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Psychological or Theological Dynamics of Students who Wear Cadar at Islamic Universities in Indonesia

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Abstract

Cadar is a type of veil worn by some Muslim women that covers the face, leaving only the eyes visible. Several studies have been carried out with the primary aim of exploring the use of this veil in Islamic colleges. These explorations identified several significant elements contributing to the usage of *cadar*, including psychological and ideological issues, both of which have not been thoroughly examined. Therefore, the present study aims to fill these gaps through the use of the reality of *fiqh* and psychological techniques. To achieve the stated objective, data were collected from 22 UIN Datokarama high school graduates who were assigned to participate in lifts, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The obtained results showed that three factors namely, the need for stability, the possibility of personal development, and the propensity to emulate an adored figure, served as psychologically motivating factors to students. Furthermore, the reality of *fiqh* was observed to suggest that the use of *cadar* is not necessarily accompanied by a strong religious understanding of its significance. This fact reinforces previous results that the adoption of *cadar* in Islamic colleges is more psychological than theological. Within the context of the present study, new facts emphasizing psychological and theological fragility among university students were uncovered and stakeholders are expected to address these facts when dealing with the phenomenon at Islamic universities.

Keywords: Veil; Higher Education; Psychological; Reality Fiqh, Theological.

Abstrak

Cadar adalah jenis kerudung yang dikenakan oleh beberapa wanita Muslim yang menutupi wajah, sehingga hanya menyisakan bagian mata yang terlihat. Beberapa penelitian telah dilakukan dengan tujuan utama untuk mengeksplorasi penggunaan *cadar* di perguruan tinggi Islam. Eksplorasi ini mengidentifikasi beberapa elemen penting yang berkontribusi terhadap penggunaan *cadar*, termasuk masalah psikologis dan

ideologis, yang keduanya belum diteliti secara menyeluruh. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi kesenjangan ini melalui penggunaan realitas fikih dan teknik psikologis. Untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut, data dikumpulkan dari 22 lulusan SMA UIN Datokarama yang ditugaskan untuk berpartisipasi dalam daftar, wawancara, dan *focus group discussions* (FGD). Hasil yang diperoleh menunjukkan bahwa tiga faktor yaitu, kebutuhan akan stabilitas, kemungkinan pengembangan pribadi, dan kecenderungan untuk meniru sosok yang dipuja, berfungsi sebagai faktor pendorong psikologis bagi para siswa. Selain itu, realitas fikih yang diamati menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan cadar tidak serta merta disertai dengan pemahaman agama yang kuat tentang maknanya. Fakta ini memperkuat hasil penelitian sebelumnya bahwa penggunaan cadar di perguruan tinggi Islam lebih bersifat psikologis daripada teologis. Dalam konteks penelitian ini, fakta-fakta baru yang menekankan kerapuhan psikologis dan teologis di kalangan mahasiswa ditemukan dan para pemangku kepentingan diharapkan untuk mengatasi fakta-fakta ini ketika berhadapan dengan fenomena tersebut di perguruan tinggi Islam

Kata Kunci: Cadar; Pendidikan Tinggi; Psikologis; Fikih Realitas; Teologis.

Introduction

The use of *cadar* by students at the State Islamic College (PTKIN) has become a serious debate amid the priority of religious moderation by the Ministry of Religion (Kurniawan, 2018). According to a previous study, the rectors of Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Ampel advocated for the ban of *cadar* for students of Islamic universities (Abidin, 2021). This policy was seen as a preventive measure against extremism on campus (Iqbal & Fauzi, 2021), as universities have become sites of ideologization and indoctrination of beliefs that are contrary to the *Pancasila* (Mukaromah et al., 2022). Alternatively, it is important to state that not question the use of *cadar* as long as its use did not include ideological expression (Dwifatma & Beta, 2024). This pro-counter point was made as a result of the complexity of the *cadar* phenomenon itself. As stated by Pohan (2021), *cadar* is just a cover form of *aurat* (intimate part) which is still a trend among millennials (Pohan, 2021), but this cover form has become a new identity rooted in a sense of religion and ideology of radicalism (Ariyani, 2023). For instance, in countries such as Egypt (van Nieuwkerk, 2008), Turkey (Secor, 2002) Iran (Shavarini, 2006), and Bangladesh (Rozario, 2006), *cadar* is considered a resistance symbol to all forms of discrimination.

