

MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS TO WEAR THE VEIL IN MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA

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ABSTRACT. Religion has mandated that we, as Muslims, dress appropriately and cover our aurat. Allah SWT has commanded women to cover their aurat by wearing the hijab. The purpose of this study is to examine the motivation of female students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta to wear the niqab. This research employs a qualitative case study method, conducted at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Data collection techniques include interviews and observations. Data validity is ensured through source triangulation, and data analysis is carried out using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The motivations for wearing the niqab among UMS female students are categorized into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The intrinsic motivations identified include eleven themes: worship, self-protection, self-improvement, avoiding negative influences, increased self-confidence, limiting social interactions with the opposite gender, preventing sexual objectification, avoiding slander from the opposite gender, interest in specific halaqah communities, heartbreak, seeking closeness to God, and self-actualization. The extrinsic motivations identified include five themes: appearing graceful and feeling safe, encouraging politeness from others, family support, inspiration from hadith and scholars' opinions, and environmental influences.

Keywords: Motivation; Niqab; Students.

INTRODUCTION

Islam is a comprehensive religion that regulates all aspects of human life. The rules of Islam cover physical and spiritual life as well as worldly and afterlife. Islam has regulated various things in human life that are considered guidelines for the path of life, including in terms of dressing and covering the genitals. In this case, Islamic jurisprudence scholars state that the genitals must be covered from the view of people with clothing that is not transparent and does not form the curves of the body.

Therefore, in Islam, it is prescribed for women to dress according to the sharia to achieve fundamental goals. First, to cover the aurat and prevent slander. Second, to distinguish it from other women and as a form of respect for Muslim women. According to Islamic teachings, the parts of the body that need to be covered are clearly and firmly defined; for men from the navel to the knees, while for women all parts of the body except the face and palms to the wrists.

Clothing is the main difference between humans and animals. In addition, it is also a sign of civilization and progress. Because clothing is an address of the height of humanity, then a civilized woman must dress neatly. With clothes like this, she will be able to maintain her religion, her honor, and her sense of shame for a woman, the highest value lies in maintaining her sense of shame.

Islam provides clear rules about dress ethics. Clothing for a Muslim or Muslimah has a very high meaning of worship. Indonesia is one of the largest Muslim countries in the world, most of whose Muslim women wear the hijab following current trends, to the point that some wear the hijab and dress according to sharia and the niqab. As in Khairunnisa's research (2018) entering the end of 2016 and early 2017, the trend of the sharia hijab has grown rapidly with the use of the niqab or face covering. The development of this trend has influenced several Muslim women in Indonesia to use the niqab and other Muslim clothing.

Meanwhile, in Surakarta as an area with religious and traditionalist society, it is inseparable from the rise of Muslim women who wear the niqab. In 2018, a community of Muslim women wearing the niqab, which they named "Muslimah Solo Raya" held a demonstration in Solo. This action was triggered by the emergence of negative public assessments of women wearing the niqab after a series of suicide bombings in Surabaya, then followed by a terror attack on the Riau Police in 2018 (Siswanto 2018).

Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS) as an Islamic-based university in Surakarta is also not free from the phenomenon of the niqab. In the UMS campus environment, the niqab phenomenon is now increasingly popular. The niqab is nothing new for the UMS campus, especially in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education and the Faculty of Islamic Studies. Even so, according to a limited survey by Setyarini (2018), the majority (60%) of the UMS academic community still has a negative perception of students wearing niqabs. This is also reinforced by the prohibition of wearing niqabs by one of the lecturers at the Faculty of Psychology (Mutiasari 2020).

The reasons why individuals wear a veil are very diverse. This diversity arises due to many influencing factors, such as knowledge gained from the family environment or awareness from within. There are numerous reasons why women decide to wear a veil, and these reasons are shaped by a motivation to do so. Based on the background described above, the researchers formulated the problem in this study as follows: What is the motivation of female students in wearing the veil, specifically within the UMS environment?

METHOD

The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach, namely "an approach in conducting research that is oriented towards natural phenomena or symptoms". Its nature is basic and naturalistic or natural, and cannot be done in a laboratory, but in the field. Therefore, this type of research is often called a naturalistic inquiry or case study. This qualitative approach is descriptive in the sense that it only describes the meaning of data or phenomena that can be captured by the researcher by showing evidence.

