

## Career and Faith Harmony: Exploring *Halal* Lifestyle Working Women

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**ABSTRACT:** Today, the World modernization has significantly transformed the lives of women. They are enabled to grow and contribute to the national development because of more access to education, employment, and socioeconomic changes. Work life and the type of work influence their lifestyle. There is also growing development of Muslim fashion and *halal* cosmetics. This is also imperative that the lifestyle of Muslim women should be conformed with the requirements of the Shari'ah. The aim of this study is to explore the impact of *Halal* lifestyle of Muslim working women and how the concept of *Halal* can be integrated into the lifestyle of working women. This study used the document analysis method to explore the impact of *Halal* lifestyle on working women generally and Muslim women of Indonesia in particular. The data was collected from the published studies and documents. The study finds that Islam as a universal religion which has provided guidelines in determining the priorities that should be considered in every aspect of life, including in exercising the concept of moderation. The current research has provided a thoughtful insight and knowledge and provided meaningful and useful contributions to the development of scholarship on *Halal* lifestyle of working women. The results of this study are also expected to be a reference for Governments, researchers, businessmen, and *Halal* community while developing and implementing policies and practices under the commands of Shari'ah.

**KEYWORDS:** Halal lifestyle, Muslim Working Women, Shari'ah, Working Women

### I. INTRODUCTION

The continent of Asia has the largest Muslim population. In this continent, *Halal* products like food, cosmetics, and medicines are more commonly consumed. Although, *Halal* products are obligatory to be consumed by the Muslims, but these are not limited to Muslims population but countries like Thailand, Japan, and South Korea are also using these products. According to the State of the Global Islamic Economy (issued by Thomson Reuters and Dinar Standards), the *Halal* food, *Halal* tourism, *Halal* fashion, *Halal* media, *Halal* cosmetics, and *Halal* medicines are most promising economic opportunities.

The Muslim population of Indonesia is around 231 million (Salsabila & Ihsan, 2023). This is 12.7% of the total world Muslim population. The 86.88% of the total population of Indonesia is Muslim (Harahap et al., 2022). Being a Muslim majority county, the *Halal* lifestyle can develop appropriately (Adinugraha et al., 2019; Aziz & Ahmad, 2018; Boediman, 2017; Jailani & Adinugraha, 2022; Pratama & Sundari, 2019). Indonesia is among the countries that has effectively incorporated the *Halal* concept into the lifestyle of the society. Since 2016, the lifestyle of Indonesian has experienced advancement soon the residents started living a modern lifestyle in accordance with the Shari'ah (Taringan, 2016). This is the era of modernization but the Indonesian society was careful in Islamic adoption based on the concept of *Halal* and Haram (Samsudin & Ahmad, 2018).

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. The Term "Lifestyle"

In general, a lifestyle can be defined as a way of living that is defined by the activities people participate in, the things the find fascinating and interesting about their environment, and their beliefs about the world and themselves (Harjadi & Fitriani, 2024).

#### B. *Halal* as per Shari'ah/ Al-Quran.

The word 'Halal' originates from an Arabic word. This stands for 'lawful', 'permitted', or 'legal' according to the Shari'ah (Al-Qardaw, 1995; Jailani & Adinugraha, 2022). The author further explained that Halal is something that is a permitted thing, which is free from binding and permitted by the Shari'ah. Halal is opposite to haram, which means something that is prohibited under the teaching of Shari'ah and one must face the wrath of Allah SWT if he/she performed haram acts. These both are the parts of Islamic system (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018).

In Al-Quran, the basic concept of *Halal* is described as under,

"Eat of that Allah hath bestowed on you as food, lawful and good, and keep your duty to Allah in Whom ye are believers." (5:88)

This is also evident in the Hadith of Rasulullah SAW:

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*“Seeking halal is obligatory for all Muslims.” (Narrated by al-Tabarani with proper sanad; Narrated by Imam ad-Dailami in Musnad al-Firdaus hadith no. 5270)*

Further, the term “*Halal* lifestyle” includes wearing modest clothing, modest socializing with male colleagues, *Halal* work, *Halal* Muamalah and *Halal* lifestyle, all under the set procedures of Shari’ah (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018)