Despite the numerous studies carried out to explore the intricacies of the subject matter, only a few have been tailored towards psychological dynamics and comprehension of the religious attitudes of college students using the interdisciplinary approach between psychology and the *fiqh* of reality. Therefore, the aim of this study is to provide more detail on psychological dynamics and comprehension of students of Datokarama UIN. It is important to state that psychological dynamics, in this context, consist of motivations and dynamics of subjective well-being in the process of modifying attitudes and choices to become a *cadari*. Theoretically, religiousness improves women with the subjective well-being of sexual impairments (Saifuddin & Andriani, 2018), but many women have been

observed to experience compromised psychological well-being due to social stress (Pramitasari & Satrio, 2022). These individuals are usually isolated from society, less confident (Nofalia, 2021), and tend to possess firmness in a bid to be seen as an expression of diversity (Ummah, 2021).

Cadar, as a facial covering, is subject to varying interpretations among scholars. Some view this style of dressing merely as a recommended practice (limited *sunnah*), while others consider it obligatory and enforce its observance. Religious texts about intimate boundaries have never escaped from existing and evolving realities (Aderus et al., 2023). The order of closing the *aurat* is based on authoritative religious texts, but the specific determination of what includes the face as part of the *aurat* is subject to human interpretation (Muna, 2021). It is important to comprehend that the humanitarian consideration of the *aurat* covers both the social and psychological aspects of a woman. Considering this fact, the development of a smart approach to reality that is grounded in practical wisdom rather than abstract theory is necessary. Fictional reality has been associated with the use of a Muslim's *cadar* in an attempt to understand the deeper social and psychological contextual aspects of the wearer, regardless of the existence of religious texts. Therefore, the science of psychology can also be used in analyzing the product of *fuqaha's* *ijtihad*, including veil problems.

Several studies have investigated the concept of *cadar* at Islamic colleges in Indonesia, including that of where five major themes were observed to be related with wearing the veil in universities (Kistoro et al., 2020). These themes include the average age of female students who wear a veil, the motivation, and reasons for wearing a veil, the perceptions of those who wear a veil towards themselves and the environment, the constraints encountered, and the consistency in wearing a veil. According to the study, factors such as religion, external influences, traumatic abuse, and well-being constituted the main aspects facilitating the adoption of *cadar* among university students. Kistoro stated that in general, knowledge of Islamophobia, particularly the perception of the veil problem, is critical for educational institutions when defining policies and for the community as a resource in dealing with the phenomena.

Another study carried out by showed that the dominant motives of students in Indonesia were more on the aspects of security, love, and self-actualization as well as trends (Pohan & Fitria, 2022). Meanwhile, (Ritonga, 2022) and (Rusuli, 2021) concluded that the use of *cadar* is more based on intrinsic aspects. Rusuli's study further associated the wearing of a *cadar* with the attraction of resistance and negative stigma in college. Accordingly, (Sartika & Yusuf (2020) stated that *cadar* was conceived as a reproduction of meaning in education. In this context, the concept of *cadar* is not only a limited expression of religious doctrines (self-protection) but also a medium of publicity. The ideology

associated with the concept is based on the spirit of authentic religious association with the group of the *salufusaleh*, the friends of the *cadar* women. This group was able to effectively use social media to form a sub-culture to express the authenticity of religious understanding (Nisa, 2013). The *cadar* has also managed to attract the attention of students in Islamic and public universities (Abidin, 2021).

The present study aims to discuss three scientifically and politically important points, namely, the reality of *cadar* students in Datokarama Palu UIN, the psychological analysis of the use of student cards at Datokarama Palu UIN, and the *fiqh*-based analysis of the *cadar* practice among these students. The obtained results enriched the treasure and discourse of the college, while also contributing significantly to policy-making and strategic measures for stakeholders in addressing the reputation of students in the Indonesian college.

Methods

This qualitative field study was carried out using a cross-science (interdisciplinary) approach comprising two disciplines, namely psychology and Islamic law, particularly *fiqh* reality. Psychological approaches were used to examine the range of behavior, motives, and psychological aspects of students, while the *fiqh* of reality or *fiqh al-waqi'*, as one of the branches of Islamic law, was used to investigate student's understanding of the text and context of religion.

