

The Concept Of Virginity From the Perspective of Islam And Muslim Women

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Abstract

This research delves into the intricate interplay between societal norms and the honor attributed to women, specifically addressing the pervasive myths surrounding the virginity of Muslim women in Indonesia. Rooted in the negative impacts experienced by women due to their virginity status, this inquiry seeks to unravel the perspectives of 17 Muslim women on the significance of virginity within the context of Islamic teachings. Employing qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, the study illuminates nuanced dimensions, shedding light on how these women navigate the complexities surrounding their virginity. The findings underscore three pivotal conclusions: Indonesian Muslim women emphasize the importance of virginity and the need to protect it. Importantly, they highlight that virginity is not solely judged based on the hymen. Moreover, their stories reveal that Islam honors women who maintain their virginity. These conclusions contribute significantly to a more comprehensive understanding of the societal implications and individual experiences associated with the concept of virginity among Muslim women in Indonesia. The study's outcomes hold the potential to inform broader discussions on cultural perceptions and foster awareness, promoting respectful discourse surrounding the role of virginity within the social fabric.

Keywords: *Virginity, Women, Muslim, Islamic Perspective.*

Introduction

Virginity is the state of a woman who has never engaged in sexual activity. An unbroken hymen, which can be demonstrated by bleeding during the first sexual encounter after marriage, is the

defining characteristic of this condition in general. Virginity is a social, cultural, and religious construct rather than a term used in medicine or science. A specific civilization places such a high value on virginity that after



the first night, bloodstains on a sheet are required to prove it.¹

Opinions and presumptions regarding virginity are actually brought on by a number of factors. First, there is a lack of gender equality between men and women. Furthermore, patriarchal culture contributes to the development of sexist beliefs and gender stereotypes. The moral precepts regarding virginity and chastity that are expected have a great value in women's lives. Many individuals believe that remaining virgin is the ideal standard that every woman must adhere to. Girls and couples getting ready for marriage can better comprehend the idea of hymen and how it relates to virginity myths by learning more about the various types of hymen.²

The myths about the existence of the hymen are quite widespread. Most people believe that the hymen is the membrane that covers the vaginal opening, but in fact the hymen is the membrane that surrounds or encircles the vaginal orifice, which will not be the same in every teenager. The second fact regarding the existence of the hymen is that

the appearance of the hymen in terms of shape, size, and flexibility will change according to the development of a woman's age. After 3–4 years of age, the hymen begins to change to a thinner and smoother surface that adapts to pre-pubertal development. During puberty, under the influence of the hormone estrogen, the shape of the hymen begins to become clearer, and its elasticity increases.³

Whether or not the hymen exists and can describe whether a woman has had sexual intercourse is one of the myths that exist in the wider community. The fact is that changes in the hymen do not always indicate sexual intercourse. Intact hymens and "blood on the sheet" on the bridal bed cannot be used as indicators of virginity. Several scientific studies disproved this assumption and showed no evidence to support this belief. In fact, several studies have found that bleeding does not always occur during the first sexual encounter.⁴

Facts that are quite concerning about the assessment of virginity occur in India and Afghanistan. Teenage marriages are quite

¹ Saraiya, Hemant A. "Surgical Revirgination: Four Vaginal Mucosal Flaps for Reconstruction of a Hymen." *Indian Journal of Plastic Surgery* 48, no. 02 (May 1, 2015): 192–95. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0970-0358.163060>.

² Jarral, Farrah. "A Hymen Epiphany." *Journal of Clinical Ethics* 26, no. 2 (June 1, 2015): 158–60. <https://doi.org/10.1086/jce2015262158>.

³ Mishori, Ranit, Hope Ferdowsian, Karen Naimer, Muriel Volpellier, and Thomas J. McHale.

"The Little Tissue That Couldn't – Dispelling Myths about the Hymen's Role in Determining Sexual History and Assault." *Reproductive Health* 16, no. 1 (June 3, 2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-019-0731-8>.

⁴ Kotb, Heba G., and Waffa M.M. Abo-Zeid. "Forensic Point of View on Proving Virginity." *International Journal of Health Sciences (IJHS)*, May 17, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6ns2.7458>.

common due to cultural influences in the country. The status of a widow is often carried by teenagers under the age of 18. They were divorced by their husbands on the grounds that they were not virgins at the time of marriage. This of course destroys the lives and futures of the women who experience this, and the future will of course be even more difficult for them. Virginity has even become a guarantee of life or death in Arab culture; virginity determines the high dowry in Zimbabwe⁵; and in the past, virginity was a requirement to enter certain institutions in Indonesia.⁶

The view of virginity in Indonesia is a product of patriarchal culture. Various phenomena that occur, such as virginity tests before entering high school, virginity surgeries, and the circulation of fake hymens, are demands for virginity from various parties, which actually tend to corner women. The concept of virginity, which is shaped by social, cultural, and religious factors, is often gender-biased and detrimental to women. There is no gender equality in this case, as

evidenced by the absence of the virginity test for men, and men's virginity has no value in the eyes of society. The views on women's and men's virginity, which should be the same biologically and psychologically, actually have differences in the social order of society. Only women are required to maintain their chastity, while men are always free from the concept of virginity.⁷