### C. Halal Lifestyle Background

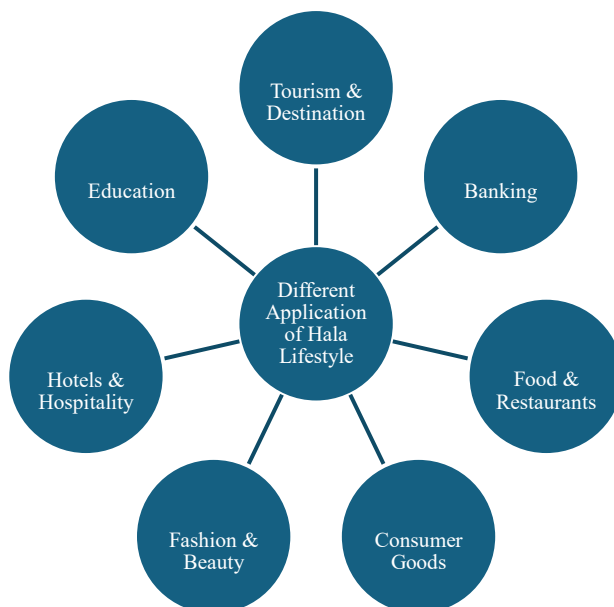
The concept of Halal lifestyle is accepted universally. The focus of the concept is emphasized and prioritize life and practices under the command of Shari’ah. It is a requirement for all mankind and not limited to Muslims only, because Halal is just not a philosophical concept but a practical innovation. It is a set of standard operating procedures (SOPs) which have existed since the last fourteen centuries (Annisa, 2021). The Halal lifestyle consists of health, safety, security, prosperity, and human dignity. In this exploration, the term Halal is not used as “a concept of restriction” but intended to introduce the concept under the commands of Shari’ah and Al-Quran (Boediman, 2017).

The Halal lifestyle is also not limited to needs only, but this has emerged as a trend which could enhance the social status of someone. Businesses are using the concept of the Halal lifestyle as a positive influencing strategy to boost the economy through value added products and services in different economic sectors like tourism, exports, and education (Sukardani et al., 2018; Kamaruddin et al., 2012).

## III. APPLICATION OF HALAL IN WORKING WOMEN’S LIFESTYLE

### A. Applocation of “Halal” in Different Aspets of Life

It is generally believed that Halal is associated with food from the perspective of Shari’ah. Scholars have held discussions on Halal with refence to the food. Infect, the concept of Halal is more holistic (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018).



**Figure 1. Application of Halal Lifestyle in different Arenas**

**Source:** Aziz & Ahmad (2018); Maysyaroh & Akbar (2024)

### B. Halal Lifestyle of a Muslim Working Woman

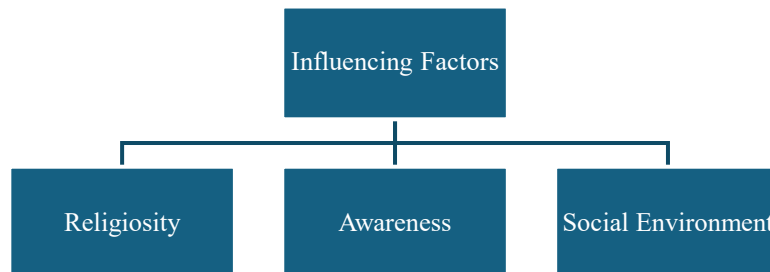
The role of women has become critical for economic development of the nations. Currently, women are considered as one the important entity that contribute to economic development. Therefore, there is a rise of the women participation in the workforce. The percentage of women workforce has raised from 45.7% to 55% from 2008 to 2016. The prominent economic sectors where rise in women contribution can be observed are education and medical (Bakar, 2012). There is also an increase in women workforce in fields like security and engineering which are male dominating areas. Since the more women are working and adopting different fields, it is affecting their lifestyle. Here, commands of Shari’ah provide an appropriate teaching about dressing, relationships with male colleagues, working hours, and logistics so for a Halal lifestyle. There are challenges faced by working women like excessive workload and sexual harassment and these influence their lifestyle. In this regard, organizations also need to reconsider their policies and practices. Hence this is an attempt to find the answer that whether the women involvement meet the boundaries of Shari’ah? Further, whether Halal lifestyle can be incorporated into the lives of Muslim working women?

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### C. Factors Influencing the Halal Lifestyle

The findings from different studies suggest that Halal lifestyle of working women is influenced by different factors. (1) Religiosity, (2) awareness, and (3) social environment are some factors. For women, fulfilling their responsibilities as Muslims increases the faith and influence their lifestyle. Being a career woman, living a Halal lifestyle is most important, not only as an obligation but also as self-identity as a Muslim woman (Salsabila & Ihsan, 2023).

A Muslim-friendly working environment influences the working women to express themselves freely as Muslims women. Awareness also plays a role. The level of awareness Muslim women possesses, encourage to opt the Halal lifestyle. Currently, many Halal products are available in the market, and Muslim women has shown inclined toward using them but not significantly (Salsabila & Ihsan, 2023).



**Figure 2 Factors Influencing the Hala Lifestyle**

### D. Halal Framework for Muslim Working Women

The positive role of women in economic development of the nation is undeniable. This has resulted a positive rise in women status. However, the working women have encountered different issues and challenges. These challenges have altered the lifestyle of working women in general and Muslim working women in particular. The lifestyle of Muslim working women can be assessed with basics values. These values safeguard in realizing the Halal lifestyle. These are life, intellect, honour and dignity, lineage, and property (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018).

