and experienced (Irma, Hatta, & Kholil, 2020). Participation in fashion draws attention to the significance of clothes and their roles in consumers' lives while revealing their shopping preferences (Razzaq, Ansari, Razzaq, & Awan, 2018). Fashion companies must keep their items contemporary with the most recent version to satisfy their market segments' ever-shifting requirements (Sari & Asad, 2019).

Since many decades ago, the fashion industry around hijabs has been expanding worldwide, resulting in a change in the outward look of religious Muslim women (Sayan-Cengiz, 2018). Clothing's original purpose of covering the body has given way to its current role as a form of self-expression and communication (Ernawati, Astuti, Patriantoro, Marta, & Lang, 2020). In Islam, it is crucial to dress appropriately since how one dress sends signals to others (Hassan, Kasi, Shaharuddin, & Kechil, 2019). Fashion and religion are often said to be interlinked because of the rise of modest dress trends for Muslim women (Peterson, 2020). To gain redemption in this life and the next, Muslims cooperate in believing in the god of Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala and avoiding the prohibitions since Muslims are a community (Purwaningwulan, Suryana, Wahyudin, & Dida, 2019). For example,

according to Islamic teachings (Sumarliah, Li, & Wang, 2020), modesty, safety, cleanliness and comfort of clothes are all critical considerations regarding hijab fashion. In a culture predicated on Islam,

Muslim women comprise one of the most potentially influential groups. Yet, how they interact with fashion is not something that has received much attention (Kartajaya, Iqbal, Alfisyahr, Devita, & Ismail, 2019). After years of being made to feel like the mainstream fashion industry was disregarding them, modest fashion offers Muslim women the chance to be represented in public in a manner they have never been before (Rosenberg, 2019). Women can develop an identity that is not wholly nationality-based but entirely foreign by dressing by Islamic customs (Hass & Lutek, 2019). In recent years, there has been a rapid growth in the global Muslim population, which has resulted in a significant surge in demand for Halal items, particularly those related to the hijab fashion industry (Sumarliah, Li, & Wang, 2020). However, many Muslim women dress in Muslim trends that are not dictated by religious requirements; as a result, the Muslim clothes they wear do not match the standards for appropriate Muslim attire (Riptiono, 2019).

It is said that religion and consumerism are two things that cannot be separated since religion provides an individual with an ideology and advice on how they should act as a consumer (Aruan & Wirdania, 2020). Consequently, Muslims are seen as consumers rather than participants in the mainstream fashion sector, which shows the development of a false dichotomy between Muslim consumers and mainstream fashion participants (Hass & Lutek, 2019). The reason is clothing has a purpose for a Muslim in that it is a tool that may be used to hide "awrah", which are areas of the body that should not be seen by anybody other than members of the same family in line with religious orders (Adib & Yudhanto, 2018).

In short, Muslims may only wear clothes that are according to the Islamic dress code, which is a Sharia rule that determines what forms of clothing are allowed (i.e., Halal) and prohibited (i.e., Haram) for Muslims to wear (Sumarliah, Li, Wang, Fauziyah, & Indriya, 2022). To address the shortage of design schools that can educate and inform different Islamic understandings of clothing, describe Muslim cultural and traditional fashion settings, and comprehend the aesthetic and functional possibilities, proof of acknowledgment of this requirement is required (Randeree, 2019).

As a result, businesses at the forefront of the halal fashion sector are ready to have their supply chains rigorously scrutinized for Islamic norms (Sumarliah, Li, Wang, Moosa, & Sackey, 2021). The amount that Muslim consumers spend on clothing each year totals \$250 billion, which is more than 10 percent of the worldwide market (Randeree, 2019). When it comes to female Muslim fashion trends, subjective norm factors substantially influence customer attitudes and consumer purchasing intentions (Riptiono, 2019). As a result, there is a significant demand for clothes compliant with Islam's regulations (Kusumawati, Listyorini, Suharyono, & Yulianto, 2020). Most Muslim women today wear the hijab not just because of its purpose but also because it is a source of charm or attraction for them (Puspitasari & Dolah, 2018).

