Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir
https://ejurnal.iiq.ac.id/index.php/alfanar

Etiquette of Gender Relations in Islam: A Living Quran Analysis of Contemporary Practices

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Article Information:
Received November 17, 2025
Revised December 28, 2025
Accepted January 27, 2026

Keywords: *Islamic etiquette, gender interaction, men and women, living Quran*

Abstract

The etiquette of social interaction between men and women in Islam constitutes a fundamental aspect of religious teachings aimed at preserving dignity, moral purity, and social harmony. This article is written to examine Quranic and Prophetic principles governing gender relations and their relevance for contemporary youth in educational, professional, and social contexts. Employing a qualitative approach with the Living Quran method, the study explores how Quranic values are embodied in daily practices through observation, interviews, and thematic analysis. Findings reveal that while Islam does not prohibit male–female interaction absolutely, such relations must be conducted within ethical boundaries, including the prohibition of physical contact between non-mahram individuals, the obligation to lower the gaze, modest dress, and respectful communication. The analysis highlights the adaptation of Quranic values among youth, reflected in their awareness of maintaining religious boundaries and adopting Islamic dress codes. The implications underscore the necessity of integrating Quranic ethics into character education, moral development programs, and Islamic-based social policies to foster environments that are dignified, harmonious, and pleasing to Allah SWT.

INTRODUCTION

Etiquette plays an important role in human life, especially in a social context, because today many people have forgotten the values of etiquette, such as a child's etiquette toward parents, a student's etiquette toward teachers, and etiquette toward friends (Arif, 2019). Islam is known as a religion that governs all aspects of human life, whether related to worship of the Creator or interpersonal relationships among fellow human beings (Fhadila, 2017). The holy Quran contains teachings on faith (*aqidah*), Islamic law (*sharia*), and ethics (*akhlak*). Aqidah serves as the foundation of faith; sharia governs Allah's laws, which encompass both worship and social interactions; while akhlak teaches behavior and attitudes as manifestations of the practice of faith and obedience to sharia. One of the important teachings in the Quran is the proper way to interact with the opposite sex the boundaries that govern

How to cite: Khatami, M., Akmal, F., Azzahrah, N. (2026). Etiquette of Gender Relations in Islam: A Living Quran Analysis of Contemporary Practices. *Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, *9*(1), 64-77.

E-ISSN: 2622-4658
Published by: Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta

such interactions (Wadud, 2009).

As times have changed, interactions between men and women have often deviated from Islamic teachings, one example being the practice of *ikhtilath* the mixing of *non-mahram* men and women in the same space which allows for interactions that could potentially lead to fitnah (Nabila, 2024). Islam emphasizes the principles of guarding one's gaze, avoiding adultery, and treating others with respect, as affirmed in Surah Al-Isra' verse 32 and Surah An-Nur verse 30. This indicates that cross-gender interactions must be conducted with great caution so as not to violate Islamic law.

During adolescence, guidance and direction from the surrounding community are essential to prevent them from falling into the widespread trend of promiscuous relationships. Adolescents must be nurtured in matters of moral character, as moral character serves as the primary foundation for interacting with the broader community (Mulyasa, 2021). However, reality shows that many adolescents are more inclined to adopt Western culture without first filtering it, thereby straying from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) (Nawangsari, 2015; Suharni, 2015). Islam does not prohibit interaction between men and women, but regulates it to align with moral values and Islamic law. By understanding and applying these principles, Muslims can foster healthy social relationships without violating religious boundaries, while simultaneously preserving personal purity and collective honor.

Recent studies indicate that the issue of Islamic social etiquette is becoming increasingly relevant in the modern context. Agustina & Sahputra, (2026) highlight social transformations in gender relations according to the Quran, including dress codes and shifts in patriarchal culture. Rijal, (2017) employs a holistic hermeneutic to affirm gender equality in Quranic exegesis, while Chowdhury et al., (2026) emphasize gender complementarity through thematic exposition. In the context of adolescents, Sukri et al., (2024) emphasize the importance of preventing promiscuity through family guidance, whereas other studies by Davinka, (2026) highlight the relevance of Quranic and hadith etiquette in addressing the challenges of the digital age. The Al Ma'soem Foundation in Bandung (2023) emphasizes five key ethical principles in cross-gender interactions: guarding one's gaze, avoiding seclusion, self-restraint, polite communication, and dressing in an Islamic manner.

