

RELIGION, POPULAR CULTURE, AND FASHION: NEGOTIATING ISLAMIC ETHICS AMONG GEN Z STUDENTS IN KUDUS

Research Article

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Abstract. The phenomenon of fashion and the existence of Outfit of the Day (OOTD) as a digital pop culture trend has influenced the way Generation Z Muslim students dress, including in religious and social contexts such as Kudus. Amid the dominance of social media as a source of visual references, students' dressing practices are no longer understood solely as a fulfillment of neatness and academic formality, but also as a space where popular aesthetic demands and Islamic ethical values intersect. This study aims to analyze how Generation Z Muslim students in Kudus respond to the influence of the OOTD phenomenon in their daily dressing practices and how Islamic ethics play a role in the process of selecting and limiting this influence. This study uses a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach through observation of student dressing practices on campus and semi-structured interviews with a number of students. Data analysis was carried out using Islamic ethics as the main analytical framework, particularly the concepts of *aurat*, modesty (*hayā'*), and moral responsibility for the body. The results show that students do not directly imitate OOTD references, but rather adopt cuts, silhouettes, and styles of dress that are considered "neat" and "up-to-date." However, in practice, this tendency often blurs the boundaries of Islamic dress ethics. This study confirms that student dressing practices are a continuous negotiation between digital aesthetics and Islamic ethics. Academically, this study contributes as an empirical reference in contemporary Islamic ethics studies, particularly in reading the dynamics of Muslim student dressing in the era of digital popular culture.

Keywords:

Islamic ethics, student fashion, OOTD, Generation Z, digital popular culture

Introduction

The development of popular culture has shaped a new landscape in the lives of the younger generation, including in the way students dress. One form of this influence is the rise of the Outfit of the Day (OOTD) phenomenon, which has grown alongside the dominance of social media and global visual culture (Nadia Afifah et Septi Kuntari, 2025). For Generation Z students, fashion is no longer limited to covering the body or fulfilling personal needs, but also involves the demands of looking neat, following trends, and adapting to the visual tastes that are widely circulated in the digital space (Ayu et Bela, 2023; Hendariningrum et al., 2008).

For Muslim Generation Z students in Kudus, the influence of the OOTD phenomenon presents a more complex dynamic. Kudus is known as an area with

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strong socio-religious characteristics, where Islamic values such as modesty, simplicity, and covering the *aurat* are norms that are alive on campus (Rosyid, 2019). However, at the same time, students are also exposed to digital popular culture that offers various references to modern clothing styles, the Korean Wave, Western street style, and international modest fashion trends, which shape the visual tastes of the young Muslim generation (Izzah Nurul, 2025; Sunaryanto dan Ahmad Rofi Syamsuri, 2022). This situation places Muslim Gen Z students in a position of negotiation, where the influence of digital popular culture needs to be addressed and adapted to the Islamic ethical values they believe in.

The dressing practices of students at various universities in Kudus, such as UIN Sunan Kudus, Muria Kudus University (UMK), and Muhammadiyah Kudus University (UMKU), show a wide variety of styles. Students generally wear clothes that are considered neat and formal, such as shirts, blouses, trousers, jeans, skirts, and various hijab styles. This diversity is not solely related to personal taste or comfort, but also reflects how students respond to clothing references they encounter in digital popular culture (Islami et al., 2025; Salma et al., 2023). In this context, OOTD is understood as a visual cultural phenomenon that indirectly influences how students assess appropriateness, aesthetics, and modesty in clothing.

Academically, an important question arises: how do Muslim Generation Z students in Kudus respond to the influence of the OOTD phenomenon on their clothing practices? Are these visual references freely accepted, or are they filtered through Islamic ethical considerations such as modesty, shame (*ḥayā'*), and moral responsibility for the body (Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, 1995)? This question is relevant because clothing practices not only reflect aesthetic tastes but also serve as a space for articulating values, religious identity, and ethical awareness among Muslim students amid the dominance of digital popular culture.

A number of previous studies have discussed the relationship between fashion, religiosity, and young Muslim generations. Islami et al. (2025) examined the dressing patterns of Generation Z Muslim women, emphasizing the relationship between fashion trends and levels of religiosity. Rahman et Indra (2024) examined the influence of halal fashion and brand image on clothing preferences from an economic perspective. Sunaryanto dan Ahmad Rofi Syamsuri (2022) highlighted the dynamics of Islamic identity among the younger generation, while Ocktavia et al. (2024) and Fitri et al. (2025) emphasized aspects of lifestyle, fashion consumption, and the tension between global trends and Islamic values of simplicity.