The study was conducted inside the boundaries of UIN Datokarama Palu's campuses I and II. The main informants include public school graduates furthering at UIN Datokarama Palu who chose to wear the veil. These informants were selected through multiple filtering stages to ensure the study criteria were met. The first stage included distributing registration forms to all veiled female students at UIN Datokarama Palu, inviting each individual to become an informant of the study, and after the distribution, 75 of the students showed willingness to participate. In the second stage, the willing experienced a selection process. This phase included reviewing the biodata of the 75 informants to find out when each individual started wearing the veil. At the conclusion of this process, 22 respondents were selected to continue filling out the questionnaire. In stage three, the distributed questionnaires, which contain motives for using the veil, were filled out. After the filling process, 8 of the informants were selected for in-depth interviews and FGD

Data from observations, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and documentation were used to gather information for both primary and secondary studies. A questionnaire consists of a series of statements or inquiries typed on a worksheet and provided to the informant to complete without the inclusiveness or manipulation of the investigator

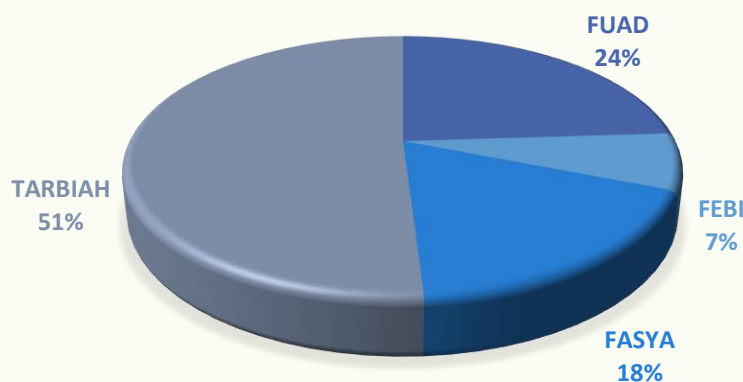
(Benson, 2012). When data is presented, a set of information is verified and organized methodically to allow for the potential of conclusion retraction and action execution. Within this context, data verification was subject to the investigator's comprehension and interpretation of the presented data (Crowther & Lauesen, 2017). During the course of the investigation, an analysis was also carried out on the examination made to determine its authenticity and relevance for further studies using theories from psychological sciences and the fiqh of reality. Lastly, validation was carried out using several validation methods such as credibility check, transferability, reliability, and verification in order to preserve objectivity, scientific norms, and credibility (Agarwal, 2019).

Results and Discussion

The Reality of Student's who adopt Cadar in UIN Datokarama Palu

Based on the field data obtained, the ratings of students on computers at UINs have been quite high lately. Among the early semester students surveyed, 75 identified as *cadar* users and the distribution of these students by faculty is presented in the following diagram.