From a fiqh perspective, Suharni, (2015) examine *ikhtilat* using the maqasid dakwah approach, while Rijal, (2016) compares the views of Abdul Aziz bin Baz and Quraish Shihab on *ikhtilat* in education. These studies reveal differences in interpretation that are relevant to the realities of college and high school settings. Additionally, Saputra, (2024) emphasize the living Quran methodology as a phenomenological approach to understanding the social practices of Muslims, while Jannah, (2017) highlights the integration of Islamic values into character education for adolescents as a strategy for addressing contemporary moral crises. These ten studies demonstrate that the issue of Islamic social etiquette is discussed not only normatively but also within social, educational, and policy contexts.

The implications of this study indicate that Quranic values need to be integrated into both formal and non-formal education so that the principles of guarding one's gaze, dressing modestly, and avoiding ikhtilath become part of the character education curriculum for the younger generation. Furthermore, an understanding of Islamic social etiquette contributes to the moral development of adolescents, enabling them to develop mature personalities and navigate the influences of global culture without losing their Islamic identity. These findings also have implications for social policy, where regulations grounded in Quranic values can foster a conducive environment, prevent promiscuity, and reinforce Islamic social norms. Furthermore, this study enriches the development of the theory of social

etiquette in academic discourse through the living Quran approach, thereby offering a new perspective on how Quranic texts are brought to life in contemporary social practice.

Although there are many normative studies on social etiquette in Islam, most research still focuses on classical texts or normative exegesis. Social reality reveals a gap between Quranic theory on social etiquette and the practices of the younger generation, which are often influenced by global culture. Previous literature has not extensively examined how Quranic principles are internalized in daily life through the living Quran approach.

A search of the Scopus database for studies on etiquette of gender relations found 129 documents from 2021 to 2026. This analysis clearly shows that no studies related to etiquette of gender relations in Islam have been found. Below is a visualization of the VOSviewer bibliometric analysis based on the themes of gender interaction and the Quran.

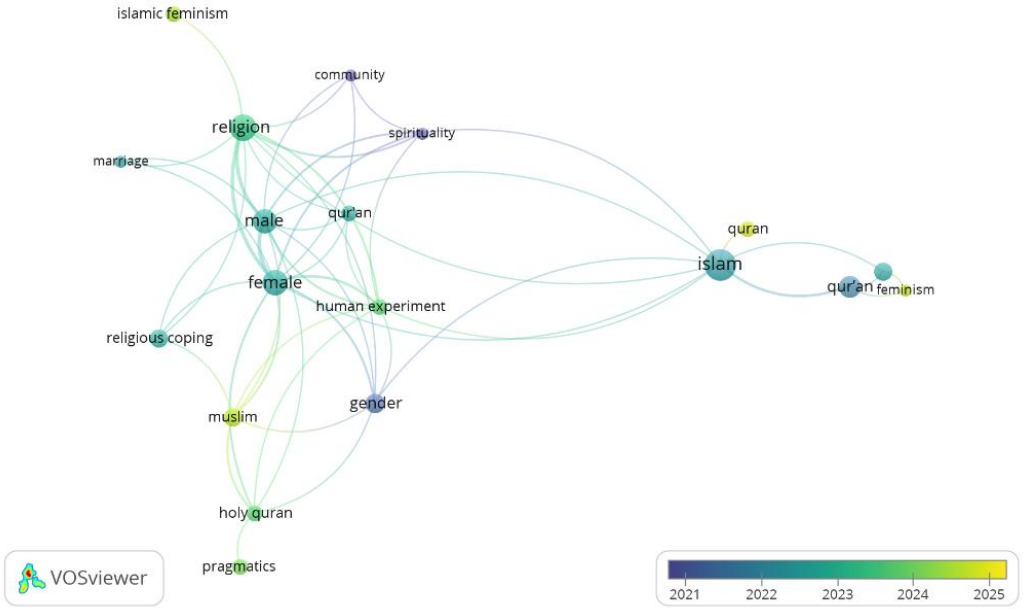


Fig 1. Vosviewer visualization analysis regarding etiquette of gender relations based on the keywords gender interaction and Quran

This article offers a novel approach by using a qualitative methodology grounded in the living Quran to examine the social practices of the younger generation in cross-gender interactions. A fundamental difference from previous research lies in the methodology, which not only highlights normative texts but also connects Quranic texts to social reality through observation, interviews, and thematic analysis. Thus, this article presents a new perspective on how Quranic values are brought to life in a contemporary context. The implications of this article include: the development of a theory of social etiquette using a more contextual living Quran approach; a contribution to Islamic education curricula in fostering the moral character of the younger generation; a foundation for social regulations that support the creation of an Islamic and harmonious environment; and the fostering of healthy, dignified, and Sharia-compliant social interactions, thereby enhancing the quality of social life for Muslims.