Although these studies make important contributions, most still focus on clothing preferences, fashion consumption, or the representation of religious identity in general. Studies that specifically place the OOTD phenomenon as a digital popular culture influence on student clothing practices, with Islamic ethics as the main analytical framework, especially in the context of religious communities such as Kudus, are still relatively limited. In fact, the influence of OOTD has important ethical dynamics because it shapes how students assess the limits of appropriateness, modesty, and moral responsibility in their daily dress.

Based on this gap, this study aims to analyze how Generation Z Muslim students in Kudus respond to the influence of the OOTD phenomenon in their

dressing practices through the perspective of Islamic ethics. This study focuses on how students, as moral subjects, select, adapt, and limit the influence of digital popular culture in their dressing practices on campus. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to the development of contemporary Islamic ethics studies in interpreting the daily practices of young Muslims in the digital era.

Method

This study uses a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach to understand how Muslim Generation Z students in Kudus respond to the influence of the Outfit of the Day (OOTD) phenomenon in their daily dressing practices. A qualitative approach was chosen because dressing practices cannot be understood solely as visual appearances, but rather as social practices laden with considerations of values, norms, and ethical awareness that are formed within specific social and religious contexts (Creswel, 2009).

The subjects of this study were Generation Z Muslim students who were studying at several universities in Kudus, namely UIN Sunan Kudus, Muria Kudus University (UMK), and Muhammadiyah Kudus University (UMKU). Informants were selected purposively based on the criteria of being active students who used social media and were exposed to fashion or OOTD content, even though not all of them produced or uploaded such content. The number of informants was adjusted to the data requirements to achieve sufficient depth of information. The subjects in this study include 6 males and 13 females, ranging in age between 19 and 22 years, who are enrolled in the Islamic Philosophy, Quranic Studies, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Elementary School Teacher Education, and Law programs.

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques. (1) Field observation of students' dressing practices on campus, both in lecture activities and informal activities. This observation focused on the types of clothing, clothing styles, ways of dressing, and dominant dressing logic, such as the meanings of "neat," "formal," and "appropriate" on campus. (2) Semi-structured interviews with a number of students to explore how they interpret the influence of OOTD references from social media on their clothing choices, including aesthetic and ethical considerations that they are aware of or ignore. Third, a limited analysis of OOTD content on social media such as TikTok and Instagram was conducted as contextual material to understand the types of visual references that are widely consumed by students (Creswel, 2009). This research uses Triangulation of Source such comparing interview results from informants from multiple programs/campuse and Triangulation of Technique such comparing direct observations of students' clothing on campus with their interview results.

Data analysis was conducted thematically through the stages of data reduction, theme grouping, and meaning interpretation. The data from observations and interviews were read repeatedly to find key patterns related to dressing practices, the influence of OOTD references, and the dynamics of students' ethical awareness. Islamic ethics were used as the main analytical tool, particularly the concepts of

aurat, modesty (*ḥayā'*), simplicity, and moral responsibility for the body, as discussed in classical Islamic ethics.

Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a descriptive-analytical understanding of how Gen Z Muslim students in Kudus are not only exposed to digital popular culture but also actively respond to, select, and practice these influences in their daily dressing habits on campus.

Results and Discussion

Student Dress Code on Campus: Between Formal Neatness and Ethical Awareness

Based on field observations at three universities in Kudus, namely UIN Sunan Kudus, Muria Kudus University (UMK), and Muhammadiyah Kudus University (UMKU), students' clothing practices show diverse patterns, but have a relatively similar dominant logic. Students generally display a style of dress that is understood as "neat" and "appropriate" for the campus environment, although the definition of neatness does not always go hand in hand with a deeper ethical awareness (Izzah Nurul, 2025; Nurirvan Sopi et al., 2024). In this context, dressing neatly is often interpreted practically as not wearing T-shirts, shorts, or overly casual clothing (Anggraini Misi et al., 2022).