The type of research used is a case study, which is a detailed examination of a setting, a subject, a storage place, or a particular event. In this study, the case study focuses on the motivation of female students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

Research Location

The location of this research is at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta with the focus of the research on the motivation of female students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in using the veil.

This location was chosen because this institution is one of the advanced Islamic educational institutions that is growing rapidly and has an important influence in Central Java and National regions, and is a private educational institution that has an important influence on the environment and students who study in it.

Research Object

Research objects in conducting research that is first considered is the research object that. The research object contains problems that are used as research material to find solutions. According to Sugiyono (2009), the object of research is as follows: "An attribute or characteristic or value of a person, object or activity that has certain variations determined by the researcher to be studied and then conclusions drawn."

According to Arikunto (2010), the object of research is as follows: "The object of research is the research variable, namely something that is the core of the research problem. The object, thing, or person where the data for the research variable is attached and is questioned is called the object".

From the definition above, it can be concluded that the object of the research is the students who wear the veil at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, with the aim of obtaining specific data for scientific purposes

Research Subject

The research subject chosen was qualitative research, namely on the Motivation of Female Students of the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in Using the Veil.

Moleong (2007) describes research subjects as informants, which means people in the research setting who are used to provide information about the situation and conditions of the research setting.

In line with this definition, Mulyana (2010) describes the subject of research as a person who is observed as a research target. Based on this understanding, the researcher describes the subject of motivational research as a motivational actor who is the target of observation or informant in a study conducted by the researcher. The subject of this research is a female student who wears a niqab, namely a female student at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

Table 1: Informant Description (Based on Maslow Need Theory)

Code	Background	Study Program	SMT	Long time wearing the veil	Wearing the Veil
C1	have attention to health conditions	Geography	VII	2 years	Only on campus
C2	from a study program that is predominantly male	Mechanical Engineering	III	1.5 years	Anywhere
C3	selling headscarves	IQT	III	1.5 years	Only on campus
C4	comes from the Islamic religious department	PIE	III	6.5 years	Anywhere

Method of collecting data

Interview Method

Interviews are a method of data collection that is widely used, both for practical and scientific purposes, especially for qualitative social research. An interview is a direct and face-to-face conversation with a specific purpose. This conversation is conducted by two parties, namely the interviewer who asks questions, and the interviewee who provides answers to the questions. (Sugiyono, 2017).

In this study, interviews were used as the primary method to explore in-depth the motivations of female students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in wearing the veil. The type of interview used was in-depth unstructured interviews, which allowed for flexibility in gathering open and natural information.

The study involved four informants, all female students from different faculties at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The informants were purposively selected based on criteria such as their academic background, semester, and personal experiences with wearing the veil.

An interview guide containing main questions (guide grid) was used, but the approach remained flexible, allowing for spontaneous follow-up questions to explore topics as the conversation evolved. The interviews were conducted face-to-face on campus, with each session lasting between 30 and 60 minutes.

The topics covered in the interviews included: Personal background and initial experience of wearing the veil, Factors influencing the decision to wear the veil (both intrinsic and extrinsic), Perceptions of social support or challenges within the campus environment, Personal meanings and expectations related to wearing the veil.

Each interview was recorded using field notes and audio recordings (with consent from the informants), then transcribed manually for further thematic analysis.

As Creswell (2014) emphasizes, interviews in qualitative research aim to understand the

subjective meaning of an individual's experiences, and an open, in-depth approach is essential for uncovering information that is not immediately visible.

Observation Method

In this study, observation was carried out as one of the key techniques to explore the motivations of female students wearing the veil at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The type of observation used was participant observation, where the researcher was directly involved in the natural setting of the subjects to understand their experiences more deeply.

The observation focused on several specific aspects related to the students' daily behaviors and interactions, including: How veiled female students interact with their peers and lecturers in different academic or social environments, How they express their personal motivations or beliefs through behavior, gestures, or statements during informal discussions, The responses or attitudes of the surrounding academic community—including non-veiled students and faculty—toward those who wear the veil, The consistency between students' verbal statements and their behavior, especially in settings that either support or challenge their decision to wear the veil, Visible religious expressions or symbols displayed in personal appearance, classroom participation, and group activities.

Documentation Methods

The documentation method is a technique used to collect data from non-human sources, these sources consist of documents and recordings such as newspapers, diaries, personal manuscripts, photographs, case notes, and so on.(Moleong, 2017)

Through this documentation technique, researchers collect the necessary data according to the needs of the research, personal notes are used if necessary to support data available at the research location.