The dress code and cloths are used to safeguarding the dignity of Muslim working women and must be according to the teachings of Shari'a. This is a challenge as dress not only need to cover but make sure it covers the aurah of a Muslim woman. The professional dress code must compliance with Shari'ah. At the same time, dress should not interfere with work. There are professions where it is not compulsory to wear Hijab and even some employers prohibit doing so (Bakar, 2014; Aziz & Ahmad, 2018). This may rise a discrimination against the Muslim women in the context of Halal lifestyle. This may result is not safeguarding the dignity and honor of the Muslim working women (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018).

Secondly, the relationship on Muslim working women with their male colleagues also possess challenges. Muslim working women must make interaction with male colleagues either employees or employers and of different age groups. The physical contact in form of handshake depicts the level of friendliness among colleagues and should not be beyond the teachings of Shari'a (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018). Women and men must socialize while adhering the boundaries of Shari'a. In case of non-compliance can lead various issues like sexual harassment (Bakar, 2014; Aziz, 2005). Sexual harassment is one the challenges faced by women at the workplace. This involves the sexually oriented abuse, disgrace and discrimination toward women. It can be in physical form, verbal, body language, or some actions which leads to mental and psychological stress among women. The free socialization and dress-code without setting boundaries at the workplace can be reasons (Bakar, 2014).

This may result in work pressure also. According to Bakar (2014), work pressure could be the product of interaction between workers and the work environment, be it negative or positive pressure. In the context of the issue discussed previously, the pressure is called distress, which is negative pressure. The pressure can affect work and work productivity (Aziz & Ahmad, 2018).

Based on above discussion, it is noted that if some aspects are taken into consideration, can ensure the safeguarding the honour and dignity of Muslim working women. Women can adopt the Halal lifestyle by dressing and socializing according to Shari'a. This will help to avoid the issues like sexual harassment and moral decline. Beside this, Muslim women in case of non-adherence have to face the wrath of Allah SWT (Bakar, 2014).

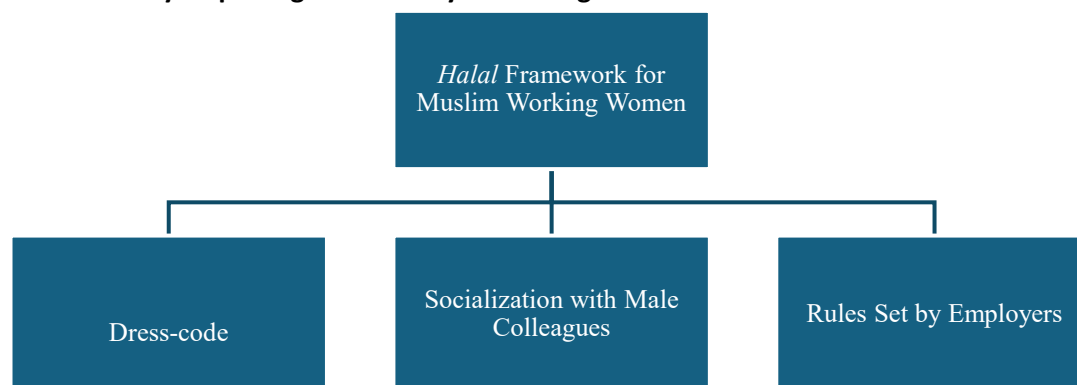


Figure 3. *Halal Framework for Muslim Working Women.*

### E. CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays, the participation of women in the workforce is inevitable due to the fact of rapid advancement around the world. Indonesia, a Muslim majority country where women are playing their role in economic development. Being Muslim women their lifestyle is influenced by different factors, and they must manage the harmony by adapting *halal* lifestyle. Islam as a universal religion has provided guidelines in determining the priorities that should be considered in every aspect of life. *Halal* lifestyle is needed by all of mankind not only for Muslims, because the *Halal* concept philosophically and practically is an innovation from the “standard operation procedures” for fourteen centuries ago existed in Islamic Shari’ah compliant. Inside of *Halal* lifestyle are the elements of health, safety and security, purity, prosperity and human dignity. However, the objective of this article is that the term ‘*Halal* lifestyle’ is not intended for a restriction or coercion, but rather to reintroduce from the viewpoint of Islam which is already stated in the Qur’an, although it is still in general platform, future research will always present a more specific scientific platform (Boediman, 2017). The issues related to Working women and their adherence with Shari’a are highlighted in above discussion. There is a need to explore how to role of Muslim women can be enhanced and their honor and dignity can be safeguard at the workplace. There is also a need to investigate the application of *Halal* lifestyle and its impact on women performance. This study was an attempt to explore the impact of *Halal* lifestyle and challenges associated with it. This is an insight into the available scholarship on *Halal* lifestyle of working women generally and Muslim working women in particular. It is also expected that this study will lead to more in-depth investigation of other factors empirically also.

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