The variety of student dress styles is evident in daily academic activities. Female students are found wearing a variety of clothing combinations, ranging from gamis and long skirts to jeans, including tight or form-fitting styles, paired with tops such as shirts, blouses, or knitwear (Hana Kharis Fadlullah et al., 2023; Nurirvan Sopi et al., 2024). The use of hijabs also shows variation, from loose hijabs that cover the chest to simple pashmina styles that emphasize aesthetics and practicality (Hana Kharis Fadlullah et al., 2023; Izzah Nurul, 2025). Meanwhile, male students tend to wear long pants paired with shirts, jackets, or hoodies, which are considered formal and appropriate for lecture activities (Fitri Nova Anggriana et Muttaqin Khairul, 2025).

The interviews revealed that the main considerations for students in dressing are comfort and conformity with general campus norms, rather than explicit ethical reflections. One informant stated, "The important thing is to look neat and polite on campus, not to wear a T-shirt. As for the style, just adjust accordingly." Another informant added, "As long as you don't get reprimanded by lecturers or security guards, it's usually considered safe." These statements indicate that the limits of appropriate clothing are often determined by implicit social standards, rather than by reflective consideration of religious values (Fitri Nova Anggriana et Muttaqin Khairul, 2025; Rosyid, 2019).

In practice, the understanding of modesty in dress tends to be reduced to a matter of visual formality. Tight clothing, clothing that reveals the silhouette of the body, or hijabs that do not cover the chest are often still considered appropriate as long as they meet the criteria of being neat and do not violate the written rules of the campus. This shows a gap between normative ethical awareness and the daily dress practices of students (Fitri Nova Anggriana et Muttaqin Khairul, 2025).

These findings confirm that students' dressing practices on campus exist in a gray area between compliance with formal social norms and a lack of explicit ethical reflection. This condition is an important context for understanding how OOTD references from social media influence and shape students' dressing practices, as will be discussed in the next subsection ([Putri Ni Luh Made Meilinda Dhyana et Anggreni Ni Wayan Yuli, 2025](#)).

The Influence of OOTD References on How Students Dress

Based on field observations and interviews, the influence of Outfit of the Day (OOTD) on the dressing practices of Generation Z Muslim students in Kudus does not work directly in the form of complete imitation, but rather through a process of repeated visual consumption on social media, particularly TikTok and Instagram ([Putri Ni Luh Made Meilinda Dhyana et Anggreni Ni Wayan Yuli, 2025](#); [Rusdi Hidayat et al., 2022](#)). Regular scrolling activities make OOTD content a quick, concise, and relevant reference for students' daily clothing needs ([Nurhidayah Indah et al., 2025](#)).

A number of informants revealed that social media is often used as a reference when they feel uncertain or run out of ideas for what to wear to campus. One informant stated, "Sometimes when I'm confused about what to wear to campus, I look at TikTok first. Then I think, 'oh, this style actually looks good.'" Another informant added, "Usually, I get ideas about colors or cuts from OOTD, not copying the exact outfit." This statement indicates that OOTD serves as a source of visual inspiration that influences how students assess the appropriateness and appeal of an outfit, not as a mechanical pattern of dressing to be copied ([Listiana et Annisa, 2024](#); [Rusdi Hidayat et al., 2022](#)).

This influence is evident in the adoption of certain cuts, silhouettes, and styles that are currently popular, such as cutbray pants, knitwear, fitted shirts or blouses, and color combinations that are considered aesthetic ([Hana Kharis Fadlullah et al., 2023](#)). Among female students, contemporary hijab styles such as the simple wrapping of a pashmina that does not cover the chest are quite dominant. Meanwhile, male students tend to adopt a neat casual style, such as long pants paired with hoodies or jackets, which are perceived as meeting campus formality standards.

The observations also show that the OOTD content consumed by students is very diverse in terms of style and aesthetics. While scrolling, students are exposed to various clothing styles, such as Korean look, skena, girly style, formal outfits, vintage, retro, casual, and streetwear, with a wide variety of colors ranging from monochrome palettes to bright colors that are currently trending ([Nurhidayah Indah et al., 2025](#); [Rusdi Hidayat et al., 2022](#)). This diversity of visual references enriches students' aesthetic tastes while shaping their preferences in clothing ([Salma et al., 2023](#)).