Women are often helpless with the assessment of virginity based on the presence or absence of a hymen and the myth that there must be blood on the first night, while the men do not have to experience proof of this. Hymen proves the purity of a woman, where the socio-cultural and religious context still highly upholds this value, especially in Middle Eastern, Asian, and other Muslim countries⁸. Although the concept of virginity means not having sex before marriage for both men and women in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, in men this cannot be

⁵ Matswetu, Vimbai Sharon, and Deevia Bhana. "Humhandara and Hujaya: Virginity, Culture, and Gender Inequalities Among Adolescents in Zimbabwe." *SAGE Open* 8, no. 2 (May 25, 2018): 215824401877910. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018779107>.

⁶ Tampubolon, Manotar. "Virginity Test in Police Recruitment System: Evidence from Indonesia." *Budapest International Research and*

Critics Institute Journal (BIRCI-Journal) 4, no. 2 (May 21, 2021): 2600–2611. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v4i2.1965>.

⁷ Andani, Mutia Tanseba. "Perempuan Dalam Konsep Keperawanan: Studi Feminis Tradisi Kain Keperawanan Penukal Abab Kabupaten Muara Enim Sumatera-Selatan." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling* 5, no. 1 (2022).

⁸ *Ibid.*

proven physically like the presence of a hymen can in women.⁹

Discussing virginity, this has many links and is related to many aspects of women's lives, including human rights related to the dignity and worth of women, and its relationship to adolescent sexual behavior, especially women. The purpose of protecting human rights is to safeguard the dignity of everyone including women. Unfortunately cases of sexual violence are still about morality and are not seen by criminals who violate human rights as it is actually about human dignity. It is important to remember that the victim of sexual violence is not only psychologically and physically affected but his human dignity is also violated.¹⁰

Adolescent sexual behavior is strongly influenced by several factors, namely sexual drive, social culture and morals, sexual knowledge and social function. That adolescents who are developing sexual maturity are very closely linked to individual personal (internal) factors in the form of sexual urges which lead to adolescent sexual

behavior. One object that is thought to be related to premarital sexual behavior is the value of virginity. The meaning of virginity is someone who has not had sexual intercourse.¹¹

Fighting for changes in laws and viewpoints, as well as altering the current social conditions to open the widest opportunities for women, is vital to eradicating the oblique stigma against them. A woman's worth cannot be determined by her virginity. But there are greater accomplishments by women that must be acknowledged and valued, as they are rarely valued.¹²

In Islam, women are special beings. Allah has created a woman whose hymen is not worthless and useless. Its existence is proof of the seriousness of women's commitment to and maintenance of purity of faith and virginity. Allah has arranged for His servants to take care of themselves as well as possible in accordance with Islamic teachings. If a woman is able to take care of herself, her honor will be safe and will not give rise to

⁹ Robotajazi, Mehri, Masoumeh Simbar, Yousef Javadzadeh, Jaber Gharehdaghi, Mohammadali Emamhadi, AbouAli Vedadhir, and Hamid Alavi Majd. "Virginity Testing Beyond a Medical Examination." *Global Journal of Health Science* 8, no. 7 (November 18, 2015): 152. <https://doi.org/10.5539/gjhs.v8n7p152>.

¹⁰ Indriyani, Asit Defi. Human Rights in Indonesia's Constitution: Human Rights Violations in Sexual Violence, *Jurnal An-Nisa'* 15, no. 2 (December, 31): 210 (2022).

¹¹ Saputra, Doni, Tarbiyatul Aulad Fil Islam: Breaking the Chain of Promiscuous Sex among Teenagers, *Jurnal An-Nisa'* 15, no. 1 (April, 26): 115, (2022).

¹² Andani, Mutia Tanseba. "Perempuan Dalam Konsep Keperawanan: Studi Feminis Tradisi Kain Keperawanan Penukal Abab Kabupaten Muara Enim Sumatera-Selatan." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling* 5, no. 1 (2022).

views that demean her. Even though there is no accurate evidence in the Qur'an that determines virginity, staying away from adultery is the best way to maintain the integrity of a woman's honor.¹³

In Indonesia, there are several groups that mark a woman's virginity by the presence of a hymen and blood on the bed sheet during the wedding night. Meanwhile, other groups claim that there are no signs indicating a woman's virginity and think that blood on the bed sheets on the wedding night is a mere myth. Islam itself narrates that the virginity of Muslim women is their identity and honor. The phenomenon related to differences in the views of Indonesian Muslim women regarding the importance of virginity has attracted the interest of researchers who want to explore more deeply the views of Indonesian Muslim women and then link them with Islamic views in terms of female virginity.