The expanding market for Islamic clothing, in conjunction with an increased number of depictions in the media of prominent figures wearing in an Islamic manner, has resulted in the transformation of Islamic clothing into a significant trend of fashion (Mas' udah, 2018). A substantial portion of today's Southeast Asian youth "chooses to live 'the contemporary life' religiously and frequently in ways more orthodox than their parents or grandparents would have chosen only a few short generations before" (Baulch & Pramiyanti, 2018).

Knowledge and comprehension of both the Islamic dress code and modest fashion may be enhanced by examining their similarities and contrasts (Kamarulzaman & Shaari, 2020). Successful social media influencers in the fashion industry are now considered fashion thought leaders due to their extensive participation and ability to convince anyone else to adopt their own fashion choices (Zain, Perry, & Quinn, 2018). For example, Hollywood stars like Rihanna, Kim Kardashian, and Beyonce have posted pictures of themselves wearing hijabs on social media (Bakar & Hamid, 2020). This situation reflected a change in attitude toward Islamic dress from conservatism to modernity. The primary goal of the current study is to analyze the actual standards for shariah-compliant dress in Islam.

## 2. Islamic Fashion in Global

Nurul Shamsul, a woman with Indonesian- Malaysian background who wears the hijab, placed in the top five in this year's Miss Universe New Zealand pageant, is undeniable proof that the hijab fashion industry is booming not just in Muslim-majority countries but also in the West (Sumarliah, Li, Wang, Moosa, & Sackey, 2021). Nike, a big sports company, is believed to be among the first ads performed by prominent veiled athletes to give value to the product 'hijab' and to promote these attributes to customers (Aloui & Amdouni, 2018).

The contemporary idea of the "hijab" has been widely criticized by traditionalist Muslims, who believe that the influence of the fashion industry and social media takes Muslim women's attention away from their religious obligations (Hashmi, Rashid, & Ahmad, 2021). By comparison, the World Trade Organization (WTO) estimates in the year 2020 (Sumarliah, Usmanova, Mousa, & Indriya, 2022), the total value of the worldwide fashion sector at 797 billion USD, with USD 492 billion coming from the global clothing trade and USD 273 billion from the worldwide textile trade (305 billion USD). In 2015 alone, the Muslim population worldwide spent a total of USD

243 billion on clothing and footwear (Hassan, Kasi, Shaharuddin, & Kechil, 2019). It is predicted that by 2022, Muslims will spend USD 373 billion on clothing and footwear (Bardakçı, Kantar, Wood, & Kadirov, 2021).

Following the lead of major fashion cities like London, Paris, and Dubai, "Islamic fashion" has multiplied in recent years (Aris, Ibrahim, & Ahmad, 2018). Although the trend began with a style that emphasizes festive elements and accessories, most hijabers (the name for those who wear the hijab) continue to experiment with their appearance by donning innovative head coverings (Andriana, 2019). Through the rise of new media like social media, globalization has made it possible for Islamic feminism to become a reality (Zainudin, Hasan, & Othman, 2019).

This situation has helped spread the idea and concept of modernity to all continents around the world. For instance, individuals now employed in the Islamic fashion sector in Europe assert that there is no inconsistency between publicly declaring the beauty of Islam (as a means of combating Islamophobia) and obtaining meaningful employment in this industry (Frisina & Hawthorne, 2018). Ata, Baydaş, & Say (2022) found the sub-dimensions of religious attitude known as interiorized belief and traditional belief have strong and beneficial effects on both religiously-motivated spending and the hijab among Turkish women above the age of 18 who choose to wear the hijab. However, Krisjanous, Allayarova, & Kadirov (2021) reported several problems with the online promotion and availability of halal maternity clothing, especially concerning the demands of Western Muslim women.

Practical strategies for marketing halal maternity clothing necessitate resolving conflicts at the intersections of differences such as mahram vs non-mahram settings, crude versus elegant design, and the ethical perceptions of immodesty versus modesty. Besides that, Boy, Uitermark, & Wiersma (2018) cited the significance of (micro-)celebrities in the hijab fashion industry. These are young ladies whose notoriety is mainly due to the ecosystem of social media sites where they have built up sizable fan bases. These young ladies inspire other women of faith, advising them on spiritual and practical topics. For example, Revina & Hadijah (2020) discovered pre-graduate students from Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia, fashion faculty showed an exceptionally high enthusiasm for participating in a fashion event. Similarly, Ranathunga & Dewapura (2018) carry out that Muslim women in Sri Lanka are likelier to wear clothing with decorations and patterns (flora and fauna, geometric, calligraphy, prints, and embroidery).