METHODS

Methodologically, this article employs a qualitative approach based on the living Quran, which aims to connect the normative text of the Quran with contemporary social realities. This approach was chosen because it is relevant for examining how Quranic principles regarding social etiquette between men and

women are practiced in the lives of the younger generation. The living Quran as a research method has been used in various phenomenological studies to understand the internalization of Quranic values in the social practices of Muslims (Adol et al., 2025; Anidar et al., 2026; Ayubi, 2020; Engkizar et al., 2026; Zubairi et al., 2024). Thus, this method allows the author not only to examine the text but also to observe how the text is brought to life in everyday social interactions.

Method and Type

This article employs a qualitative approach using the living Quran method, which emphasizes a phenomenological study of the social practices of Muslims. This approach not only focuses on normative texts but also connects the Quranic text to contemporary social realities, particularly in the context of cross-gender interactions among the younger generation (Adel et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2024, 2025; Jamshaid & Maryam, 2025).

Data Sources

The data sources for this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through observations of adolescents' social interactions in educational and social settings, as well as interviews with college and high school students regarding their understanding of Islamic social etiquette. Field observations were conducted to examine the phenomenon of *ikhtilath*, the practice of guarding one's gaze, and the application of cross-gender communication ethics (Efendi et al., 2026; Engkizar et al., 2023; Nabila, 2024). Secondary data were obtained from classical and contemporary exegetical literature, hadith, and recent academic studies on Islamic social etiquette, gender relations, and the living Quran methodology (Wahyudi et al., 2025).

Instruments

The primary instruments used were a semi-structured interview guide, field observation notes, and documentation of social and religious activities. These instruments were designed to explore the younger generation's understanding, attitudes, and practices in applying social etiquette in accordance with Islamic law. This approach aligns with the method used by (Nabila, 2024), who emphasize the importance of interview instruments in understanding the practice of *ikhtilath* from the perspective of *maqasid dakwah*.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which involves identifying the main themes that emerged from the observations and interviews, and then linking them to relevant verses of the Quran and hadiths. The analysis process was conducted through the stages of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and verification (Miles, 2015; Saidi et al., 2025). This thematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify consistent patterns in the social practices of the younger generation, such as the awareness of maintaining modesty, the adaptation of Islamic attire, and the ethics of cross-gender communication.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the etiquette of social interaction between men and women in Islam comprises five aspects. These five aspects, as identified by the author, are based on the Quran, hadith, expert opinions, and previous research on this issue. These five aspects are illustrated in the following figure.

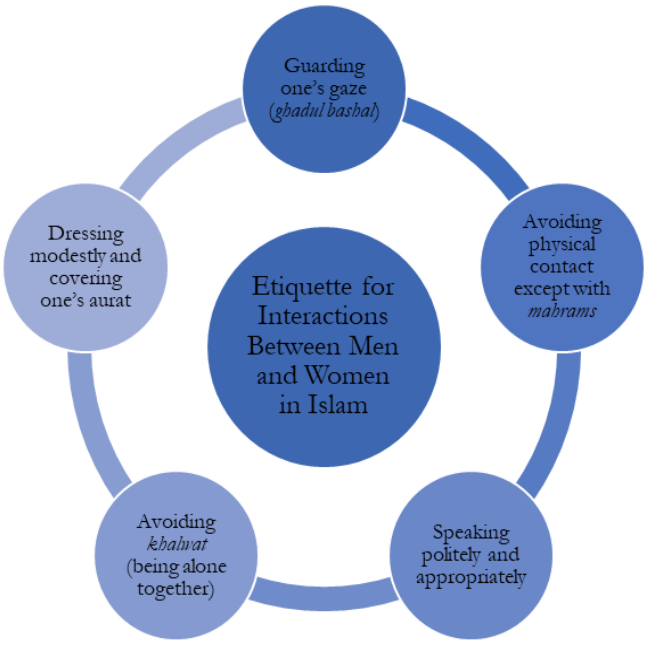


Fig 2. Etiquette for Interactions Between Men and Women in Islam

The researcher will explain the five themes related to Islamic etiquette for social interactions, as outlined in Figure 1 above, based on the Quran, the Hadith, and the opinions of Islamic scholars.