Data Validation Techniques

In this study, data validation was conducted using **triangulation**, a technique that combines multiple data sources or methods to enhance the credibility of the findings. Triangulation helps ensure that the data collected is consistent and reliable by cross-checking it from different angles. The triangulation process in this study involved several steps: **Comparing Observation and Interview Data**: Observations were made during the fieldwork, and these were cross-checked with interview responses to verify consistency, **Cross-checking Public vs. Private Statements**: To assess reliability, the study compared what participants said in public with what they shared in private settings. This helped reveal any discrepancies or hidden aspects of their motivations, **Comparing Perspectives Across Different Groups**: The study also compared the perspectives of students with varying backgrounds (e.g., those with different academic levels, socioeconomic statuses) to ensure a broader understanding of motivations for wearing the veil, **Document Review**: The interview results were further validated by comparing them to relevant documents, such as university policies and previous research findings on similar topics.

By using these triangulation methods, the data was cross-verified to reduce bias and ensure its validity. As suggested by Creswell (2014), triangulation helps researchers obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining various data sources, methods, or perspectives.

This approach provided a strong foundation for validating the findings and ensuring their trustworthiness, minimizing the risk of errors or misinterpretations.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study was carried out using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman(1992), which involves three main components: **data reduction**, **data display**, and **drawing conclusions**..

Data Reduction

In this step, the raw data collected from interviews and field observations were selected and focused based on their relevance to the research objectives. Key information related to the motivations of veiled female students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS) was identified, summarized, and categorized. Repetitive and irrelevant data were excluded to maintain focus on meaningful patterns.

Display Data

The reduced data were then organized into a coherent structure to facilitate interpretation. This involved arranging the information into thematic categories, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and presenting it in narrative form. This step helped visualize the relationship between different data segments and supported the process of pattern recognition.

Drawing Conclusions

The final step involved interpreting the displayed data to draw conclusions. Patterns and themes that emerged from the analysis were linked back to the research objectives. The conclusions were drawn inductively, meaning they were developed directly from the data rather than from pre-existing theories. Verification was done by checking the consistency of findings across multiple data sources and participant statements.

This approach allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind the use of the niqab by UMS students, grounded in their lived experiences and direct testimonies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore the motivations of female students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in wearing the veil. The primary objective was to understand the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing their decision

Worship

Some informants agreed that wearing a veil provides benefits in bringing people closer to religious behavior.

"Only after wearing the veil did I join religious studies here and there. With friends". (C1)

"I just want to make sure that you (the man) don't get sin and I don't get sin either." (C2)

"I follow the sunnah of the Prophet." (C4)

Look graceful and feel secure.

Most informants felt safe and comfortable wearing the veil.

"By wearing a veil, I feel... oh... cool." (C1)

"Looking graceful and well maintained is the point." (C3)

"I was a bit hesitant, but I tried it and said, 'Bismillah, it turns out to be comfortable like that.'" (C4)

Take care of yourself

All informants agreed that the veil protects them.

"more respected as a woman." (C1)

"Because if it's more closed, it's more protected." (C2)

"I see her wearing a veil that can protect her, be more protective." (C3)

"Moreover, the majority of students at university are male, so I feel like I am more protected that way." (C4)

Want to improve yourself?

Most of the informants used the veil to improve themselves.

"So I changed it from myself." (C1)

"But the point is to make ourselves better." (C2)

"I am improving myself so that later, the biggest role of a woman is actually to be a housewife." (C3)

Avoid bad things

Some others feel protected from bad things and some others do not pay attention to it.

"So maybe by wearing a veil I can protect myself. (2. And I was even about to be raped and kidnapped too,)." (C1)

"I once had an unpleasant experience that happened to my friend." (C2)

More confident

Most informants feel confident when wearing the veil, they even really enjoy it.

"In solo, there are a lot of people who wear veils, sir, so you're not surprised or intimidated." (C1)

"In fact, on campus, it's dominated by men, so they understand my condition." (C2)

"They said it was different, but for me, I just enjoy it, this is my life." (C4)

Limiting social relations with the opposite sex

All informants agreed that the veil was used as a means to limit social relations with the opposite sex.