The research aims to analyze the perspectives of Indonesian Muslim women on virginity, emphasizing its significance in their social lives and the esteemed honor

associated with it in Islamic views. The motivation stems from acknowledging the profound impact a woman's virginity status can wield on her social interactions and environment. Addressing prevalent negative impacts and myths surrounding Muslim women's virginity, the article sheds light on their perspectives without repetitively delving into past discussions. Its distinctiveness lies in its exclusive focus on Muslim women's viewpoints, dedicated myth dispelling, utilization of qualitative research, nuanced conclusions, and practical implications for women's awareness and well-being. In the intricate tapestry of research, this article emerges as a singular and valuable contribution to a discourse rife with misconceptions and societal pressures.

Previous research that raised the theme of female virginity included the following: Stereotip Makna Keperawanan (Virginity) Remaja Perempuan Pada Masyarakat Pedesaan¹⁴, Gambaran Nilai Keperawanan Dan Perilaku Seksual Pada Remaja: Systematic Literature Review¹⁵, and Kepatutan Tes Keperawanan Dalam

¹³ Udasmoro, Wening. "Gender and Islam: On the Politics of Sexuality of Muslim Male Authors In Indonesia and France." *Musawa: Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Islam* 21, no. 1 (June 8, 2022): 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.14421/musawa.2022.211.1-11>.

¹⁴ Putri, Pratiwi Hariyani. "STEREOTIP MAKNA KEPERAWANAN (VIRGINITY)

REMAJA PEREMPUAN DALAM MASYARAKAT PEDESAAN." *Martabat*, December 20, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.21274/martabat.2019.3.2.225-246>.

¹⁵ Savira, Wanda Okta, Rize Budi Amalia, Nur Ainy Fardhana, and Atika. "GAMBARAN NILAI KEPERAWANAN DAN PERILAKU SEKSUAL PADA REMAJA: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE

Perspektif Hak Asasi Manusia¹⁶. Previous research has discussed a lot in terms of the meaning of virginity, which is associated with sexual behavior and views based on human rights. Distinguishing itself from prior research, this study uniquely concentrates on the viewpoints of Muslim women concerning virginity, specifically within the context of Islamic beliefs.

This research holds profound significance grounded in philosophical, juridical, and empirical dimensions. Philosophically, it delves into the intricate intersections between societal norms, religious beliefs, and the intrinsic value of women, challenging ingrained perceptions that hinge on outdated constructs. Juridically, the study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on human rights, questioning the legitimacy of practices such as virginity tests and their alignment with fundamental principles of justice and equality. Empirically, the research acknowledges the lived experiences of Indonesian Muslim women, offering a platform to amplify their voices and perspectives in a landscape dominated by preconceived notions. This tripartite foundation not only underscores the need for an in-depth exploration but also positions the

research as a catalyst for reevaluating cultural practices and legal frameworks that impact the lives of women. The articulation of these foundations sets the stage for an enlightening inquiry into the complex dynamics surrounding the concept of virginity and its implications for Muslim women in Indonesia.

Method

With a case study design, this study employs a qualitative methodology. Interviews and observation are the methods used to obtain data. The researcher serves as a fundamental instrument in qualitative research, which uses triangulation for data gathering, inductive data analysis, and conclusions that place an emphasis on meaning rather than generalization. To collect detailed, meaningful data, qualitative methods are used. Interpretation is genuine, concrete data that lies beneath the visible data and has a value of its own, hence in qualitative research, interpretation is emphasized rather than generalization. In qualitative research, generalizations are referred to as transferability, which simply means that the research's findings can be applied to other locations provided their characteristics are similar to those of the original location.¹⁷

REVIEW.” *Jurnal Kebidanan Khatulistiwa* 8, no. 2 (August 25, 2022): 6. <https://doi.org/10.30602/jkk.v8i2.893>.

¹⁶ Lamonti, Erinda, and Diah Tri Utami. “KEPATUTAN TES KEPERAWANAN DALAM

PERSPEKTIF HAK ASASI MANUSIA.” *LONTAR MERAH* 1, no. 2 (November 30, 2018): 101–7.

¹⁷ Abdussamad, Zuchri. *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Makassar: CV. Syakir Media Press, 2021.

In the data analysis process of this study, a thematic analysis method is adopted, involving several stages. Firstly, detailed transcriptions of interviews are conducted to ensure accurate data. Next, the theme detection stage is implemented to identify emerging patterns and themes from the interviews. Once the themes are identified, data classification based on these themes is carried out to construct the analytical framework. The data are then systematically presented in accordance with the identified themes. Subsequently, the interpretation stage involves the researcher elucidating the meanings and significance of the emerging findings. Finally, conclusions drawn from the research findings are formulated to provide a comprehensive and detailed overview of relevant insights into the phenomenon of marriage postponement among career women. This approach is expected to offer a profound and holistic understanding of the research context.

The informants chosen by the researchers were Muslim women in general with several specified criteria, as well as several medical experts, with the assumption that they were people who knew in depth about the formulation of the problems in this

study. Data was collected by using purposive sampling from key informants and proceeding like a snowball (snowball sampling). Researchers made observations, utilized documentation, and interviewed informants. This was done by researchers in order to obtain comprehensive results regarding the formulation of the problem in this study.

Discussion

Virginity from Muslim Women's Perspective

In general, virginity is defined as the condition of a woman who has never had sexual intercourse. However, with advances in technology and the times, many Indonesian women are no longer based on the concept of virginity, which is based solely on the presence or absence of a hymen and whether or not they bleed during the first night. This statement is based on the answers of several informants, one of whom is Aurora¹⁸, a medical expert who has been treating vaginismus for five years: "In truth, there is nothing that indicates virginity. There are still many today who associate virginity with the hymen, and if the hymen has been torn, then a woman is no longer called a

¹⁸ Aurora, *Interview* (Medan, 12 February 2023).

virgin. While the tearing of the hymen is caused by many factors.”

Esty, who has been studying medicine for nine years, reinforces this previous statement, "A virgin is someone who has never had intercourse. It is inexplicable whether those who have never had contact are bloody or not. Physiologically and anatomically, every woman is different because her hymen is different.”¹⁹

Deana, a Taiwanese migrant worker, added, Generally, virginity is defined as a woman who is a maiden, that is, whose honor is maintained and who has never had sexual intercourse. Usually, virginity is seen from the hymen; if the hymen is torn, then it is not a virgin. However, the tearing of the hymen is not only due to sexual intercourse but can also be due to other factors, and nowadays, many medical experts explain that virginity is just a 'myth' and in fact it doesn't exist.²⁰

In addition, cultural perspectives also have an influence on the perspective that states that sexual intercourse is something sacred and can only be done with a partner in a marriage bond. The stigma about virginity that is widespread in society often harms women who are discriminated against and are not given space if it is known that they are no longer virgins. Regarding this stigma, Okta,

who is a mother of three girls, said, "Such a stigma exists; it's because people think non-virgins did something beyond the moral limit, but it does not mean that because of this, she is not given the space or opportunity to self-actualize.”²¹ Jubellia, who was forced to have an abortion by her boyfriend, replied, "Yes, there is a lot of stigma around virginity. Many bad judgments about the status of not being a virgin often make women feel limited and restrained in their freedom.”²²

In order to remove the oblique stigma against women, it is necessary to fight for changes in laws and beliefs, as well as reform existing social conditions so as to open up the most chances available for women. In actuality, a woman's value cannot be determined by her virginity. However, there are bigger things that women have to have recognized and appreciated, as an achievement that is rarely appreciated.

From a religious point of view, maintaining virginity is an absolute order from God because it is the honor of women. Hence, avoiding heinous behaviors that result in virginity loss is a need for every woman. This belief was shared by all informants whom the researchers interviewed in depth. Among them is the statement of Sherly, an activist: "Apart from being something that

¹⁹ Esty, *Interview* (Jember, 16 February 2023).

²⁰ Deana, *Interview* (Changhua, 14 February 2023).

²¹ Okta, *Interview* (Medan, 15 February 2023).

²² Jubellia, *Interview* (Jakarta, 15 February 2023).

must be taken care of by those who are lawful for her, maintaining virginity is also the same as maintaining the woman's self-esteem. A woman who is a virgin and avoids sexual intercourse, which is forbidden, will maintain her good name and honor. She has taken care of her religion by looking after herself." she said.²³

Zahira, a young woman from a family that runs an institution for Islamic education, stated, "In terms of religion, adultery is categorically forbidden since it compromises women's chastity and has negative repercussions, as taught by religion. You will face repercussions in the afterlife in addition to self-destruction in this world."²⁴

Virginity lost can indeed be caused by factors other than sexual intercourse, such as exercise that is too strenuous and accidents. Islam, however, strongly supports virginity for every Muslim woman, unless the reason for her virginity loss is something other than sexual intercourse, like adultery. In Islam, not being a virgin before marriage is a plague of fear in and of itself. Jubellia voiced her complaints about having trouble finding a husband because she wasn't a virgin anymore,

Not being a virgin before marriage is terrible, in my opinion, it will affect both you and your family. Virginity may be the key consideration for men looking for a spouse, because of course most men naturally want to have a partner who takes care of themselves for someone who is already halal. I, who was 'not a virgin' before marriage, found it very difficult to find a partner, until now.²⁵

However, Isella who is a student at an Islamic campus, has a different take regarding this matter: "Not being a virgin before marriage is okay because, actually, virginity is not what determines whether or not it is good or bad; some even have no hymen since birth; women can also tear the hymen due to falling from a bicycle or some other accident,"²⁶ she said. The opinion of Christy, a hypersexual, supports this. "Personally, it's fine. It's not a disgrace to be excommunicated if you're not a virgin. Because, as stated previously, virginity is not the only standard by which to evaluate a person."²⁷

Just like other human beings, every woman, whether a virgin or not anymore—regardless of the cause of her no longer being a virgin—should not have her freedom restricted or be discriminated against in her

²³ Sherly, *Interview* (Banten, 13 February 2023).

²⁴ Zahira, *Interview* (Bogor 15 February 2023).

²⁵ Jubellia, *Interview* (Jakarta, 15 February 2023).

²⁶ Isella, *Interview* (Surabaya, 17 February 2023).

²⁷ Christy, *Interview* (Manado, 16 February 2023).

social life. But while still fulfilling their rights as fellow human beings who live together in a social environment, they should be given the same space to change themselves for the better.

Raisa, a student who has not been a virgin since high school, expressed that, it is clearly bad from Islamic perspective because improper sexual interaction is adultery. But it's best if something like this has happened; it's better to be embraced and advised so that people don't fall further into adultery. Even though I am no longer a virgin, there must be a feeling of regret within me, and I hope to be able to repent and return to being good.²⁸

Virginity tests are often used as a condition for entering certain education or jobs. As in Indonesia previously, the requirements for registering to become a policewoman or TNI (military), and also prospective TNI (military) wives, include undergoing a virginity test. Basically, this regulation actually violates the TNI's code of ethics based on Law No. 34 of 2004 concerning the TNI (military), international law, public opinion, medical science, and the code of ethics for TNI (military) professionals.²⁹ Currently, it is reported that

the test is no longer being carried out as a requirement; this should be appreciated as an effort to eliminate gender bias in the requirements for female police or military candidates. The WHO even issued an appeal to abolish the virginity test on the grounds that there is trauma, discrimination, and a violation of the privacy and physical integrity of a woman.³⁰

Indonesian women are also opposed to having their virginity tested. Aurora expressed her thoughts, "I do not agree if any organization or institution imposes laws like this for their employees since it is discriminatory, demeans human dignity, and restricts their freedom."³¹ Rahma, who has studied at the Islamic boarding school since elementary school, confirmed this statement: "Nah, it's a disgrace, we should cover up our disgrace, and shouldn't disseminate it if God covers up the disgrace, so why do other parties ask about our virginity?"³²

It is indisputable that when it comes to marriage, the majority of Indonesian men want a partner who is still a virgin. As in Islam, it has been mentioned by the Prophet that marrying a virgin is more advisable. Yet, the informants' perspectives varied when the

²⁸ Raisha, *Interview* (Bali, 16 February 2023).

²⁹ Hamida, Aulia Rochma. "The Policy of Virginity Testing in the Indonesian Military from the Perspectives of Public Values and Control toward Bureaucratic Discretion." *Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi: Media Pengembangan Ilmu Dan Praktek Administrasi* 19, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 78–94. <https://doi.org/10.31113/jia.v19i1.846>.

³⁰ Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research. "Eliminating Virginity Testing – An Interagency Statement," October 16, 2018. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-RHR-18.15>.

³¹ Aurora, *Interview* (Medan, 12 February 2023).

³² Rahma, *Interview* (Jember 15 February 2023).

future wife's virginity was brought up during the ta'aruf process. Some of them think that there is nothing wrong with questioning this because the reason for marriage is to have good offspring.

This is as stated by Isella, "It is very natural to ask about it during ta'aruf, because Indonesian people consider virginity important. It will have to be answered honestly, accompanied by the cause."³³ Deana's statement corroborates this, "It doesn't matter, as long as you listen carefully to the cause of the future wife's not being a virgin and don't immediately pass a bad verdict for not being a virgin. If in a dating relationship, questioning virginity in my opinion is unethical and inappropriate."³⁴

As for the informants who argue that this includes indulgence in disgrace and that it's best not to spread the disgrace, they think they have no right to be questioned about this status during the ta'aruf process. Rahma argued, "It may not be asked by other people... because, like I said before, we have to hide our shame, which is hidden by Allah; even Allah hides our shame; we shouldn't

spread it; just checking the health before the wedding is enough."³⁵ This is confirmed by the words of Kamila, a student at the Islamic campus: "It is not appropriate because, from a religious point of view, you shouldn't spread your disgrace. It shouldn't be asked unless there is something important and urgent."³⁶

Virginity from Islam's Perspective

Islam has ensured human dignity by placing a high priority on upholding individual rights. This form of concern is the imposition of very severe penalties for adulterers who destroy the honor of others through backbiting, slandering, and so on. To accomplish maqasid sharia, such actions are necessary. Activities that can cause the loss of a person's virginity or chastity are actions that are antithetical to the divine ideals found in Pancasila. Indonesia is a nation with Pancasila ideology, not liberal, after all.³⁷

This kind of thinking about women was common before the advent of Islam. In the period of ignorance, at that time humans were in an empty state, and even life was full of feminist ways of thinking, especially among the Arab nation. The position of

³³ Isella, *Interview* (Surabaya, 17 February 2023).

³⁴ Deana, *Interview* (Changhua, 14 February 2023).

³⁵ Rahma, *Interview* (Jember 15 February 2023).

³⁶ Kamila, *Interview* (Jakarta, 15 February 2023).

³⁷ Khakim, M. Lutfi, and Moh Didik Ardiyanto. "MENJAGA KEHORMATAN SEBAGAI PERLINDUNGAN NASAB PERSPEKTIF MAQASHID SYARIAH." *Nizam*, May 21, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.32332/nizham.v8i01.2105>.

women at that time was considered very deplorable, and the birth of a daughter was something of a source of hatred that settled in society at that time, especially with their actions that made women humiliated—they often buried newborn babies alive just because the baby was female.³⁸

This is the reality that happened in the period before the arrival of Islam, not only for the Arabs but also for other nations such as the Greeks or the Romans. Without a doubt, placing women is equivalent to treating them as cheap commodities that may be exchanged freely, lack status or independence, and also do not receive the treatment they merit. When Islam emerged, the Qur'an reaffirmed the human dignity of women, increased their educational attainment, and restored their independence. Men and women have equal status in human society.³⁹

Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds. QS. An-Nahl (16): 97.

It is clear that men and women are equal in terms of humanity, what separates

each person from God's side is their kindness. Many people today believe that a woman's virginity is a testament to her honor. Honor is *izzah*, and maintaining it is *iffah*; it is indeed difficult to maintain *izzah*. However, behind the difficulties, a woman can achieve glory. So the basis of the meaning of honor itself is morals, having a sense of shame. When a woman has shame, she will be afraid to do things that can get rid of their *iffah*.⁴⁰

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their chastity, and not to reveal their adornments except what normally appears. Let them draw their veils over their chests, and not reveal their 'hidden' adornments. QS. An-Nur (24): 31.

In addition to Islam, the religious teachings adopted in Indonesia, both Christian and Jewish, also prohibit all forms of action that can cause one to lose one's virginity, such as sexual intercourse before marriage or adultery. There is a good reason why virginity is so important in Islam that having sex before and outside of marriage is a sin.⁴¹ In some Islamic countries, virginity is highly valued, so a woman who is about to

³⁸ Ariziq, None Bagas Luay. "KEDUDUKAN DAN KONDISI WANITA SEBELUM DAN SESUDAH DATANGNYA AGAMA ISLAM." *Jurnal Keislaman* 5, no. 1 (March 1, 2022): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.54298/jk.v5i1.3398>.

³⁹ Aziz, Abdul. "Visualisasi Perempuan Dalam Perspektif AL-Qur'an: Antara Teks Dan Konteks."

Analisis, August 7, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v17i2.2170>.

⁴⁰ Pratiwi, Tien, *Konsep Kebormatan Manusia Dalam Al-Qur'an Dan Relevansinya Dengan Kehidupan Masyarakat Modern*, Skripsi (Ponorogo: IAIN Ponorogo, 2018).

⁴¹ Madjid, Mutia Arsita. "Harga Diri Dan Virginity Value Dengan Perilaku Seksual Pra Nikah

marry must undergo a virginity test before being accepted as a wife. Islam itself emphasizes the importance of virginity, so every woman who has sex outside of marriage will be accused and punished by society. The first drop of blood that comes out of a woman's genitals at the first sexual intercourse is considered sacred.⁴²

Chastity is highly praised in the Qur'an. For every pure man and woman, the Qur'an sends them high praise. One of the most praised virgins in the Qur'an is Maryam, the mother of Prophet Isa and Prophet Yusuf. Maryam is a great female figure in the trajectory of pre-Islamic history. In fact, the name of Prophet Isa's mother was enshrined in the Qur'an as the only woman whose name became the name of the surah in the Qur'an.⁴³

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰكِ
وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاَصْطَفٰكِ عَلٰٓى نِسَآءِ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

“And (remember) when the angels said, “O Mary! Surely Allah has selected you, purified you, and chosen you over all women of the world.” QS. Ali-Imran (3): 42.

Ali Imran's explanation of verse 42 in Tafsir Ibn Katsir explains that Maryam was chosen by Allah because of her numerous acts of worship, her asceticism, her glory, and her cleanliness from filth and the whispers of Satan. Then important lessons can be learned about maintaining physical cleanliness and self-purity. This has also been arranged in such a way by Islamic law, and even *thaharah*, or purification, is the initial topic of discussion in various classical and contemporary fiqh books.⁴⁴

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهٖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا اَنْ رَّاى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهٖ
كَذٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهٗ السُّوْءَ وَالْفَحْشَآءَ اِنَّهٗ مِنْ
عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِيْنَ

She advanced towards him, and he would have done likewise, had he not seen a sign from his Lord. This is how We kept evil and indecency away from him, for he was truly one of Our chosen servants. QS. Yusuf (12): 24.

In the commentary of Ibn Kathir, this is how We kept evil and indecency away from him. Means, just as We show him a sign that turns him away from what he intended, so We

Pada Remaja Putri.” *Psikoborneo: Jurnal Ilmu Psikologi* 8, no. 4 (December 29, 2020): 767. <https://doi.org/10.30872/psikoborneo.v8i4.5581>.

⁴² Putri, Pratiwi Hariyani. “STEREOTIP MAKNA KEPERAWANAN (VIRGINITY) REMAJA PEREMPUAN DALAM MASYARAKAT PEDESAAN.” *Martabat*, December 20, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.21274/martabat.2019.3.2.225-246>.

⁴³ Samsuri, Suriadi Adi. “Hakikat Fitrah Manusia Dalam Islam.” *Al-Ishlah*, June 30, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.35905/alishlah.v18i1.1278>.

⁴⁴ Ibnu Katsir, Ismail bin Umar Al-Qurasy Ad-Dimisyqi, *Tafsir Qur'anil 'Adzhim*, Cet.2 (Saudi Arabia: Daar Thayyibah, 1420H/1999M) jld. 2, hlm. 40.

protect him from abominable and unjust deeds in all his affairs. For he was truly one of Our chosen servants means he's one of those people who are chosen, purified, and brought closer to Him.⁴⁵

Virginity is highly valued in Islam because it contains several qualities that must be present in a Muslim: chastity, fidelity, morality, a good family, and a healthy upbringing. Only a lousy woman would so easily lose her most prized possession as if it didn't matter. Sexual intercourse before marriage is adultery in Islam, and anyone who commits adultery will be placed in Hell. Thus, maintaining virginity prevents a Muslim from committing immorality and sin.⁴⁶

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزَّوْجَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً يَوْمَئِذٍ سَبِيلًا

"Do not go near adultery. It is truly a shameful deed and an evil way." QS. Al-Isra (17): 32.

Shaykh Abdurrahman bin Nashir As-Sa'di explained the meaning of the verse. "Do not go near adultery. It is truly a shameful deed and an evil way." Among what Allah has ordained and willed is the prohibition against approaching adultery for believers. Even if it's just getting close to not doing it. Because

adultery in Allah's law is an abominable act, very bad behavior cannot be accepted by character, reason, or Shari'a. And the path that can lead to adultery is the worst path that can have negative and damaging effects, among them destroying the honor of the believers; the last one is the hell of Jahannam.⁴⁷

Virginity is something that must be maintained by a woman until she is legally married. She had to save it at all costs until the first night of the wedding came around. A spouse is a reflection of your present self. If a Muslim expects virginity as a quality of her husband-to-be, she must maintain her own virginity because a pure and guarded man must marry a pure and guarded woman.⁴⁸

الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَالْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ

Wicked women are for wicked men, and wicked men are for wicked women. And virtuous women are for virtuous men, and virtuous men are for virtuous women. QS. An-Nur (24): 26.

It is stated in Tafsir Ibn Kathir that good words are only appropriate for good men, and good men are only worthy of being

⁴⁵ Ibnu Katsir, Ismail bin Umar Al-Qurasy Ad-Dimisyqi, *Tafsir Qur'anil 'Adzhim*, Cet.2 (Saudi Arabia, Daar Thayyibah, 1420H/1999M) jld. 4, hlm. 381.

⁴⁶ Sari, Ayu Puspita, Nurniswah, and Hamdan Effendi. "Pemahaman Terhadap Larangan Mendekati Zina (QS. Al-Isra' Ayat 32) Pada Mahasiswa PAI Yang Berpacaran Di UIN Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu." *Jurnal Ghaitsa* 3, no. 2 (2019).

⁴⁷ As-Sa'di, Abdurrahman bin Nasir, *Taisir Karim Rahman*, Cet. 1 (Mesir: Daar Hadits, 1800H/2002M), hlm. 489.

⁴⁸ Najwah, Nurun. "Kriteria Memilih Pasangan Hidup (Kajian Hermeneutika Hadis)." *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 17, no. 1 (May 8, 2018): 95. <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2016.1701-05>.

talked about with good words. Ibn Abbas said that this verse was revealed regarding Aisyah and the spreaders of false news. Ibn Jarir argues that words that are vile are appropriate if they are addressed to people with a vicious character, and good words are appropriate if they are addressed to people who are good.⁴⁹

Islam is holy and orders its adherents to maintain purity. Chastity reveals one's innermost thoughts and actions. Virginity is an anatomical clue that shows the integrity of the hymen, because usually the hymen will tear if there is intercourse between a man and a woman. Chastity has become one of many identities in Islam. The Islamic idea of virginity has not altered, despite how the world has changed.⁵⁰

The Quran has stated that adultery is the worst kind of sin. And instead of committing adultery, it is better for Muslims to do more good and worship Allah. By following what is written in the Qur'an, a

Muslim has proven his loyalty to the Qur'an as his life guide.⁵¹

In Islam, a man who wants to get married is allowed to marry a widow. However, according to Islam, it would be better for him to marry a virgin. The reason for doing so is based on a hadith narrated by Ibn Majah.

عليكم بالأبكارِ فَإِنَّهُنَّ أَعْدَبُ أَفْوَاهًا وَأَرْحَامًا
وَأَرْضَى بِالْيَسِيرِ

“Marry virgins, for they have the sweetest mouths, the most prolific wombs, and are most satisfied with little.”⁵²

In addition to the hadith above, there is also a hadith narrated by Ahmad from Anas bin Malik that the Prophet said:

تَزَوَّجُوا الْوَدُودَ الْوَلُودَ ، فَإِنِّي مُكَاثِّرُ بِكُمْ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Marry women who are beloved (due to their good characteristics), prolific in bearing children, for I shall outnumber the Prophets by you on the Day of Resurrection.”⁵³

⁴⁹ Ibnu Katsir, Ismail bin Umar Al-Qurasy Ad-Dimisyqi, *Tafsir Qur'anil 'Adzhim*, Cet.2 (Saudi Arabia, Daar Thayyibah, 1420H/1999M) jld. 6, hlm. 34.

⁵⁰ Samsuri, Suriadi Adi. “Hakikat Fitrah Manusia Dalam Islam.” *Al-Isblah*, June 30, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.35905/alishlah.v18i1.1278>.

⁵¹ Zumaro, Ahmad. “Konsep Pencegahan Zina Dalam Hadits Nabi SAW.” *Al-Dzikra: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Al-Hadist* 15, no. 1 (June 23, 2021): 139–60. <https://doi.org/10.24042/al-dzikra.v15i1.8408>.

⁵² At-Tabrani, Abul Qosim Sulaiman bin Muhammad, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsath*, Cet. 1 (Saudi: Daar Al-Haramain), jld. 7, hlm. 344, No. 7677, 1415H/1990M.

⁵³ At-Tabrani, Abul Qosim Sulaiman bin Muhammad, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsath*, Cet. 1 (Saudi: Daar Al-Haramain), jld. 5, hlm. 207, No. 5099, 1415H/1990M.

According to the Hadith, marrying a virgin has become a sunnah in Islam. This means that it is more advisable to marry a virgin than a woman who is not a virgin. It should be emphasized here again that marrying a widow is indeed not a prohibition. However, marrying a virgin is something that is recommended in Islam, as described in the hadith above.⁵⁴

But if a woman is no longer a virgin, then she should hide this disgrace. Disgrace is something to be ashamed of, and it should be covered up. In the hadith of the Prophet that is often quoted, whoever covers the disgrace of his Muslim brother, Allah will cover his disgrace on the Day of Judgment. This reason is based on the hadith about the recommendation to cover up disgrace.

وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ يُسَنُّ لِلرَّائِي وَلِكُلِّ مَنِ ارْتَكَبَ مَعْصِيَةً أَنْ
يَسْتُرَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ لِحَبْرِ مَنْ آتَى مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَادُورَاتِ
شَيْئًا فَلْيَسْتُرْ بِسِتْرِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

Know that it is advised for people who commit adultery and disobedience to cover themselves because there is a hadith that states, "Whoever commits an abominable act should cover it with Allah's cover."⁵⁵

In Islam, the discussion on virginity is very clear: Islam requires that every adherent,

male or female, always maintain their honor and do not surrender their chastity, except to a marriage partner who is legal according to religion. Virginity is very important for women because therein lies the purity of morality and the perfection of faith. Islam itself makes virginity a form of protection for Muslim women. Every woman must keep her virginity and may only hand it over to her husband. Women are special beings. Allah has created a woman whose hymen is not worthless and useless. Its existence is proof of the seriousness of women's commitment to and maintenance of purity of faith and virginity.⁵⁶

Conclusion

In summary, this research underscores the significance of virginity for Indonesian women, emphasizing its role in shaping honor, dignity, and identity. While maintaining virginity is crucial, the study rejects discriminatory judgments, recognizing that it doesn't singularly define a woman's character. Contrary to common beliefs, the research found no conclusive evidence supporting traditional indicators of virginity. Instead, it emphasizes the essence of virginity

⁵⁴ Ibnu Ruslan, Syihabuddin Ahmad bin Husain bin Hasan bin Ali bin Yusuf bin Ali bin Arsilan ar-Ramli asy-Syafi'I, *Syarh Sunan Abi Daud*, Cet. 1, (Mesir: Daar Falaah, 1437H/2016M), jld. 9, hlm. 265.

⁵⁵ Abu Bakr Ibn as-Sayyid Muhammad Syatha ad-Dimyathi, *Panah atb-Thalibin*, (Bairut: Dar al-Fikr, tt), jld. 4, hlm. 147.

⁵⁶ Hasan, None Kazi Wahadul, and Rosmita Rosmita. "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Operasi Selaput Dara Wanita." *AL-QIBLAH: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 1 (September 5, 2022): 93–104. <https://doi.org/10.36701/qiblah.v1i1.637>.

in a woman's purity, chastity, and honor, particularly in avoiding adultery, which goes against religious principles. The study highlights Islam's emphasis on honoring Muslim women by steering clear of prohibited behaviors that damage reputation and religious sanctity. Islam doesn't equate virginity with physical markers but stresses purity and protection against forbidden actions, encouraging women to uphold their honor by avoiding adultery.

This research contributes to raising awareness among Muslim women about the importance of safeguarding their honor by avoiding actions leading to adultery. In the context of modern attitudes towards virginity, understanding Islam's perspective becomes crucial in recognizing the significance it places on preserving virginity as a mark of honor. Additionally, the study emphasizes that Islam doesn't focus on the physical aspects of virginity but on purity, chastity, and safeguarding against forbidden actions like adultery. Every woman, especially Muslim women, is obligated to protect herself and her religion by upholding the importance of virginity, influencing her social standing in society. Future research could delve deeper into the relationship between virginity and the social lives of women, comparing the consequences of not being

virgin with Islamic teachings for further insights.

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