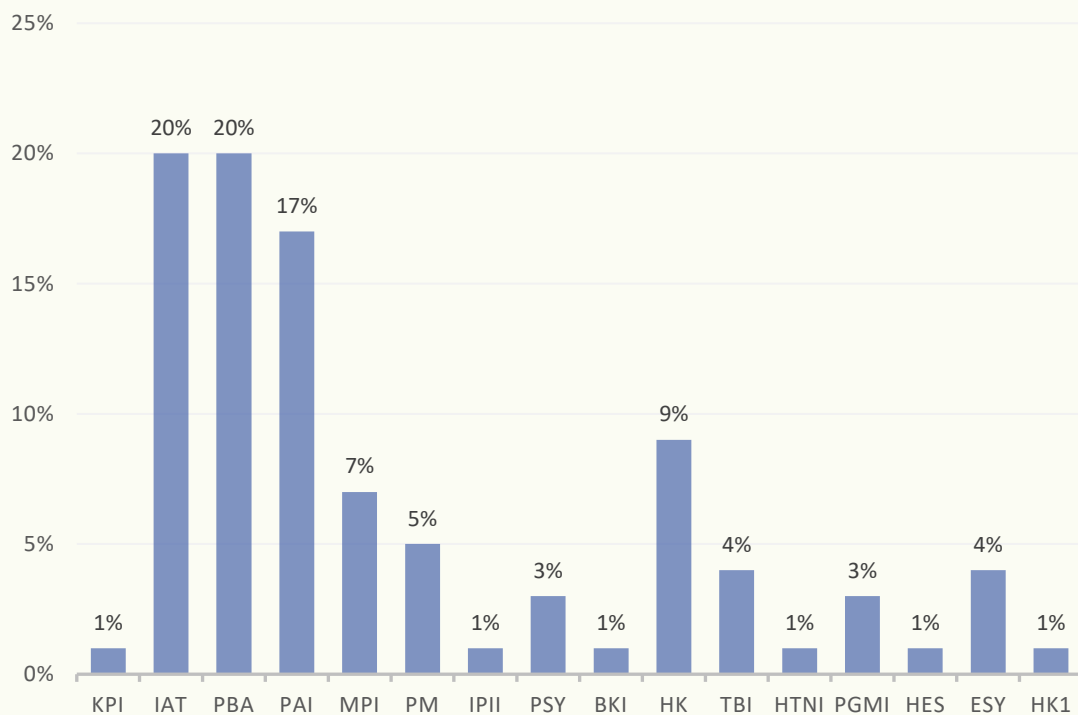
Diagram 1.1.
Percentage of Students' *Cadari* Scored in Datokarama UIN by Faculty



Source: Results of Research Data by June 2023

Diagram 4.1 shows that student backgrounds are distributed across four faculties namely, the Tarbiyah and Keguruan Sciences Faculty (FTIK), which has 38 students (51%), the Ushuluddin, Adab, and Dakwah Faculties (FUAD) comprising 18 students (24%), the Shariah Faculty (FASYA) with 14 students (18%), and the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business (FEBI) constituting 5 students (7%). This data shows that FTIK had the highest number of students, while FEBI provided the smallest.

Diagram 4.2.
Percentage of Veiled Female Students at UIN Datokarama

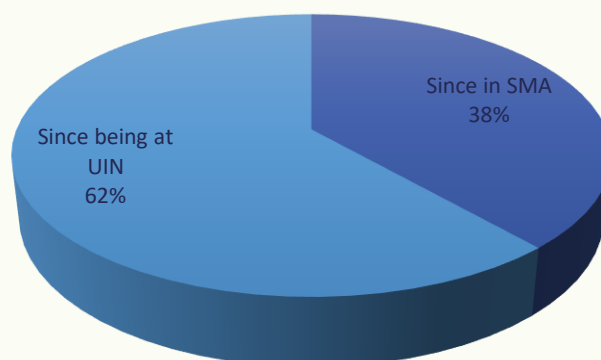


Based on the Study Program

Source: Results of Research Data by June 2023

The percentage of students rated based on respective programs of study was observed to be highest in three major areas namely the Science of the Quran and Tafsir, Arabic Language Education, and Islamic Religious Education. Based on study and informant explanations, two major factors were identified to be responsible for this trend. These factors include first, the number of students attracted to the three outlined programs was significantly higher compared to others, leading to increased competition and some students expressing dissatisfaction due to the large demographic. Second, students in these programs were highly engaged in Islamic studies both on and off campus. It is important to acknowledge that, out of the 75 respondents, 39 were graduates of public schools (SMA or SMK), and the majority of these public-school graduates chose to wear the *cadar* after being admitted into the university.

Diagram 4.3
Students 'Time Wearing Cadar



Source: Research Data Processing Results as of June 2023

Several factors have been found to influence the decision of students to be discreet at the onset of being admitted to the campus, and these factors are both internal and external (Rusuli, 2021). Internal factors include students being at an age where independent decisions can be made without the need for family consent. For instance, one respondent reported wearing the *cadar* on campus without her parent's knowledge. External factors, such as the campus environment, also influenced the decision of students to wear the *cadar*. For example, at Datokarama University, there is no prohibition against covering the face, either in class or outside.