Several informants revealed that their interest in certain styles often led to fashion consumption decisions. One student said, "At first, I just looked at OOTDs, but after a while, I thought, 'That style is cute,' so I looked for something similar and ended up wearing it to campus." Another informant said that OOTD content helped them imagine how an outfit would look when worn in daily activities. These findings

show that OOTD serves not only as visual inspiration, but also as a bridge between aesthetic taste and students' fashion consumption practices (Fitri et al., 2025; Metin Elkatmış, 2024).

Interestingly, OOTD does not encourage students to consciously dress for the sake of social media content. Instead, OOTD indirectly shapes visual tastes and standards of appropriateness in clothing. Styles that repeatedly appear on timelines are then normalized as reasonable and appropriate to wear to campus. In this context, OOTD works as a cultural mechanism that slowly shifts the boundaries between casual wear, campus wear, and socially acceptable clothing.

This normalization process creates ambivalence among students. Several informants admitted that they were aware that their dressing style was not fully in line with Islamic ethical values, but still felt that it was normal because it had become a common practice on campus. One female informant said, "Actually, I know that my hijab does not cover my chest, but almost everyone else does the same, so it feels normal." These findings show that ethical awareness has not completely disappeared, but is often negotiated with normalized social realities (Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025).

Under these conditions, the meaning of modesty tends to be narrowed down to simply being "neat" and "formal," which in practice is interpreted as not wearing T-shirts or overly casual clothing. As a result, clothing that shapes the body, accentuates the silhouette, or does not completely cover the *aurat* is still considered appropriate as long as it meets visual standards of neatness (Izzah Nurul, 2025). Visual aesthetics then become the main consideration in dressing, while deeper ethical considerations take a back seat.

Thus, the influence of OOTD on how students dress is subtle and gradual. OOTD works through three main stages: repeated visual exposure, aesthetic appeal, and the application of style in everyday dressing practices.

Dress Code Ethics from an Islamic Perspective: *Aurat*, *Ḥayā'*, and Controlled Aesthetics

From an Islamic ethical perspective, clothing cannot be understood solely as a matter of personal taste or social appropriateness, but rather as a moral practice directly related to how humans interpret their bodies (Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, 1995). Al-Ghazali, in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, emphasizes that the human body is not the absolute property of the individual, but rather a trust from *Allah* that must be guarded with ethical awareness. The body, in Al-Ghazali's view, has both physical and spiritual dimensions; therefore, the way one dresses not only represents one's social identity, but also reflects one's spiritual orientation and moral character (Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025). Dressing, therefore, is part of everyday religious practice and often takes place unconsciously as a moral act.

Islam sets the limits of the *aurat* as the main foundation of dress ethics. The Qur'an states:

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا

"And let them not display their adornment except what is apparent thereof."

(QS. an-Nūr [24]: 31) (Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025).

This verse shows that Islam does not reject aesthetic expression, but places it within a framework of moral control. In the tradition of fiqh, the *aurat* of women covers the entire body except the face and palms, while the *aurat* of men is between the navel and the knees (Tohir Umar Faruq, 2025). However, in Al-Ghazali's ethical framework, the boundaries of the *aurat* do not stop at legal-formal measures alone. The *aurat* serves as an initial sign so that the body does not become the center of excessive attention and does not arouse lust, either for oneself or for others. In other words, the *aurat* is the gateway to ethics, not the ultimate goal (Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, 1995).

This is where Al-Ghazali provides an ethical insight that is often overlooked. According to him, covering the *h* legally does not automatically mean dressing ethically. Clothing that technically covers the body but is tight, form-fitting, or attracts excessive attention can still be morally problematic (Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025). In this case, the body is indeed "covered," but the meaning of covering, namely the preservation of honor and self-control, is not fully achieved. This perspective is important for interpreting the clothing practices of students who appear neat and formal visually, but still emphasize body shape as part of popular aesthetics (Fitri Nova Anggriana et Muttaqin Khairul, 2025).

Al-Ghazali places *hayā'* (modesty) as the main internal mechanism that protects humans from ethical violations. He asserts:

الحياء أصل كل خير

"Modesty is the basis of all goodness." (Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, 1995)

In his explanation, Al-Ghazali states that moral corruption does not always arise from conscious intentions to commit sin. Instead, ethical violations often arise from repeated habits, which gradually dull the sense of shame. Something that initially feels inappropriate is eventually considered normal when it is constantly seen, done, and normalized by the environment (Andriansyah Wiza Atholla, 2025). In this framework, the loss of *hayā'* is not a sudden event, but a gradual process that goes unnoticed by the perpetrator.

