

The Concept of Tasyabbuh in Hadith: A Comparative Study of Classical and Modern Interpretations

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ABSTRACT

One of the hadiths that has broad implications for the formation of Muslim identity is the hadith prohibiting resemblance to non-Muslims (tasyabbuh). In contemporary social realities, this hadith is frequently invoked as a basis for legal debates concerning various social practices, cultural expressions, and symbols that intersect with non-Muslim traditions. This study aims to examine the meaning of the hadith prohibiting tasyabbuh through a comparative analysis of the perspectives of classical and contemporary scholars. This research employs a library-based qualitative method with a comparative approach, grounded in textual analysis of the hadith and scholarly interpretations across different periods. The findings indicate that both classical and contemporary scholars share fundamental principles in understanding the hadith on tasyabbuh, particularly in affirming the prohibition of resembling non-Muslims in matters of creed ('aqidah), worship ('ibadah), and religious symbols (shi'ar al-din). The differences that emerge are primarily methodological, especially in responding to modern social and cultural changes. Contemporary scholars emphasize the classification of forms of tasyabbuh, the distinction between acts of worship and customary practices, as well as considerations of intention and potential harm (mafsadah). Thus, these differences are not contradictory but complementary, aiming to safeguard the purity of faith and the identity of the Muslim community in accordance with the context of each era.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wasallam* constitute the second fundamental source of Islam after the Qur'an [1]. As a source of Islamic teachings, hadith function to explain, elaborate, and clarify various rulings that are not detailed explicitly in the Quran [2].

Through hadith, Muslims are guided in diverse aspects of Islamic teachings, including matters related to worship ('ibādāt), social transactions (*mu'āmalāt*), and the social order that should be observed by the Muslim community.

In addition to serving as the second source of Islamic law after the Quran, hadith also constitutes an important reference in the

formation of Muslim social identity. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam* preserved in hadith shape patterns of behavior, modes of perception, and value systems that distinguish Muslims from other communities. This identity is reflected in various aspects of life, ranging from modes of worship and social ethics to attitudes governing social interaction among human beings [3].

One of the hadiths frequently used as a foundation for shaping Muslim social identity is the hadith concerning the prohibition of resembling non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*). This hadith is often employed to assess various forms of social interaction, cultural practices, and even certain symbols derived from non-Muslim traditions. Its application is not limited to matters of worship and belief but also extends to aspects of everyday life, such as dress, lifestyle, social celebrations, and the adoption of customs that develop within a globalized society.

The phenomenon of *tasyabbuh* has become increasingly visible in daily social life as a result of interactions with foreign cultures and the influence of local cultural practices. Many religious expressions among non-Muslims are deeply intertwined with cultural traditions, raising concerns that prohibited forms of *tasyabbuh* may occur unconsciously due to a tendency to underestimate or overlook the issue [4].

The acceptance of non-Muslim cultures has increasingly intensified alongside the forces of globalization and the growing intensity of cross-cultural interaction. Various social practices, such as the adoption of certain styles of dress, the embrace of Western lifestyles, and participation in non-Muslim celebrations and symbols, are often regarded as normal and perceived as matters lying outside the scope of Islamic religious concerns.

The role of media has further accelerated the spread of such cultures, particularly among younger generations [5]. This phenomenon has subsequently generated debates among Muslims regarding the limits of accepting other cultures,

especially in relation to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam* concerning the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*).

The interpretation of the hadith concerning the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*) has, in practice, frequently given rise to differences of opinion within the Muslim community. These differences are evident in the varying understandings of the meaning and scope of the hadith, which consequently affect the legal conclusions derived from it. Such divergent interpretations often lead to public debates on various issues, including the permissibility of exchanging engagement rings [6], celebrating birthdays [7], offering Christmas greetings [8], and even the use of interfaith greetings [9].

The differences of opinion within Muslim societies regarding the hadith prohibiting the imitation of non-Muslims are, in essence, a reflection of the dynamic nature of scholarly interpretation in understanding this hadith. Therefore, a study that examines the views of scholars across different periods through a comparative approach is essential in order to comprehend the meaning of this hadith in a rigorous academic manner. This approach is expected to provide a more proportionate understanding of the hadith on *tasyabbuh* and to prevent misinterpretations in its application.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the meaning of the hadith prohibiting the imitation of non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*) as explained by classical and contemporary scholars. It also seeks to map the similarities and differences in scholarly approaches across different eras in understanding the concept of *tasyabbuh*, particularly in distinguishing between the domains of creed (*‘aqidah*), worship (*‘ibadah*), and customary practices (*‘ādāt*).

This research is significant in providing academic clarification of the concept of *tasyabbuh*, which frequently generates divergent interpretations within Muslim communities. By examining the perspectives of classical and contemporary

scholars comparatively, this study is expected to prevent both excessive rigidity and undue leniency in understanding the hadith on the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims. Moreover, this research contributes to enriching hadith studies through a cross-temporal analytical approach and offers a balanced scholarly reference for Muslims in navigating social interaction, cultural engagement, and globalization without compromising religious identity and fundamental principles of faith.

The novelty of this study lies in its comparative analysis that situates the views of classical and contemporary scholars on the hadith prohibiting the imitation of non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*) within a continuous and integrated interpretive framework. This research also emphasizes the classification of *tasyabbuh* based on the domains of worship and customary practices, and explains the shifting legal status of certain practices due to the loss of their exclusivity as non-Muslim symbols in modern social contexts. Accordingly, this study offers a more proportionate understanding of the hadith on *tasyabbuh* and bridges the normative rigor of Islamic law with the realities of contemporary Muslim life.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section of this study aims to trace and map the development of scholarly discussions on the concept of *tasyabbuh* in Islam, both in the works of classical scholars and in contemporary Islamic thought. This review is structured to demonstrate how the concept of *tasyabbuh* has been understood, formulated, and applied across various historical and social contexts, as well as to identify points of convergence and divergence among scholars in interpreting the relevant *hadith* as a foundation for shaping Muslim religious identity.

2.1 *The Legitimacy of Hadith as a Foundation of Islamic Teachings*

The *hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi*

wasallam has been widely recognized in Islamic scholarly literature as a primary source of Islamic teachings after the Quran. Several academic studies have systematically affirmed this position. Research conducted by Ni'mah et al. demonstrates that *hadith* generally encompasses the sayings, actions, approvals, physical attributes, and moral character of the Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam*, all of which have significant implications for the formation of Islamic law and guidance for Muslim life. *Hadith* functions as the second source of Islamic law after the Quran and serves as a fundamental basis for establishing legal rulings and moral guidelines for the Muslim community [10].

Research conducted by Tasbih further reinforces the position of *hadith* as the second source of Islamic law. *Hadith* functions as a means of affirmation (*ta'kid*) of the teachings of the Quran, provides clarification (*tabyin*), and establishes legal rulings that are not explicitly detailed in the Quran. The authoritative strength of *hadith* as a source of law is determined by two aspects: first, the reliability of its transmission (*riwayah*), and second, the strength of its legal indication and guidance [11].

2.2 *The Relationship between Muslims and Non-Muslims*

In the book of *Relasi Muslim Menurut Syariat* written by Mulia, it is explained that Islam establishes relations with non-Muslims based on the principles of justice, tolerance, benevolence, and compassion. The Prophet Muhammad

ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam granted protection to all people regardless of religion, ethnicity, or language, as reflected in the Constitution of Medina.

This book demonstrates that social interaction and everyday relations between Muslims and non-Muslims are well regulated within Islamic law, including the recognition of rights and protection of freedom for non-Muslims to adhere to and practice their religion. Peaceful and prosperous coexistence among human beings can be achieved through the comprehensive implementation of Islamic law [12].

Research conducted by Ilham *et al.* explains that interreligious harmony is difficult to achieve if religious individualism continues to be prioritized. In the Quran, social interactions with non-Muslims are addressed in various aspects of life. The Quran provides guidelines for social interaction that encompass matters such as food, marriage, and the regulations of *jizyah*, indicating that religious differences do not constitute a barrier as long as these relationships lead toward goodness [13].

2.3 The Concept of *Tasyabbuh* in Islam

In general, *tasyabbuh* refers to an individual's effort to resemble others in terms of behavior, clothing, or certain characteristics through deliberate imitation of actions that are intentionally adopted in accordance with what is practiced by those being imitated [14]. This concept includes the attitude of a Muslim imitating non-Muslims, particularly in

matters related to identity, symbols, or practices that are distinctive to them.

Research conducted by Wahidin explains that scholars from the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī, and Ḥanbalī, generally agree on the prohibition of *tasyabbuh* with disbelievers, especially in matters that constitute distinctive religious symbols (*syi‘ār*) of their beliefs and faith traditions. Ibn Taymiyyah even explicitly states that the prohibition of *tasyabbuh* has reached the level of *ijmā‘* among scholars [15].

Furthermore, research by Annibras argues that the *hadiths* prohibiting *tasyabbuh* with the traditions of non-Muslims, particularly Jews and Christians, are understood as an effort to preserve the identity and moral integrity of the Muslim community. This prohibition applies to forms of *tasyabbuh* that contradict Islamic creed (*‘aqidah*), law (*sharī‘ah*), and moral values. Conversely, practices that are not related to matters of faith, worship, or religious symbols, and that do not constitute exclusive customs of a particular group, may be tolerated as long as they do not violate the normative provisions of the Qur’an and the Sunnah [16].

3. METHODS

This study is a qualitative research design using a library research approach. The focus of the research is directed toward examining the *hadith* of the Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam concerning the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*), as well as the interpretations of this *hadith* by classical and contemporary scholars.

The approaches applied in this study are descriptive-analytical and comparative. The descriptive approach is used to present the text of the *hadith* on *tasyabbuh* along with its context and content, while the analytical approach is employed to examine in depth the scholarly explanations of the *hadith*. Meanwhile, the comparative approach is utilized to compare the views of classical and contemporary scholars in understanding the meaning, scope, and legal implications of the *hadith* prohibiting *tasyabbuh*.

The data sources of this research consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include *hadith* collections containing the *hadith* on *tasyabbuh* as well as classical scholarly works that provide explanations of the *hadith* and elaborate on the concept of *tasyabbuh*. Secondary sources comprise works by contemporary scholars, academic books, and scholarly journal articles that discuss the concept of *tasyabbuh* in Islam.

Data collection is carried out through a documentation method, involving the identification, reading, and selection of literature relevant to the research topic. The collected data are then classified according to thematic categories, including the text of the *hadith* on *tasyabbuh*, explanations by classical scholars, and interpretations by contemporary scholars. This classification process aims to facilitate analysis and maintain systematic discussion.

Data analysis is conducted in several stages. The first stage involves analyzing the text of the *hadith* on *tasyabbuh* by paying attention to its wording and fundamental meaning. The second stage focuses on analyzing the views of classical scholars regarding the meaning of the *hadith*. The third stage examines contemporary scholars' interpretations of the concept of *tasyabbuh* in modern life. Finally, a comparative analysis is conducted to identify similarities and differences in the approaches of classical and contemporary scholars.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Hadith Prohibiting Imitation of Non-Muslims (*Tasyabbuh*)

The discussion of the concept of *tasyabbuh* in Islam is grounded in several *hadith* of the Prophet Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wasallam* that address the prohibition of imitating other communities. Among the *hadiths* most frequently cited are two narrations. The first *hadith* states:

مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ

The mean: "Whoever imitates a people is considered to be one of them."

This *hadith* is narrated by Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan* (no. 4031) [17], and also by Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad* (no. 5114) [18]. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī classified this *hadith* as *ḥasan* [19]. Ibn Taymiyyah stated that the *hadith* has a sound status, as its narrators are among those reported in the two *Ṣaḥīḥ* collections [20], *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Meanwhile, al-Albānī regarded this *hadith* as *ṣaḥīḥ* [21].

The second *hadith* that serves as a basis for the prohibition of *tasyabbuh* states:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِغَيْرِنَا

The mean: "He is not among us who imitates others."

This *hadith* is narrated by al-Tirmidhī in his book *al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr* [22]. Ibn Taymiyyah, in his *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, classified the status of this *hadith* as sound (*ḥasan*) [23].

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the *hadiths* concerning *tasyabbuh* possess an acceptable (*maqbul*) level of authenticity. Therefore, these *hadiths* are valid as normative foundations and should be observed and implemented in the life of a Muslim.

4.2 The Meaning of the Hadith on the Prohibition of Imitating Non-Muslims (*Tasyabbuh*) According to Classical Scholars

Early Muslim scholars did not provide a single, formal definition of *tasyabbuh*, with the notable exception of Muḥammad al-Ghazzī al-Syāfi'ī, a scholar of the Shāfi'ī school who died in 1061 AH. He defined *tashabbuh* as a person's attempt to resemble those he imitates in terms of form,

appearance, adornment, distinguishing features, or characteristics. *Tasyabbuh* is also understood as an act carried out intentionally, through deliberate effort and learning. The concept of *tasyabbuh* is often expressed using related terms such as *tashakkul*, *tamatthul*, *al-tazayyi*, *al-taḥallī*, and *al-takhalluq* [24].

Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī explains that the statement of the Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam regarding *tasyabbuh* carries two meanings. The first meaning refers to resembling those who are known for righteousness, piety, faith, and obedience. Resembling such people is a commendable act and is even encouraged. Muslims are commanded to emulate the Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam in all aspects of life, including his words, actions, manners, and moral character.

The hadith also conveys a second meaning, namely a firm prohibition against imitating groups characterized by deviation, such as disbelievers, people of immorality, and those engaged in sinful conduct. Differentiating oneself from non-Muslims is one of the objectives intended by Islamic law; therefore, imitating them is fundamentally prohibited in Islam.

This principle is derived from the aforementioned hadith as well as other textual evidences that explicitly prohibit *tasyabbuh* with non-Muslims, such as the prohibition of constructing graves, turning graves into places of worship, growing the moustache while trimming the beard, eating and drinking with the left hand, and similar practices [20].

The Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam also emphasized the prohibition of resembling non-Muslims by forbidding the performance of prayer at the times of sunrise and sunset [25]. The prohibition is accompanied by an explanation from the Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wasallam that at the times of sunrise and sunset, disbelievers perform prostration to the sun [26], therefore, performing prostration at those times may constitute *tasyabbuh* with them, and such an act is prohibited in Islam.

The prohibition of *tasyabbuh* also includes imitating non-Muslims in their distinctive religious celebrations. This is affirmed by the statement of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar raḍiyallāhu ‘anhumā, who warned that whoever resides in the land of non-Muslims, participates in their festivals, and imitates them until the end of his life will be gathered with them on the Day of Resurrection [25].

Al-Suyūṭī adds that participating in the celebrations of non-Muslims is an act that is inappropriate for a Muslim. A Muslim is not permitted to imitate, take part in, or approve of such practices. This prohibition remains in effect even when such imitation or involvement is not accompanied by an intention to venerate or adopt their religious beliefs.

This is because such imitation has the potential to strengthen their position and embolden them in displaying their distinctive symbols. The prohibition is therefore established due to the element of harm inherent in such imitation, whether as a form of disobedience or as a means of promoting the religious symbols (*shī‘ār*) of non-Muslims, all of which are impermissible for a Muslim [27].

A similar view was also expressed by Ibn Mas‘ūd raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu, who stated that approval (*riḍā*) of the actions of a particular group renders a person part of that group [28]. Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal likewise expressed his disapproval of shaving the back of the head, as this practice constituted a distinctive characteristic of the Magians [29].

Al-Ṣan‘ānī explains in his book *Subul al-Salām* that, based on the hadith prohibiting imitation of non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*), it can be understood that imitating certain groups whether immoral individuals, disbelievers, or practitioners of religious innovation in matters that constitute their distinctive features, such as clothing, means of transportation, or outward appearance, carries legal implications related to creed (*‘aqīdah*) [28].

The scholars further explain that if imitation of others is accompanied by the belief that one becomes the same as them,

such an act is considered disbelief (*kufur*). However, if such imitation is not accompanied by that belief, the scholars differ in opinion: some still regard it as disbelief based on the apparent meaning of the hadith, while others hold that it does not reach the level of disbelief, though it remains reprehensible and deserving of sanction [30].

Ibn Taymiyyah reports the existence of scholarly consensus (*ijmā'*) among the early generations of scholars regarding the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims. He further explains that this hadith functions as a general principle for Muslims in both psychological and sociological dimensions. This is because *tasyabbuh* with non-Muslims has significant consequences for the Muslim community, affecting both individuals and social relationships.

Imitating others in outward aspects such as appearance and behavior has a direct influence on the formation of emotional closeness. When two parties exhibit similarities in lifestyle, habits, and behavioral patterns, a sense of intimacy, empathy, and mutual affection naturally develops.

Such similarities have the potential to shape particular attitudes and social relationships. In the context of relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, resemblance in appearance, customs, behavior, language, and other similar aspects may give rise to feelings of closeness and emotional attachment between the two. These effects have been empirically observed in social reality.

This phenomenon can be directly experienced in everyday life. For instance, a person who wears clothing commonly associated with religious scholars tends to feel a sense of inner connection and closeness to that group. Likewise, someone who wears military attire may experience an internal inclination to emulate the character and demeanor of soldiers. In such circumstances, an individual's psychological tendencies are shaped in accordance with the symbols and identities they display, leading their character to align with the roles and values attached to that appearance.

If imitation of others in worldly matters alone is capable of fostering affection and tendencies toward loyalty, then imitation in religious matters undoubtedly exerts a far stronger influence. Such imitation may develop into a deeper form of loyalty.

The more intense and persistent the act of imitation, the greater its impact on the formation of morals and character, until it ultimately diminishes the distinctions between the two parties, leaving only superficial differences. Therefore, such forms of affection and loyalty are incompatible with the principles of faith [20].

4.3 The Meaning of the Hadith Prohibiting Imitation of Non-Muslims (*Tasyabbuh*) According to Contemporary Scholars

One of the contemporary scholars who discusses this issue is Shaykh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān. He is a senior scholar who currently serves as the Grand Mufti of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a member of the Council of Senior Scholars (*Hay'at Kibār al-'Ulamā'*), the Fiqh Committee of the Muslim World League (*Rābiṭah al-'Ālam al-Islāmī*) in Makkah, as well as a member of the Supervisory Committee for Du'āt al-Ḥajj and the head of membership of *al-Lajnah al-Dā'imah li al-Buḥūth wa al-Iftā'* [31].

He explains that *tasyabbuh* refers to a Muslim imitating non-Muslims in their distinctive characteristics and practices, whether in matters of belief, acts of worship, culture, or behavior [32]. This definition is specifically directed toward imitation of non-Muslims and the people of innovation (*ahl al-bid'ah*), as this is the primary intent of the hadith, as indicated by its contextual framework [24].

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān explains that, from a textual perspective, the hadith indicates that any act of imitating another group places the imitator in a position similar to the one being imitated. This ruling applies in general, without distinguishing whether the object of imitation is a righteous person, a

sinner, a practitioner of religious innovation, or non-Muslims.

Another contemporary scholar is Shaykh Muḥammad bin Ṣāliḥ al-Uthaymīn. He previously served as a member of the Council of Senior Scholars of Saudi Arabia and as a lecturer at Imam Muhammad bin Saud University in al-Qassim [33]. He explains that this hadith contains several important lessons. Among them is the encouragement to imitate righteous people. From this benefit arises the exhortation to follow the righteous predecessors (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*) in matters of worship, creed, and all aspects of life, so that a person may be counted among them. Another lesson derived from this hadith is the warning and prohibition against imitating non-Muslims [34].

Imitating non-Muslims is regarded as an absolute prohibition in Islam. Non-Muslims commit shirk toward Allah, which is the gravest sin and one that is not forgiven. Therefore, a Muslim is required to avoid all forms of imitation of them, whether in the fundamental aspects of disbelief or in customs and practices that are distinctive to them. Imitating them is extremely dangerous, as it may lead to disbelief, weaken faith, and erode the identity of a Muslim [35].

This prohibition encompasses all aspects of Muslim life. Shaykh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān explains that in matters of creed (*‘aqīdah*), acts of worship, and religious celebrations, the prohibition signifies the absolute unlawfulness of such practices and may even lead to disbelief (*kufr*) if they are performed intentionally and with full awareness. This is because deliberate imitation constitutes an implicit endorsement of false beliefs, which entails elements of affection and loyalty. Such elements fall within matters that may invalidate faith.

In contrast, in matters of customs and styles of dress, imitating non-Muslims is considered unlawful (*ḥarām*) and indicative of moral deviation (*fisq*), but it does not reach the level of disbelief as long as it is not accompanied by intent. This conclusion is drawn from the attitude of the Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam

when he prohibited ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ from wearing the clothing of disbelievers [26]. In that instance, the Prophet ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam did not describe the act as disbelief [24].

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-‘Abbād al-Badr, a hadith scholar from Madinah and recognized as an *‘ālim rabbānī*, previously served as Vice Rector of the Islamic University of Madinah and remains an active instructor at al-Masjid al-Nabawī [36]. He states that outward imitation (*tasyabbuh*) of non-Muslims, such as in clothing or physical appearance, may give rise to an inward inclination of the heart and inner attachment toward them [37].

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ bin Fawzān further explains that this prohibition is viewed as a preventive measure, commonly referred to by scholars as *sadd al-dharī‘ah*, namely, blocking the means that lead to greater harm. As for scholars who consider *tasyabbuh* in certain actions or customs to constitute disbelief (*kufr*), this ruling applies only when it is accompanied by intention, as such intention undermines a fundamental principle of faith, love for Allah and Islam, which necessarily entails hatred toward disbelief.

Meanwhile, in purely worldly and technical matters that are unrelated to religious identity, such as science, technology, and military strategy, it is permissible to benefit from the experience of disbelievers when Muslims lack adequate capability. This practice has a basis in the example of the Prophet Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam, when the Companions dug a trench during the Battle of al-Aḥzāb [26], a method previously unknown to the Arabs. However, such utilization is conditioned upon not resulting in dependency, humiliation, or contradiction with the principles of Islamic law.

Tasyabbuh that is considered *makrūh* applies to practices that are prescribed in Islam but are also performed by non-Muslims, while Islam commands differentiation in their manner or form. An example of this is fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’, which was also observed by the Jews. The Prophet

Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wasallam* prescribed fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’ for Muslims and instructed them to fast an additional day before it in order to differ from the Jews [26]. Accordingly, restricting the fast solely to the day of ‘Āshūrā’ is regarded by scholars as *makrūh*, as it resembles the fasting practice of the Jews.

A detailed and absolute formulation of the legal rulings on *tasyabbuh* is not feasible, as its forms and degrees of negative impact vary significantly, particularly in the context of the modern era. Therefore, each manifestation of *tasyabbuh* must be evaluated by referring to the evidences of Islamic law, the principles of jurisprudence (*qawā‘id fiqhīyyah*), and the higher objectives of the *Sharī‘ah* (*maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*). The fundamental principle is that any form of *tasyabbuh* involving *mafsadah* (harm) is prohibited, and the greater the harm, the stronger the prohibition.

If a practice no longer constitutes a distinctive symbol of non-Muslims because it has become commonly practiced among Muslims, then it is deemed permissible, provided that it is not intrinsically prohibited. This ruling applies exclusively to matters of custom and social practice, whereas in matters of worship and religious symbols, the prohibition of *tasyabbuh* remains absolute and admits no exception.

As an example, some contemporary scholars discuss the use of trousers. Trousers are considered to have lost their exclusivity as a distinctive symbol of non-Muslims; therefore, wearing them is deemed permissible. Nevertheless, prohibiting such practices may still be considered as a preventive measure to block the means to harm (*sadd al-dharī‘ah*). Among the most concerning negative impacts are the emergence of a sense of inferiority among Muslims, the development of excessive admiration for non-Muslims, and the growth of feelings of affection and trust toward them.

The limited elaboration on the legal rulings of *tasyabbuh* in the works of classical scholars, despite the abundance of relevant textual evidences, may be attributed to the

fact that the phenomenon of *tasyabbuh* toward non-Muslims during their time was not as complex or widespread as it is in the contemporary era [24].

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that both classical and contemporary scholars share a common understanding of the meaning of the hadith prohibiting resemblance to non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*). Classical scholars emphasize the prohibition of *tasyabbuh* primarily in matters of creed (*‘aqīdah*), worship (*‘ibādah*), and religious symbols (*shī‘ār al-dīn*), as *tasyabbuh* in these domains has the potential to undermine the fundamental principles of faith by fostering affection and loyalty toward disbelief. From their perspective, *tasyabbuh* may lead to severe implications, reaching the level of disbelief (*kufr*) when accompanied by intention, justification, or veneration of the false beliefs of non-Muslims.

Contemporary scholars build upon this framework by adopting a more contextual approach in accordance with the realities of globalization and modern social interaction. They emphasize the importance of classifying forms of *tasyabbuh* based on their contexts, distinguishing between matters of worship and customary practices, and considering elements such as intention and potential harm (*mafsadah*). In matters of custom that have lost their exclusivity as symbols of non-Muslims, some contemporary scholars allow a degree of permissibility while maintaining the principle of precaution (*sadd al-dharī‘ah*).



Accordingly, the differences between classical and contemporary scholarly perspectives are not contradictory but complementary. Both understand the hadith prohibiting resemblance to non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*) in the same essential meaning and share the same objective: safeguarding the purity of faith and the identity of the Muslim community, while adjusting their methods of *ijtihād* to meet the challenges of their respective eras.

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