Dynamics of students at Datokarama UIN show that PTKIN has become a strategic platform for *cadar* activists. This movement has gradually evolved into a systematic and organized effort with various patterns and strategies. Furthermore, the movement not only serves as a form of expressing integrity in public spaces for millennials but also provides hijabers/*cadari* with a sense of security and self-esteem through wearing the *cadar* (Ashifiya, 2022). According to a previous study, the *cadar* is not always about ideology, as many believe. In certain instances, the practice represents a resistance movement developed in response to the negative stigmatization often directed at its wearers (Nofalia, 2021). It is also important to comprehend that the concept is not always a symbol of godliness, rather, it is often an alternative choice for students to maintain respective psychological well-being amidst the religious moderation movements promoted by the Ministry of Religion (Sudirman et al., 2020).

Psychological Dynamics of *Cadari* Students at UIN Datorakama

The *cadar* phenomenon among college students in Islamic institutions has been observed to be highly active. The concept of *cadar* emphasizes psychological fragility

factor that is not always based on theological understanding of religion as originally perceived by the university administration and the government. According to field study, psychological dynamics of *cadari* students can be characterized in three ways, including the need for security, the drive for personal improvement, and the propensity to imitate admired figures. This observation is based on the results obtained from the interview and surveys carried out with 22 UIN Computer students.

a. Sense of Security

The result of the present study shows that the majority of respondents from UIN Datokarama's general education program viewed the *cadar* as a symbol denoting the need for security, as evidenced by some of the surveyed respondents, including RN and J. The participants stated that the personal need for a sense of safety and comfort can be fulfilled through the wearing of *Cadar*. This perspective can be observed from the statement of one of the study's respondents as follows

"I use the cadar because I feel comfortable and want to be more awake from male bad deeds (RN)."

The statement was further supported by several other students during the interview session. The majority of the respondents stated that wearing the *cadar* helps in several ways, including avoiding negative situations, ensuring protection from the male gaze, and providing comfortable experiences when interacting with the opposite sex. Accordingly, the students also associated the feeling of a sense of tranquility and liberation with wearing the *cadar*, especially because the outfit is perceived to serve as a guide from both criticism and undue attention. The following statement confirms this perspective.

"I wear cadar because I'm uncomfortable with people's compliments, and don't like the views of people about how I behave, I feel ashamed when I've been wearing closed clothes until I even feel that if I still do not behave well, a lot of people will criticize my way of dressing first and then how to behave (JA)."

This statement confirmed that the motivation behind wearing the *cadar* is not solely driven by theological factors but is largely influenced by psychological issues. The condition of the surveyed students suggested that the *cadar* serves not only as a symbol of virtue but also as a shield against both physical and psychological disturbances. This was shown by the expressions of most of the subjects that the *cadar* helps in avoiding issues such as unwanted attention, temptations from men, and potential harm.

During the present study, the shift in behavior among the respondents was in correspondence with Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs. This theory emphasizes that security is a fundamental human requirement, and it comprises both physical and psychological well-being (Feist et al., 2018). In order to meet this need, individuals have developed and utilized various strategies, such as changing behaviors or seeking to belong within certain communities and societies.

The concept of *cadar* is related with a sense of security and the practice is observed not only at UIN Datorakama Palu but also at several other colleges (Pohan & Fitria, 2022). In accordance with this, a study was conducted by Izzatur Rusuli (2020) at IAIN Takengon and the observation made showed that students primarily used the *cadar* to shield against the sights, disturbances, and contempt of men (Pohan, 2021). In 2017, Rahman and Shafiq also carried out an investigation and concluded that the *cadar* adoption level of students was not solely for the sake of worship, but as a means of protection in social relations, specifically against the opposite sex.

In this context, it is evident that the adoption of *cadar* among Indonesian academics at Islamic colleges lacks solid theological foundations.

b. Being a Better Person

In addition to fulfilling a sense of security, some students were observed to wear the *cadar* out of a desire for righteousness, believing the concept contributes to a more devout life. These students perceived donning the *cadar* as a pathway to spiritual improvement. As stated by YS & JB.

"After the death of my best friend, there was a shame to mourn the aurat. I'm motivated to be better using the cadar (YS).

The individual perceived the *cadar* as a means of self-renewal toward a more positive direction. In this context, the transformation is not primarily driven by a deep understanding of Islamic Sharia law regarding the *cadar*, but rather by psychological trauma, such as the loss of a close friend. Typically, the sense of loss prompts an increased awareness of preparing oneself for the afterlife. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that the individual is motivated to embrace virtue by observing proper aurat covering. Similar experiences were reported by subject JB, who stated that,

"Because I am trying to be better, I am reminded by my clothes, when I think that I should do something that is not good, that my behavior is not in accord with my clothing. (JB).

Subject JB stated that while pursuing self-aspirations, wearing the *cadar* facilitates improvement, specifically considering the fact that it serves as a safeguard against actions that contradict social norms or Sharia law. In essence, the subject's commitment reflected a desire for positive progression and was characterized by the obvious awareness and aspiration for change. This phenomenon is in line with psychological theories of personal growth introduced by John C. Maxwell in 2012, which emphasizes the importance of self-improvement and surpassing one's previous self (Jain et al., 2015). In line with this, Christine Robitschek stated that personal growth can be categorized into three stages namely developmental, environmental, and intentional processes, with intentional processes representing the highest level (Weigold et al., 2018). In the present investigation, the surveyed students' intention and desire for self-improvement were

observed to be in line with the second stage of personal growth, which is the environmental level. The transformation observed was influenced by increased awareness prompted by the prevailing environment. This result was evidenced by the statements of NM and NH. According to NM

"For I use the cadar to examine myself. For as I see, he who keeps good will be removed from evil. (NM)

NH also shared a similar sentiment, as the respondent adopted the *cadar* after witnessing the graceful and charismatic appearance of another individual wearing the outfit.

"First interested to see a woman who wears cadar and looks comfortable and handsome. And then I found a friend who's also cadari and now wants to like Wardah Maulina, and Umi Pipik (NH).

The descriptions provided by some of the subjects above show that the dominant reason why students wear the *cadar* is because of a desire for personal improvement. Typically, these desires are not rooted in deep religious beliefs or knowledge regarding the *cadar's* religious significance, but rather in environmental influences. The subjects were observed to be influenced by peers who have embraced early parenthood and emphasized external appearances.

These results confirmed that at UIN Datokarama Palu, there is a tendency to prioritize outward appearances based on status and social characteristics, in line with Christine Robitschek's theory of personal growth. The decision to wear the *cadar* reflects not only a conscious choice but also a transformation influenced and facilitated by increased awareness shaped by societal norms, which established a persistent and difficult sense of division. However, it is important to state that some individuals show emotional reactivity strongly influenced by the environment. For these individuals, the *cadar* may not hold significant meaning as a symbol of religious devotion because its adoption is not deeply rooted in a solid religious consciousness or existential commitment.

c. Modeling

In addition to the goals of safety and self-improvement, Albert Bandura's theory of social learning portrays the *cadar* as a behavior that is observed and imitated. Generally, students emulate and observe the admirable conduct of influential female role models, such as teachers, aunts, and siblings. This demographic also draws inspiration from the Prophet's (peace be upon him) family, observing the portrayed modesty and exemplary behavior. By wearing the *cadar*, students aim to emulate the dignified demeanor, politeness, and decency exhibited by respected figures. According to NW,

"Personal desire, at the time I was in a prakerin, there was a creator telling about the wife and daughter of the Prophet who closed the aurat. And that caused me to use the cadar, at that moment there was the package of cadar that came from Temboro's

wife's order of the creator of the prakerine, and we were allowed to try it, so I was wearing it, I feel like I didn't want to let go, and finally that day I also wore it (NW).

NW's account was further supported by NH, who was deeply captivated by the story of Fatimah Az-Zahra, narrated by the wife of a preacher wearing a *niqab*.

"I am also motivated by the story of Fatimah Az-Zahra, a model for women based on her story. (NH)."

According to field data, the observational processes comprising attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation are instrumental in shaping predictive behavior. For instance, one of the subjects, NH, expressed being fascinated by the serene and dignified appearance of a woman wearing a *cadar*. Similarly, SZ shared a similar experience, stating that personal adoption of *cadar* is motivated by the sight of a sister who had adopted the practice. JB expressed a desire to uphold the family's honor, and this was influenced by the observation of how well the family maintained dignity during challenging times, including incarceration.