"The reason I wear a veil is because I am in a faculty that is predominantly male." (C1)

"So in terms of socializing, I feel more protected. It's not that I'm limiting them, but indirectly there is a line that becomes a hijab because she (the informant) can't be treated the same as other girls." (C2)

"I think the veil is more about protecting us from the views of people around us." (C3)

"... so I use it to be able to limit myself from men so that I don't have to look at them directly." (C4)

So as not to be seen as sexual by men

Most of the informants thought that the veil could protect them from the sexual gaze of men, but a small number paid less attention to this because they had not paid attention to it until now.

"Why did I start wearing a skirt after seeing my friend wearing jeans and tight clothes, I felt a bit uncomfortable. And I kept looking at myself, oh, will people look like this when they see me?" (C1)

", in the past, the clothes were not by Islamic law. And now, they are more careful about how they dress. And it doesn't attract other people's attention, so that we don't wear the veil too prominently, don't show it too much." (C2)

"In my opinion, meeting a man face to face is a bit strange." (C4)

Avoid slander from the opposite sex.

All informants agreed that wearing a veil can avoid slander from the opposite sex when interacting with each other.

"Before wearing the veil, I was like other students, still liked to ride with men. The environment was not yet selective. And after wearing the veil, I can carry myself, control how I should behave, and speak too." (C1)

"So now the foundation is to prepare me to be the best woman who doesn't spread slander." (C2)

"I see her wearing a veil as something that can protect her, be more protective, and God willing, the brothers out there can be more respectful, right?" (C3)

"So I use it to be able to limit myself from men so that I don't have to look at them directly." (C4)

Other people become more polite.

Most informants felt that other people were more polite towards them since wearing the veil.

"and men are now a bit reluctant to curse or swear." (C1)

"They look after me more," (C2)

"Many of the students in my campus environment are from Islamic boarding schools, so it's like we can take better care of it." (C3)

Supported by family

All informants were supported by their parents when they used the niqab, although some other families did not agree. But for some informants as long as both parents supported it, it was not a significant problem for them.

"I've asked for my family's blessing. At that time, my family also immediately agreed." (C1)

"If my father is from Muhammadiyah, it's okay, as long as you know that there is a strong basis for what you are doing. But my mother is protective of me because some neighbors gossiped "Why did she join what sect" even though I am like this because I know the

knowledge, not just wearing a niqab because of the trend. But because I have learned and am still in the learning process. But now I can accept it," (C2)

"(1. And my mother welcomes it as long as it is good) (2. I came to the religious study there and met my father and at that time I was also wearing a veil. And the first expression when he saw me wearing a veil was just normal.) (3. At home I don't dare to wear a veil, because my sister is probably the first person to oppose me wearing a veil)." (C3)

"My own family allows it because in this area the majority of people wear the veil." (C4)

Interested in a particular halaqah community

Some others are interested in halaqahs specifically for veiled women, but others prefer regular halaqahs.

"There was a special study that I once participated in, a forum for studying the Koran in particular." (C2)

"At the beginning, there was a special halaqah for women who wear the niqab on campus, I participated once (2. I have participated several times in the committee for Salafi studies. I didn't participate in Salafi studies, actually the blessing is that I only absorb the knowledge) (3." (C3)

Inspired by hadith and opinions of scholars

Most informants have a basis in hadith and verses for using the veil.

"The problem is, this veil is said to be sunnah, it's not in the Qur'an either." (C1)

"In the hadith of the prophet, if we cannot protect ourselves, it is the worst slander and I don't want my sins to flow to you. And I want to protect myself like that. (2. "The incident happened when the friend of the apostle was accused of adultery, the one who was left by the prophet's entourage who approached him always covered his face with a piece of cloth"). (3. There was once a special study on the veil that women who do not show their faces are rarely thought about by men. The point is that men rarely check on them)." (C2)

"Even though I don't remember which imam is obligatory, there are those who consider it sunnah," (C3)

If I take it from the verse of the letter al-Ahzab verse 53. The essence is to limit men like that." (C4)

Broken heart, to get closer to God

Most of the informants used the veil not because of a broken heart but because of an escape.

"I'm still close to some guys, but I don't dare to mention it when I'm dating, so it's like I'm no longer dating." (C3)

Environmental factors

All informants agreed that environmental factors also influenced the use of the veil they wore.

"I mean, I come from a broken home, you know." (C1)

"It motivated me because one of my female teachers wore a niqab.) (2." (C2)

"So because he is my close friend, it seems like he influences me too. That environment seems to support me in getting closer to Allah." (C3)

"In this area, the majority of people wear the niqab because it's close to my junior high school boarding school." (C4)

Self-actualization

Some informants also find that wearing the veil influences their self-actualization behavior in social life.

"And now it's simpler just by wearing a veil like now." (C1)

"I admit that this is a form of proof that people who wear the veil do not always close themselves off, they can socialize with the opposite sex, they can socialize with the wider community, not all of them are in their environment, not all of them are in the same study group as them, but they can still socialize outside their study group." (C2)

Table 2. Research Findings

Worship	Look graceful and feel secure	Take care of yourself	Want to improve yourself	Avoid bad things	More confident	Limiting social relations with the opposite sex	So as not to be seen as sexual by men
Some informants agree that wearing a veil provides benefits in bringing us closer to religious behavior.	Most informants feel safe and comfortable wearing the veil	all informants agreed that the veil protects them	Most of the informants use the veil to improve themselves	some others feel protected from bad things and some others do not pay attention to it	Most informants feel confident when wearing the veil, they even really enjoy it	All informants agreed that the veil was used as a means to limit social relations with the opposite sex.	Most of the informants thought that the veil could protect them from sexual glances from men.
Avoid slander from the opposite sex	Other people become more polite	Supported by family	Interested in a particular halaqah community	Inspired by hadith and opinions of scholars	Broken heart, to get closer to God	Other	
						environmental factors	self-actualization

All informants agreed that wearing a veil can avoid slander from the opposite sex when interacting with each other.	Most informants felt that other people were more polite towards them since wearing the veil.	All informants were supported by their parents when they used the niqab, although some other families did not agree. But for some informants as long as both parents supported it, it was not a significant problem for them.	Some others are interested in special halaqahs for veiled women, but others prefer ordinary halaqahs.	Most informants have a basis in hadith and verses for using the veil.	Most of the informants use the veil not because of a broken heart but because of their escape.	All informants agreed that environmental factors also influenced the use of the veil they wore.	Some informants also find that wearing the veil influences their self-actualization behavior in social life.
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Discussion

The informants' motivations for wearing the veil are very diverse. Starting from religious reasons, and comfort, to the mission of eliminating stigma (women who wear the veil are confined and unproductive). This finding is in line with the research of Wagner, et al (2012) who found that Muslim women in India (minority) wear the veil because of religious motivations, comfort, and opposing negative stereotypes.

Having a feeling of being closer to Allah becomes part of the impact after the informant uses the veil. This is different from previous studies (Mulyono 2019; Rahman 2017; Ziani 2020) which found that approaching Allah is part of the reason they use the veil. This happens because for the informant, wearing the veil is part of the process of learning about religion. Approaching Allah is part of the process, not the cause.

The main motivation for wearing the veil in this study was due to past trauma (sexual harassment) and environmental factors (conducive to wearing the veil). This is different from the research of Bhowon & Bundhoo (2016) which found that the two main reasons for wearing the veil for Mauritian Muslim women were religious obligations and gaining more respect. Furthermore, Bhowon and Bundhoo (2016) found that wearing the veil strengthened Mauritian Muslim women's awareness of themselves as Muslims.

Finally, the experience of wearing the veil is highly dependent on the informant's motivation for wearing it. This is in line with the results of a study by Legate et al.(2020) which revealed that the experience of women wearing the hijab in Saudi Arabia and Iran is different, influenced by their reasons for wearing it. Wearing the veil for intrinsic motivation is thought to cause someone to feel positive inner experiences and life satisfaction as found by Legate et al. (2020).

CONCLUSION

This study aims to explore the underlying motivations behind the decision of female students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS) to wear the niqab. The focus is placed on two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic..

There are 11 themes of intrinsic motivation revealed, namely: Worship, Take care of yourself, Want to improve yourself, Avoid bad things, More confident, Limiting social relations with the opposite sex, So as not to be seen as sexual by men, Avoid slander from the opposite sex, Interested in a particular halaqah community, Broken heart, to get closer to God, Self-actualization

There are 5 themes of extrinsic motivation revealed, namely: Look graceful and feel secure, Other people become more polite, Supported by family, Inspired by hadith and opinions of scholars, Environment

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations. The small informant area limits the representativeness of the findings. However, the focus of this study was not on generalization but rather on in-depth information. In addition, there may be an inherent bias in the selection of informants because participants were acquaintances of each other which may have prevented the possibility of diverse opinions. The findings of this study can be used to develop a more quantitative measure that can be used with a larger sample.

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