The first theme is guarding one's gaze (*ghadul bashal*); an explanation of this can be found in Surah An-Nur [24]: 30:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْۗ ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا يَصْنَعُوْنَ

Meaning: *Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do* (QS. An-Nur: 30)

In Ibn Kathir's commentary, 6:41 explains, "*This is a command from Allah the Exalted to His believing servants to guard (withhold) their gaze from things that are forbidden to them. Therefore, do not look except at what is permissible to look at. And keep your gaze away from what is forbidden.*" (Alatas, 2022; Ghazali & Adnan, 2022).

Lowering one's gaze is the foundation and means of guarding one's private parts. Therefore, in this verse, Allah the Exalted first mentions the command to lower one's gaze before the command to guard one's private parts (Amin, 2024). If a person lets their gaze wander, they have given free rein to the lusts of their heart. Thus, the eyes can commit disobedience through looking, and that is adultery of the eyes. The Messenger of Allah said:

كُتِبَ عَلَى ابْنِ آدَمَ نَصِيبُهُ مِنَ الزِّنَا، مُدْرِكٌ ذَلِكَ لَا مَحَالَةَ، فَالْعَيْنَانِ زِنَاهُمَا النَّظَرُ، وَالْأُذُنَانِ زِنَاهُمَا الِاسْتِمَاعُ، وَاللِّسَانُ زِنَاهُ الْكَلَامُ، وَالْيَدُ زِنَاهَا الْبَطْشُ، وَالرِّجْلُ زِنَاهَا الْخُطَا، وَالْقَلْبُ يَهْوَى وَيَتَمَنَّى، وَيُصَدِّقُ ذَلِكَ الْفَرْجُ وَيُكَذِّبُهُ

Meaning: *"Indeed, Allah has decreed for the children of Adam their share of adultery. He knows this beyond any doubt. The eyes can commit adultery, and their adultery is (forbidden) gaze. The ears' adultery is (forbidden) listening. The tongue can commit adultery, and its adultery is (forbidden) speech. The hands can commit adultery, and their adultery is (forbidden) touching. The feet can commit adultery, and their form of adultery is taking steps (toward a forbidden place). The heart can desire and fantasize. As for the genitals, they either confirm or deny such desires."* (Narrated by al-Bukhari, no. 6243, and Muslim, no. 2657. The wording is from Muslim's hadith.)

In another hadith, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, said:

الْعَيْنُ تَزْنِي، وَالْقَلْبُ يَزْنِي، فَزِنَا الْعَيْنِ النَّظَرُ، وَزِنَا الْقَلْبِ التَّمَنِّي، وَالْفَرْجُ يُصَدِّقُ مَا هُنَالِكَ أَوْ يُكَذِّبُهُ

Meaning: *"The eyes commit adultery, and the heart commits adultery as well. Adultery of the eyes*

> *is looking at what is forbidden; adultery of the heart is imagining forbidden objects that arouse lust. Meanwhile, the genitals either confirm or deny all of that."* (Narrated by Ahmad, no. 8356. Rated sahih by Shaykh Shu'ayb Al-Arnauth.)

In this hadith, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, mentions the adultery of the eyes first, because this is the foundation of the adultery of the hands, feet, heart, and genitals. The genitals will serve as proof of all these forms of adultery if the act of adultery ultimately takes place, or as a refutation of them if it does not. Therefore, let us lower our gaze. For if we let our gaze wander, it means we have opened the doors to great corruption (Fatihin et al., 2024; Wulan, 2023).

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Quraish Shihab explains that the command to guard one's gaze in this verse does not mean one must completely lower one's gaze and see nothing at all. Rather, one's gaze should be directed selectively that is, avoiding things that might arouse sexual desire or violate Islamic norms (Mubarokah & Bakri, 2023; Syahra, 2024).

Quraish Shihab also emphasized that lowering one's gaze is not only intended to protect oneself from temptation but also to foster a healthy social environment. He added that this verse demonstrates Islam's deep respect for the sanctity and dignity of the individual, as well as providing clear guidelines for avoiding actions that lead to adultery (Fhadila, 2017).