These processes observed in some subjects are categorized as modeling. For example, MAP was inspired by an aunt's calm, patient, and gentle demeanor, while JB admired the family's ability to uphold honor. NH further showed admiration for the composure and comfort exhibited by a woman wearing a *cadar*. This admiration prompted the subject to emulate the qualities outwardly, including adopting the *cadar* as a form of religious expression.

Due to the exemplary qualities possessed by models or authoritative figures, imitation occurs extensively. In this study, teachers, friends, siblings, aunts, and public figures like Ummi Pipit are considered authoritative figures. Respondents perceive these figures as possessing traits such as decency, politeness, morality, self-care, and warmth. The simplicity of the aforementioned qualities and the strong character shown by female authority figures make it easy for students to emulate. Students' admiration for these figures, along with feelings of security, tranquility, and contentment, was found to reinforce inherent behavior.

Considering this understanding, excessive concerns about the increasing number of high school students wearing *cadar* in PTKIN may not necessarily pose a significant threat to diversity within the framework of the moderate movement. Aside from the argument that banning *cadar* in PTKIN could encroach upon religious freedom and the educational rights of students nationwide (Kurniawan, 2018), other observations have shown that the choices of students are not always grounded in deep scholarly literature, religious textual understanding, or entrenched ideologies. This study confirms that psychological factors significantly outweigh other motives among students. Furthermore, it confirms that the decision of general graduate students to wear a *cadar* is largely driven

by three primary factors namely the pursuit of comfort and security, aspirations for personal improvement, and the emulation of authoritative figures.

The Fiqh of Reality Analyses toward Cadari Students of UIN Datakarama Palu

According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, when considering the fiqh of reality, it is essential to not only comprehend the deep meaning of legal texts (*fahm al-wājib fi al-waqi'*) but also to consider how the texts are applied in the context of human life (*fahm al-wāqi'*). The Qur'an and Hadith do not explicitly mandate covering the face, and this has led to diverse legal interpretations among scholars. The khilafiyah (difference of opinion) regarding the law of *cadar* reflects a flexible approach for Muslims and accommodates variations in conditions and cultures through differing legal rulings.

As stated in previous observations, there are varying circumstances under which students may choose to remove the *cadar* outfit. For instance, student named NI expressed willingness to remove the outfit when participating in a provincial-level MTQ (Interview with NI, 2023) (Interview YS, 2023). Another student, JAA, stated that:

“Only when I'm with family and close friends. Also, some of the requirements I have had lately are to go to the KKP (College of Professions) by attaching photos unconsciously. I follow that rule because otherwise, I'm worried I won't pass the CCP (JAA Interview, 2023).”

In summary, the practice of wearing *cadar* openly can be attributed to the opinions of scholars regarding *cadar* laws (Toriquddin et al., 2024). However, it is important to comprehend that the decisions of students to remove the *cadar* are not based on a thorough reading of legal texts or adherence to a particular madhhab but rather influenced by the student's immediate environment. These results are supported by the fact that all the surveyed respondents in the present study are graduates of general schools, with the majority coming from families without religious or educational backgrounds.

During the interviews, students showed inconsistency in statements regarding the practice of removing the *cadar*. This showed that students possessed a varied understanding of *cadar* laws. The SNR students believed *cadar* is a recommended Sunnah but adamantly refused to remove it under any circumstance. According to Islamic theory, Sunnah refers to actions that, when not performed, do not render one blameworthy, especially under complicating conditions. Alternatively, NI regarded covering the face as obligatory but was willing to remove it even in non-emergency situations. Similarly, AG asserted that *cadar* is mandatory but permissible to remove in non-Muslim environments. The views of these students are not in line with studies adhering to madhhabs that mandate *cadar*, and prohibit the exposure of a woman's face, as advocated by authorities such as Muhammad Salih al-Munajjid (2023).

The lack of religious literacy among public school graduates at UIN Datokarama Palu was evident in the graduates' approach to religious practices. Referring to the motivations of students as detailed in Table 4.2, adherence to religious doctrines is influenced by the commitment to following the Sunnah of the Prophet and narratives about the women of the Prophet's family. For instance, one of the NH students expressed a perspective on this matter as follows:

"At that time I was doing internship (a type of KKL – ed.), and there the supervisor told me that the Prophet's wife and daughter all covered their private parts with a veil. And I was also motivated by the story of Sayyidah Fatimah Azzahra (Interviewed NH, 2023)

The motivation to emulate the wives and daughters of the Prophet has increasingly focused on adopting the portrayed style of clothing. This shows that individuals view the Sunnah of the Prophet merely as a lifestyle choice. While many do not necessarily adopt black attire, the majority acknowledge that changes in appearance prioritize aesthetics over the simplicity of figures like Fatima Sayyida, the wisdom of Aisyah, and the leadership of other women in the Prophet's family. This observation is in line with several study results, including the notion that Islamic *aurat* covers (such as *jilbab*, *cadar*, and similar garments) are less about reflecting the deep religious understanding and more about expressing diverse social realities (Atik Catur Budiati).

Regardless of the adherence of students to religious doctrines regarding face coverings, the primary motivation for most graduates of public schools is the need for a sense of security and comfort, which predominates internally. It is important to comprehend that this phenomenon is not limited to the student's community at UIN Datokarama Palu but is also observed among students at IAIN Padangsimpuan (Ritonga, 2022), IAIN Takengon Aceh (Rusuli, 2021), and several other public and private colleges across the country (Pohan & Fitria, 2022). Considering the subject matter, the need for security in this regard comes from the women's concerns about potential disturbances from the opposite sex. This motivation is in correspondence with the command to cover the *aurat* as described in religious texts. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "I am not a woman, but I am a woman." When questioned about instances of reproach that may have been encountered, only JAA stated:

"I don't feel beautiful, but before I was accused of dating... a lot of people didn't believe I wasn't a girlfriend, 'cause people of the time said 'beautiful doesn't have a boyfriend' (Interviewed JAA, 2023).

What JAA was experiencing was not a physical disturbance but rather negative perceptions or assumptions from surrounding individuals. This assumption cannot be equated to the harassment faced by free women during the time of the Prophet before the command to cover the *aurat* was enacted. In contrast to the views of NI and AG, who faced criticism from people after adopting the *cadar*, JAA's father also expressed concern

for his daughter's safety due to fears of harassment. The negative stigma attached to Indonesian Muslims has been observed to originate from misconceptions and insufficient social interaction within society (Rusuli, 2021). Several respondents at UIN Datokarama Palu admitted that choosing to wear the *cadar* brought about the habit of being more selective when choosing friends among fellow students and of being refrained from posting photos on social media.

The Maliki madhhab argued that the legal classification of *makrūh* (disliked) could serve as an alternative for students to mitigate negative assumptions (Asmara et al., 2023), specifically in cultures of foreign societies where covering the face is viewed differently. In accordance, the former Egyptian Mufti Ali Jum'ah also emphasized that if the *cadar* becomes a contentious issue in society and a source of division within Islam, its legal classification could shift from Sunnah to bid'ah.

This study is in line with the assertion of Hussein Muhammad that the command to cover the *aurat* is rooted in religious texts (*shara'*) (Muhammad & Sumardi, 2019), yet the specifics of *aurat* coverage are shaped by human considerations across various dimensions (Safitri & Bin-Maswar, 2024). This necessitated the adoption of mechanisms that are adaptive and responsive to evolving societal values

The reality of students graduating from public schools at Datokarama Palu University presents an opportunity for the campus to evaluate and enhance the perceptions of its students towards the institution, while also ensuring coherence in religious behaviors without creating gaps. Therefore, rather than prohibiting students, the diverse religious practices should be acknowledged as part of *sunnatullah*. *Cadar*-wearing students, in particular, can serve as representatives of a Muslim generation that embraces a strong identity through stricter *aurat* coverage and shows increasing religious literacy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the adoption of *cadar* among students was observed to not be solely based on theological understanding as perceived by government and university authorities but also comprised significant psychological dimensions. In this study, psychological dynamics of *cadar*-wearing students were categorized into three primary motivations namely the need for security, the desire for personal improvement, and the tendency to emulate admired figures. From a fiqh perspective, students at UIN Datokarama who were graduates of general schools often lacked a comprehensive understanding of religious texts and sophisticated madhhab opinions. This was evident by the fact that the motivations of most of the graduates were predominantly driven by the need for security and comfort, rather than a comprehensive understanding of religious doctrine.

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