This ethical framework is relevant for interpreting the field findings in this study. Students do not feel that they are committing an ethical violation when wearing tight clothing, body-shaping garments, or hijabs that do not completely cover the chest (Izzah Nurul, 2025). They do not feel guilty because these styles of dress have become commonplace and socially acceptable in the campus environment. In Al-Ghazali's terms, this condition indicates that ethics have not completely disappeared, but have weakened. Shame has not disappeared, but has shifted to follow prevailing visual standards.

The research findings also show that modesty is often interpreted minimally as "neat" and "formal." As long as they do not wear T-shirts, sandals, or overly casual clothing, students feel they have met the standards of appropriate dress (Fitri Nova Anggriana et Muttaqin Khairul, 2025). From Al-Ghazali's ethical perspective, this narrow interpretation signifies a shift in orientation from inner awareness to outward judgment. Clothing is judged primarily by how it looks in the eyes of others, not by

the extent to which it preserves self-respect (*hifz al-'ird*) and controls the urge to show off the body (Andriansyah Wiza Atholla, 2025).

Al-Ghazali does not reject aesthetics. He acknowledges that humans have a tendency to love beauty, and Islam itself encourages cleanliness, neatness, and good appearance. However, aesthetics in Islamic ethics are controlled and meaningful, not value-free. Problems arise when aesthetics become the main goal when dressing is directed to be seen, judged, and validated (Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025). In this condition, the orientation of clothing shifts from *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the self) to a subtle and often unconscious form of *riya'*. Not *riya'* in the form of showing off worship, but showing off one's image through the body and appearance (Andriansyah Wiza Atholla, 2025).

In the context of students, this shift is evident when clothing choices are determined more by considerations of "looking good," "being trendy," or "following the latest trends," while reflections on modesty and decency take a back seat (Hana Kharis Fadlullah et al., 2023). Popular aesthetics become the main reference, while Islamic ethics serve as a flexible and easily negotiable normative backdrop. This condition does not indicate a rejection of religion, but rather signifies a tug-of-war between popular culture and religious awareness.

Thus, according to Al-Ghazali, the ethics of dressing require a balance between the outer and the inner, between beauty and self-control (Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, 1995; Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025). Dressing ethically does not mean rejecting modernity or trends, but rather filtering them so that they do not exceed moral boundaries. The issue of student dress in this study cannot be reduced to individual mistakes, but must be read as the result of a value system that operates amid the dominance of popular culture and visual normalization (Fitri Nova Anggriana et Muttaqin Khairul, 2025).

Therefore, Islamic ethics, especially as formulated by Al-Ghazali, are not present to judge students' dressing practices, but to provide a reflective direction: how aesthetics can be enjoyed without dulling a sense of shame, and how moral awareness can remain alive amid the ever-changing currents of social customs. This is the important contribution of Al-Ghazali's ethics in interpreting the dressing practices of Muslim students in the era of contemporary popular culture.

Ethical Implications of Student Dress Code for the Campus Academic Environment

The findings of this study indicate that the clothing practices of Generation Z Muslim students in Kudus cannot be separated from the context of the academic space of the campus as a social, cultural, and moral arena (Nasywa Alfina Zulfatun, 2025). The campus is not only a place for intellectual activities, but also a space for shaping the ethos, attitudes, and ethical awareness of students. Therefore, the way students dress on campus has direct implications for the academic atmosphere and the values that thrive within it (Imaduddin Muhammad et Imam Muhamad Tamamul, 2025).

In a number of universities in Kudus, including UIN Sunan Kudus, UMK, and UMKU, there are written rules regarding dress that are general and administrative in nature, such as prohibitions on wearing T-shirts or recommendations to dress

modestly and neatly. However, these rules are generally not accompanied by more substantive ethical explanations regarding modesty, decency, or the relationship between aesthetics and moral responsibility. As a result, the meaning of “dressing modestly” tends to be understood in a minimal and visual way, namely as neat, formal, and in accordance with general lecture standards (Lestari Puji et al., 2025).

In this context, the campus becomes an arena where administrative regulations and strong visual popular culture meet. When institutional rules do not provide clear ethical guidance, students unconsciously fill the void with standards they obtain from social media and their social circles (Sunaryanto dan Ahmad Rofi Syamsuri, 2022). OOTD and popular fashion references then serve as an alternative framework for assessing the appropriateness of clothing, so that tight, form-fitting, or non-modest clothing is still considered acceptable as long as it meets visual neatness standards (Izzah Nurul, 2025).