In Tafsir Al-Azhar, Buya Hamka places special emphasis on the importance of guarding one's gaze as the first step in preserving morality. According to him, the eyes are the gateway to the heart, and unguarded gazes can stir up lustful desires that undermine one's faith. He writes that this command applies to both men and women, as both share the responsibility of preserving their personal purity (Hermawati, 2022). Buya Hamka also highlights that guarding one's gaze does not mean isolating oneself from the world, but rather exercising self-control over what one sees. In a modern context, he reminds Muslims to be cautious of various forms of visual temptation, such as media or environments that do not align with Islamic values (Fatihin et al., 2024).

The second theme is covering one's *aurat*: Islam teaches both men and women to dress modestly and cover their aurat. As stated in Surah al-A'raf, verse 26:

يَا بَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِيْ سَوْاٰتِكُمْ وَرِيْشًاۗ وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌۗ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُوْنَ

Meaning: *O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will remember* (QS. Al-A'raf: 26)

In Ibn Kathir's exegesis, it is explained that Allah has bestowed blessings upon His servants; among these, He has provided them with clothing and adornments. Clothing is meant to cover the private parts, while adornments are meant to beautify one's outward appearance. Clothing is a basic necessity, whereas adornments are a secondary need.

Ibn Jarir states that "*ar-riyash*," according to Arabic terminology, refers to household furnishings and clothing accessories used to adorn oneself. Ali ibn Abu Talhah narrated from Ibn Abbas and Imam Bukhari also narrated from him that "*ar-riyash*" refers to material possessions. The same was stated by Mujahid, Urwah ibn al-Zubair, As-Suddi, Adh-Dhahhak, and others not just one person. Al-Aufi narrated from Ibn Abbas that "*ar-risy*" means clothing, while "*al-disy*" means luxury (Ahmawati, 2024).

In the Jalalain commentary, it is explained: "O children of Adam! Indeed, We have sent down to you clothing which We have created for you to cover your private parts, and adornment clothing worn as adornment. (And the garment of piety) that is, righteous deeds and good character; it is read in the *nashab* case because it is attached to the word *libaasan*, and it is read in the *rafa'* case as the subject, while its

predicate is the following phrase: "that is better." (Agustina & Sahputra, 2026; Wati, 2018).

In a hadith narrated by Abu Daud, it is explained:

يَا أَسْمَاءُ إِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْمَحِيضَ لَمْ تَصْلُحْ أَنْ يُرَى مِنْهَا إِلاَّ هَذَا وَهَذَا وَأَشَارَ إِلَى وَجْهِهِ وَكَفَّ

Meaning: *"O Asma', indeed, once a woman has reached puberty (and begun menstruating), nothing of her body should be visible except this and this (pointing to her face and the palms of her hands)."*

A hadith narrated by Muslim also explains:

يَنْظُرُ الرَّجُلُ إِلَى عَوْرَةِ الرَّجُلِ، وَلاَ الْمَرْأَةُ إِلَى عَوْرَةِ الْمَرْأَةِ، وَلاَ يُفْضِي الرَّجُلُ إِلَى الرَّجُلِ فِي الثَّوْبِ الْوَا حِدِ، وَلاَ تُفْضِي الْمَرْأَةُ إِلَى الْمَرْأَةِ فِي الثَّوْبِ الْوَحِدِ

Meaning: *"Let no man look at the private parts of another man, nor let any woman look at the private parts of another woman. A man must not share a single garment with another man, nor must a woman share a single garment with another woman."*

In Tafsir Al-Azhar, Buya Hamka explains that this verse emphasizes two primary functions of clothing: As a covering for private parts: Clothing is a blessing from Allah given to humans to preserve personal dignity and protect the body. As adornment: In addition to its basic function, clothing also serves to enhance one's appearance, as long as it is not excessive or violates Islamic law. However, Buya Hamka emphasizes that physical clothing alone is not sufficient. This verse reminds us that the garment of piety is the best, because piety reflects obedience and a person's relationship with Allah SWT. According to Buya Hamka, the garment of piety is one that is not physically visible, but manifests itself in behavior, faith, and moral character. He also highlights that this verse serves as a warning against being deceived by outward appearances alone. Expensive and beautiful clothing is meaningless if it is not accompanied by good character and obedience to Allah (Hasibuan, 2024; Nurpadilah, 2021).

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Quraish Shihab explains that this verse speaks of Allah's blessing in the form of clothing to meet human physical and spiritual needs. According to him: Physical clothing is used to cover one's private parts and protect the body from heat, cold, or danger. These are basic needs that distinguish humans from other creatures.

The garment of piety is a spiritual garment that protects humans from sinful acts and maintains their relationship with Allah SWT (Dofio et al., 2023; Sholikah, 2022).

Quraish Shihab also emphasizes the importance of balance between outward appearance and inner self. He explains that people often focus too much on physical clothing and neglect the "garments of piety." In fact, the "garments of piety" are the "best garments" that guide people toward salvation in this world and the hereafter.

Furthermore, Quraish Shihab emphasizes that this verse teaches people to be grateful for Allah's blessings both those that are visible, such as physical clothing, and those that are invisible, such as guidance and the inspiration to be pious (Sayuti, 2024).

The third theme avoiding *khalwat* (being alone together) is found in Surah Al-Isra', verse 32:

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا

Meaning: *And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way* (QS. Al-Isra: 32)

The Tafsir Jalalain explains: "*And do not even come near adultery; the prohibition against committing it is even more severe (for indeed, adultery is a vile act) a wicked deed (and the worst of all) the most despicable (course of action) is the act of adultery.*"

عَنْهُ اِلاَّوَمَعَهَاذُوْمَحْرَمٍ وَلاَ رَضِى اللهُ عْنهُ قَالَ : سَمِعْتُ رسول اللهِ صلى الله عليه و سلمَ يخْطُبُ يَقُوْلُ : لاَيَخْلُوَنَّ رَجُلٌ

بِإِمْرَأَةٍ تُسَافِرُ الْمَرْأَةُ الأَمَعَ ذيْ مَحْرَمٍ. فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ. فقال:يارسول الله، إِنَّ إِمْرَأَتِى خَرَجَتْ حَا جَّةً وَ إِنِّى اكْتَتَبْتُ فِى غَزْوَةِ كَذَاوَكَذَا، فَقَالَ : اِنْطَلِقْ فَحُجِّ مَعَ إِ مْرَأَتِكَ. (متفق عليه

Meaning: *'Ibn 'Abbas said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, deliver a sermon: "Let no man be alone with a woman unless her mahram is present, and let no woman travel unless accompanied by her mahram." "A man stood up and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, my wife has set out for the Hajj, and I have enlisted for the battles of such-and-such.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, 'Go and perform the Hajj with your wife.*' (Agreed upon)

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Quraish Shihab highlights the phrase "do not approach" in this verse as a form of very strong emphasis. He explains that Allah not only forbids the act of adultery but also anything that might lead a person to commit such an act. This includes, first, the gaze failing to guard one's gaze from forbidden things can be the beginning of temptation to sin. Second is clothing: failing to dress modestly can provoke fitnah. Third is social life: interactions that are not guided by the values of Islamic law can make it easier for a person to slip into sin.

Quraish Shihab also emphasized that adultery is a destructive act not only morally but also physically, psychologically, and socially. He explained that the phrase "a bad path" (*wasaa'a sabiila*) indicates that adultery leads its perpetrator toward ruin, both in this world and in the hereafter.

In Tafsir Al-Azhar, Buya Hamka explains that this verse is a stern warning from Allah SWT to humanity not only to refrain from committing adultery but also to avoid even approaching it. Buya Hamka emphasizes that "approaching" encompasses any action that could lead a person to adultery, such as: Interactions contrary to Islamic law: Being alone together (*khalwat*), physical contact, or speaking in a flirtatious manner between a man and a woman who are not mahram. Environments that encourage adultery: Getting into the habit of being in places or situations that provoke lust, such as non-Islamic forms of entertainment (Tsalis, 2019).

According to Buya Hamka, adultery is one of the major sins that destroys the honor of individuals, families, and society. He also emphasized that adultery not only affects the perpetrators but also causes social harm, such as the breakdown of families, children left without protection, and the loss of a sense of security in society. He linked the prohibition against adultery to the importance of maintaining moral character and self-control, since carnal desire is one of the greatest temptations that can undermine a person's faith (Fatihin et al., 2024).

The fourth theme speaking appropriately and with propriety is found in Surah al-Ahzab, verse 32.

يٰنِسَآءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَاَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَآءِ اِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِيْ فِيْ قَلْبِهