

## The Impact of Implementing Islamic Sharia on Women's Freedom in Aceh

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### Abstract

*This study aims to determine the impact of the implementation of Islamic Sharia on the freedom of women in the Province of Aceh, Indonesia. This research method uses a qualitative approach with a questionnaire survey as the data collection instrument. The survey is designed to collect data related to the implementation of Sharia and its impact on women's freedom. Respondents were randomly selected from various regions in Aceh. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The respondents who participated in the survey were 20 women living in Aceh, aged between 17-25 years. The results of this study indicate that the implementation of Sharia has a significant impact on freedom of clothing, mobility, and access for women. This study is expected to provide comprehensive insights into the situation in Aceh.*

**Keywords:** Content, Formatting, Article.

### INTRODUCTION

In the context of the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh, especially in relation to women's freedom, it is an interesting topic to research. Aceh is known as the only province in Indonesia that officially applies Islamic sharia law. This is stated in several laws that regulate the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh, such as Law Number 44 of 1999 concerning the Implementation of the Privileges of the Special Region of Aceh Province, Law Number 18 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for the Special Region Province Aceh as the Province of Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, and Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning Aceh Government (Yunus, Azwarfajri, & Yusuf, 2023). This law provides a legal basis for Aceh to implement Islamic law, creates a legal framework that is different from other provinces in Indonesia, and makes Aceh a unique region in implementing Islamic law.

The implementation of Islamic law in Aceh has had a significant impact on people's lives, including women's freedom. This can be seen from the existence of regulations that regulate various aspects of people's lives, including rules regarding clothing, relationships and people's rights. This certainly raises questions regarding how the implementation of Islamic law affects women's freedom in the area, therefore women's freedom is one aspect that needs to be considered in evaluating the impact of the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh (Ismail, 2021).

A study conducted by Nurjannah Ismail (2021) shows that the implications of

implementing Islamic law in Aceh have had a complex impact on women's freedom. Even though the main aim of implementing Islamic law is to maintain morality and order in society, in practice This often creates conflict with the principles of individual freedom, including women's rights and freedoms

From the description above, it can be concluded that the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh has a significant impact on women's freedom. Therefore, it is hoped that this research can provide a clearer picture of how the policy of implementing Islamic law affects women's freedom in concrete terms.

### METHOD

This research method uses a qualitative approach using a survey method with a questionnaire as a data collection instrument (Rokhmah, et al. 2024). Respondents were randomly selected from various regions in Aceh. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The respondents who took part in the survey were 20 women living in Aceh aged 17-25 years. It is hoped that this research will provide a comprehensive insight into the situation in Aceh.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Understanding the History and Development and Application of Sharia in Aceh

Islamic Sharia is God's laws revealed to His Prophet and addressed to mankind. The goal is for the benefit of the people, both in this world and the hereafter. In this discussion and context,

the focus is on Islamic law which was established in Indonesia, specifically in Aceh Province. Islamic Sharia in Aceh has been in effect since before the independence of the Republic of Indonesia. Its implementation began during the reign of King Iskandar Muda. After Independence, the New Order period, the reform era, until now, Islamic Sharia remains in force in Aceh, which is also known as the "veranda of Mecca," has a culture that is strong with Islamic values, so that the implementation of Sharia is often rooted in life. Acehnese people. The implementation of sharia aims to ensure that Aceh remains within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. However, Islamic law in Aceh is newly acknowledged in Indonesia in Law Number 44 of 1999 concerning the Implementation of the Specialties of the Special Region of Aceh Province, recognizing the application of Islamic Sharia in a Kaffah manner in Aceh. And it is stated in Aceh Qanun Number 8 of 2014 which regulates the main points of Islamic Sharia in Aceh. The areas of implementation of Islamic Sharia in Aceh include:

1. Worship: Practice worship according to Islamic teachings.
2. Family Law (Ahwal Al-Syakhshiyah): Regulations relating to marriage, divorce, and inheritance.
3. Civil Law (Muamalah): Regulations related to transactions and contracts.
4. Criminal Law (Jinayat): Punishment for violations of criminal law.
5. Judicial (Qadha'): Judicial system based on Islamic Sharia.
6. Education (Tarbiyah): Sharia-based education.
7. Defense of Islam: Protection of Islamic values.
8. Obligation and Respect (Iqbal Maulana, 2018).

### **Islamic Sharia in Aceh and its Impact on Women's Freedom**

The implementation of Islamic Sharia in Aceh has had a significant impact on women's freedom. These include the rules of dress, where the Shari'a regulates women's and men's clothing. This is then considered by some people to limit

women's freedom of dress and expression of identity. Apart from that, the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh is considered to be a trigger for gender inequality (Saraini & Kholifah, 2019). Even though the spirit of Islamic law is equality of gender, partial interpretation often results in rules that seem patriarchal for women. And it is not uncommon for some people to think that discrimination against women is still ongoing, including in Aceh. The implementation of Islamic law in Aceh is currently still a matter of debate and long discussion for Indonesia itself. Including the issue of Respect for Identity, the application of sharia sometimes ignores women's rights in personal and identity decisions. Community welfare and education need to come first before enforcing sharia. That is why it is important to research through a questionnaire to find out how Acehnese women respond to the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh.

**Results** The majority of Acehnese female respondents (70%) stated that they strongly agreed that they understood Islamic Sharia clothing regulations well. However, some respondents (25%) felt that there were limitations in clothing which affected individual freedom. In addition, 30% of respondents agreed that their clothing choices were influenced by sharia regulations. The research results show that understanding of Sharia rules in Aceh is quite high. However, it should be noted that some respondents felt that there were limitations in clothing which affected individual freedom. The influence of Sharia dress codes on clothing choices also needs to be considered in the context of individual freedom among respondents. The Aceh Qanun regulates Islamic dress, which requires every Muslim in Aceh to wear Islamic dress. Although this rule applies to all, the practice is stricter for women.

### **Women's Mobility and Access:**

The topic of women's mobility and access in the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh has been the focus of academic research and discussion for several decades. Several previous studies have provided various interesting perspectives and findings, but there is still room for further exploration. Mobility, which is defined as the ability or readiness to move freely

and change places, has an important role in various aspects of women's lives, including: Access to opportunities and resources, namely mobility allows women to access education, work, etc. Service health, and other opportunities that may not be available in their communities. This can improve the quality of life of women and their families, as well as encourage women's participation in society. For example, women who can travel easily to school or work can more easily achieve better education and careers. Security and Welfare, mobility can help women to escape dangerous situations, such as domestic violence or child marriage. Mobility can also enable women to access help and support from authorities or non-governmental organizations. For example, women who can travel freely to seek help can more easily avoid violence or exploitation (Muhsinah, 2019).

Autonomy and Independence, mobility gives women control over their own lives and allows them to make decisions about how they want to spend their time and lives. This can increase women's sense of self-confidence and autonomy, and empower them to achieve their goals. For example, women who can travel without permission from their husbands or other family members can be more independent in making decisions about their lives. Social and Political Participation mobility allows women to participate in social and political activities in their communities. This can strengthen women's voices in decision making and help them to fight for their rights. For example, women who can attend village meetings or demonstrations can more easily voice their opinions and be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Quality of Family Life, women's mobility can improve the quality of life of the entire family. For example, women who can access markets to sell their harvests can increase family income and increase access to nutritious food. It is important to note that women's mobility is not always easy to realize. In many societies, women still face various obstacles to free movement, such as discriminatory gender norms and values, lack of safe and women-friendly infrastructure, and violence against women. Efforts to increase women's mobility need to be carried out comprehensively by overcoming these various

obstacles and creating a safe and supportive environment for women to move freely (Alima Wahyuli, et al, 2023)

Based on survey results regarding the mobility and access of Acehese women in this discussion, the majority of respondents (50%) felt that the implementation of sharia in Aceh did not affect their mobility in public spaces. Furthermore, if viewed in terms of access restrictions, as many as 65% of respondents did not experience access restrictions to certain places due to the implementation of sharia. This analysis shows that the implementation of sharia in Aceh has a significant impact on women's mobility and access in public spaces. From this data, it can be concluded that the implementation of sharia in Aceh has had a significant impact on women's mobility and access in public spaces. Although the majority of respondents did not feel any restrictions, it is important to consider their experiences. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to individual experiences and ensure that women's rights are maintained.

### **Women's Education and Participation:**

The implementation of Islamic law in Aceh has a complex impact on women's education. Even though the spirit and moral message of Islamic Shari'a is the equality of society, many interpreters only understand Shari'a texts textually, resulting in biased interpretations. gender and rules of injustice. As a result, women in Aceh face discrimination and inequality (Nurjannah Ismail, 2021). In facing this challenge, enforcement of sharia must be preceded by adequate community education as well as equal distribution of welfare and a just economy (Roviana, S., 2016). Despite this, the Islamic Sharia Service in Aceh has tried to do its best, but there are still weaknesses and deficiencies in its implementation (Halimah, S., & Hasibuan, A., 2019).

Based on the survey results, the majority of respondents (95%) stated that the implementation of sharia in Aceh did not affect their mobility regarding access to education. This shows that the majority of women in Aceh feel that the implementation of sharia does not limit their mobility in public spaces. As many as 70% of respondents stated that women's participation

in social and political activities in Aceh was quite good. This indicates that there is an opportunity for women to participate actively in social and political life despite the implementation of sharia. 40% of respondents did not face obstacles in education or socio-political participation due to the implementation of sharia.

### **The Role of Institutions and Society:**

Implementation of Islamic law in Aceh involves the role of government institutions and the community. Government institutions have formal responsibility for implementing sharia, including monitoring and enforcing sharia laws that apply to women. Apart from that, this institution also plays a role in providing education and outreach regarding sharia rules to the community (Yunus, Azwarfajri, & Yusuf, 2023).

On the other hand, the people of Aceh have an active role in implementing sharia on a daily basis. They participate in worship, wear appropriate clothing, and adhere to social norms. Public awareness of sharia and the role of women in implementing it is very important. Education and socialization at the community level play a role in ensuring correct understanding of Shari'a (Home News Articles, Aceh Islamic Shari'a Service).

The community also plays a role in monitoring women's behavior, including monitoring their clothing, relationships and daily activities. Social norms and pressure from the environment can influence women's lives in Aceh (Iskandar, 2018). Although there are limitations, the role of society also involves protecting women's rights. Awareness of women's rights and advocacy for gender equality is part of this role.

More than half of respondents (75%) stated that government and religious institutions have a good role in implementing sharia in Aceh. As many as 70% are aware of the existence of initiatives or programs from the community that support the implementation of sharia. This shows that there is good collaboration between government, religious and community institutions in supporting the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh. Nevertheless, there are still challenges that need to be overcome to ensure

that the implementation of sharia does not have a negative impact on women's rights.

### **Psychological Impact:**

The implementation of Islamic law in Aceh has a complex impact on women's psychology. On the one hand, some women feel empowered by religious values and feel closer to their religious identity. However, on the other hand, there are several challenges that influence women's psychological well-being. First, society's stigma and perception of women who violate sharia rules can affect their sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. Women may feel constrained and worry about social judgment. Second, limited freedom in clothing, mobility and interaction with the opposite sex can cause stress and dissatisfaction. Feelings of constraint and lack of autonomy can impact mental well-being. Third, gender inequalities that may arise from the application of sharia, such as in terms of inheritance or educational opportunities, can affect women's feelings about themselves and their role in society. Lastly, legal uncertainty and different interpretations in the application of sharia can cause anxiety and emotional instability (Muhsinah, 2019).

From the survey results, 90% of respondents stated that they had never felt depressed and were comfortable with the implementation of sharia in Aceh. However, 20% of respondents felt a significant psychological impact from the implementation of sharia in their daily lives as women in Aceh. The survey results show that although the majority of respondents feel comfortable with the implementation of sharia in Aceh, a small number of them experience significant psychological impacts in their daily lives and need to pay attention to women's welfare.

### **CONCLUSION**

This research shows that the implementation of Islamic law in Aceh has been going on since the pre-independence period and is officially recognized in Indonesian law. Islamic law has a significant impact on women's freedom, including dress codes and mobility, which can affect individual freedom and gender equality. Even though there are respondents who feel that their mobility is not limited, it is important to



consider individual experiences and ensure that women's rights are maintained. The majority of respondents felt that the implementation of sharia did not hinder access to education or socio-political participation, but there were still challenges in gender equality and discrimination. From the results of this survey, the implementation of sharia in Aceh has had varying impacts on women's rights to freedom, namely understanding, mobility, participation and women's psychological well-being.

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