The implication of this situation is a shift in the ethical orientation of clothing in academic spaces. Modesty is no longer interpreted as a practice of self-restraint rooted in religious awareness, but is reduced to a matter of aesthetics and social appropriateness alone (Masruroh Nadzirotul, 2025; Susilawati Nilda et al., 2021). From an Islamic ethical perspective, particularly as formulated by Al-Ghazali, this condition indicates a weakening of the function of *ḥayā'* as an internal mechanism that should regulate human behavior, including in the way one dresses (Tohir Umar Faruq, 2025). Ethics has not disappeared entirely, but its meaning has been obscured by continuous visual normalization.

However, it is important to emphasize that these findings are not intended to blame students as individuals. Their dress practices reflect how value systems operate in contemporary academic spaces (Kamarulzaman Zulina et Shaari Nazlina, 2023). Students are in a position of negotiation between the demands of popular culture, campus social norms, and the Islamic values they believe in. In this situation, Islamic ethics should not only be present as normative rules or formal prohibitions, but as a reflective framework that helps students understand the reasons, purposes, and limitations of dressing (Anggraini Misi et al., 2022).

Thus, the implication of this research for the campus academic space is the importance of strengthening the ethical dimension in understanding student dressing practices. Campuses, especially Islamic-based universities, have a strategic role in building awareness that dressing is not merely a matter of aesthetics or administrative compliance, but part of the formation of character and moral responsibility. A reflective and dialogical approach rather than a repressive one can be a middle ground for bridging modern aesthetics and Islamic ethics in students' academic lives (Andriansyah Wiza Atholla, 2025; Nasywa Alfina Zulfatun, 2025).

This subchapter emphasizes that student dress code ethics not only affect individuals but also collectively shape the moral face of the academic space. In this context, Islamic ethics serve as a relevant reference point for maintaining a balance between freedom of expression, visual beauty, and moral responsibility amid the dynamics of contemporary popular culture.

Conclusion

This study shows that the clothing practices of Generation Z Muslim students in Kudus are a complex social phenomenon that cannot be understood solely as a matter of personal taste or administrative compliance. Dressing on campus takes place in a space where academic norms, the influence of popular culture through OOTD references, and Islamic ethical values that live implicitly in students' consciousness intersect.

The results of the study show that students generally interpret appropriateness in clothing through the logic of "neat and formal," without always accompanying it with deep ethical reflection. OOTD references obtained from social media work indirectly through the formation of visual tastes, the adoption of silhouettes, cuts, and styles of dress that are considered appropriate to wear on campus. This process takes place gradually and is normalized through collective habits, so that the boundaries between aesthetics and ethics become increasingly blurred.

From an Islamic ethical perspective, particularly through Al-Ghazali's thinking in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, dressing is understood as a moral practice related to guarding one's modesty, self-control, and maintaining a sense of shame (*ḥayā'*). The findings of this study reinforce Al-Ghazali's view that ethical violations do not always arise from deviant intentions, but rather from habits that slowly dull moral sensitivity. Clothing that is visually neat and formal is not necessarily ethical if it shapes the body, attracts excessive attention, or shifts the purpose of clothing from self-protection to self-image.

This study emphasizes that students' clothing practices cannot be reduced to individual mistakes, but must be understood as the result of value systems at work in contemporary academic and popular culture. Therefore, Islamic ethics does not function as a tool of judgment, but as a reflective framework for weighing the relationship between aesthetics and moral responsibility in campus life.

Academically, this research contributes to the development of contemporary Islamic ethics studies by presenting an empirical reading of Muslim students' clothing practices amid the dominance of popular culture. Practically, these findings can serve as a reference for higher education institutions in formulating an approach to dress ethics that is not only normative-administrative, but also dialogical and contextual. Thus, the academic space of the campus can function not only as an intellectual space, but also as a space for shaping the ethical awareness of Muslim students in the era of popular culture.

Future research is recommended to expand the scope of the study. Future studies is expected not only to enrich the study on the relationship between digital popular culture and Islamic ethics but also to produce a conceptual model that explains the dynamics of identity formation, esthetics, and ethical awareness among Muslim students in the digital era.

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