### 3. Islamic Fashion in Malaysia

In Malaysia, the degree to which a particular form of clothing adheres to the rules of Shariah corresponds to contemporary society or incorporates elements of both, might vary greatly depending on the person (Kamarulzaman & Shaari, 2020). For example, Grine & Saeed (2017) illustrate that many Malaysian women wear the hijab to express their religious beliefs and preserve their moral character. As a result of changes in Muslim women's lives, beauty and grooming practices, as well as an increased concern for appearance, Muslim women are more inclined to buy hijabs that conform to their notions of femininity and have become popular in recent years (Baharuddin, Musa, Rosle, & Sara, 2021).

Hassan & Ara (2021) revealed that self-congruity and demand for uniqueness both favoured the fashion awareness of Muslim women who wear the hijab. Lee & Park (2020) claimed that the increased rate of Malaysian women's education and integration into society, in conjunction with Islamic dress, offered a chance for Muslim women to wear the hijab. By comparison, Zaki, Din, & Elseidi (2021) argue the personality model for an Islamic clothing brand includes the five qualities of "simplicity", "femininity", "modesty", "Islamic", and "righteousness". Shukran, Johari, & Bujang (2018) believed that the future of the Islamic fashion industry would be bright in Malaysia, where the sector is only beginning to emerge, and more individuals are beginning to take advantage of the potential. For example, the design and demand for Islamic clothing are expanding at a rapid rate, due in large part to the development of e-commerce and social media (Rahmawati, 2018).

Jang & Park (2021) cited that Malaysian women also gathered knowledge on fashion trends via social media and the Internet. They use this information to purchase fashion goods through the Internet and shopping malls. Saidan, Saaidin, Kamarulbaharin, Zainun, & Adzmi (2022) found that having Islamic traits and fashion forecasting is a subject within the fashion industry that focuses on anticipating the next trend in terms of the colour, design approach, and textile material. In addition, Dina & Hati (2017) state that the vast majority of Malaysian Muslims who wear the hijab believe that traditional e-commerce offers far more benefits to customers in terms of shipping arrangement, payment and billing safety and privacy, web attractiveness, product pricing, user experience, perception towards the web, and intention.

### 4. Women's Shariah-compliant Dress

This topic must be discussed since the notion of a woman's awrah in the Quran is mentioned (Misbah, Karim, Fuqohak, & Qibtiyah, 2021). The restrictions of concealing awrah were not specified in the Quran, which led to

scholars having varying points of view on the matter. For example, Quran does not directly address covering the head with a cloth as an element of modest behaviour (Pemberton & Takhar, 2021). Instead, it emphasizes covering the woman's breast and concealing her beauty (which, for some scholars, includes the body parts designated 'awrah) from males she could (at least potentially) marry.

Therefore, Muslim feminists provide a distinct interpretation of Islamic tenets about *awrah*, *khulwah*, and the hijab (Uthman, 2022). As a result, the idea of *awrah* may take on a variety of interpretations, each of which requires that the opinions given be interpreted in light of the supporting evidence. *Khulwah* refers to a situation in which a man and a woman who does not have a Mahram bond (with whom marriage is forbidden) are left alone in a location where they may engage in sexual activity. Millions of Muslim women traditionally cover their hair with the hijab (which means "partition" or "barrier"), which may apply to anything that prevents someone or anything from being seen (Sheen, Yekani, & Jordan, 2018; Bello, 2020). For these women, the headscarf is an important part of what it means to be recognized as Muslim. Instead, a new interpretation of the hijab is created by capitalists, one in which the clothing is associated with the appearance of intellect and elegance (Listyani, Utami, & Sadewo, 2018). A veil's incorporation into popular and mainstream culture occurs when the hijab is commercialized. The word *awrah* comes from the Arabic word "awrah", which means "weakness", "blemish", "imperfection", or "defectiveness" (Martiana, 2018). Thus, *awrah* is part of the patriarchal language and conceptual paradigm, which serves to objectify women's bodies and assign them to specific roles of subjection (Daragmeh & Hamamra, 2021). Therefore, words, feelings, and laughter that reveal a woman's body are considered *awrah*.

According to Sharia principle, *awrah* must have some flaw to be considered closed and hidden from view. Tight clothes on women should be avoided since they might accentuate the natural contours of their limbs (Boer, 2018). A woman who dresses in clothing but also wishes to exhibit her *awrah*, in effect by Sharia principle, is nude even if she is wearing a dress. Daruriyyat (essentials) include covering *awrah*, not in prayer, since it serves as a safeguard for one's honour and offspring (Salleh, et al., 2018).

Since modesty is one of the *maqasid al-shari'ah* that may be attained via covering *awrah*, this is seen as a way. When women wear the hijab as intended, they are protected against scathing, sexual assault, adultery, and other forms of harassment that Islam forbids. It is also essential for Muslim women to dress in a way that compliments their bodies since this may do wonders for their confidence and happiness (Kaur, Wahab, & Zulkifli, 2021). Given that Islam places a strong emphasis on modesty in dress and since the topic at hand is women's clothes, mainly when worn in public and connection to the Mahram (Radwan, Kamal, Khavarinezhad, & Calandra, 2019). Auliya, Azizah, Mahmud, & Saifudin (2022) report the notion that understanding, background, thinking, and practice of closing the *awrah* are the four variables that determine how well women wear Sharia-compliant dress. The general guideline for Women's Sharia-compliant Dress is shown in Table 1.

Basic Guidelines	Rationale
Clothing must cover the entire body from men are not mahram.	All the rules tell Muslim women not to expose their body shape in any way that might attract men's attention. Although not all men have bad intentions towards women, the guidelines are for prevention.
Clothing should not be sparse or semi-sparse.	
Cannot be tight that will follow the shape of the body.	
Do not use strong perfume so that it will attract other people's attention.	
Do not display excessive jewellery or jewellery or even show the existence of such jewellery (such as the sound of a bell) because it can cause theft or theft.	
Not dressing like non-Muslim (by not covering their <i>awrah</i> parts).	A Muslim woman must distinguish herself from non-Muslim by dressing according to the <i>Sharia</i> guidelines but still not lose their dignity as a woman.
Clothes should not resemble men.	
Clothing must be shapeless and showy position or wealthy.	Men and women should humble themselves by not showing off their material comforts or display arrogance.

Table 1: General guidelines for Women's Sharia-compliant Dress (Sulaiman, Ahmad, Daud, Mokhtar, & Mohad, 2020)

The outer appearance of religious Muslim women has changed as the fashion industry around hijabs has grown globally over the last few decades. Clothes used only to be something to keep the body covered, but now they serve as a means of communication and expression. Islam places foremost importance on modest attire since it is believed that one's outside appearance conveys messages about one's inner self. Today's Muslim women wear the hijab not just because of its value and significance but also because it makes them feel attractive. Increases in the media's portrayal of important persons dressed in Islamic clothing and the size of the market for Islamic apparel have helped to elevate Islamic clothing to the status of a major fashion trend. Modern forms of communication, especially the Internet and social networking sites, have helped bring Islamic feminism into the mainstream. Since modesty is a *maqasid al-shari'ah*, one might achieve it by covering awrah.

## 5. Conclusion

The growth of the hijab fashion industry has significantly transformed the outward appearance and self-expression of religious Muslim women. Clothing, once primarily functional for covering the body, now serves as a means of communication and personal expression. This shift underscores the importance Islam places on modest attire, as one's appearance reflects their inner self. The hijab, in particular, is worn not only for its religious significance but also for its aesthetic appeal, making Muslim women feel attractive and confident.

The media's increasing portrayal of notable figures in Islamic attire and the expanding market for such clothing have elevated Islamic fashion to a major trend. The role of social media and the Internet has been pivotal in bringing Islamic feminism and modest fashion into the mainstream, allowing Muslim women to embrace modernity while adhering to their faith. Modesty, a key principle in Islam, is achieved through the concept of covering the awrah, aligning with the broader objectives of Shariah (*maqasid al-shari'ah*).

In summary, the hijab fashion industry not only meets the evolving needs of Muslim women but also bridges the gap between tradition and modernity, fostering a unique identity that resonates globally. The ongoing integration of modesty and fashion signifies a dynamic intersection of religion, culture, and contemporary trends, highlighting the multifaceted role of clothing in Muslim women's lives.

## Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the Center for General Studies and Co-curriculum, University Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) for their support so that this writing can be published.

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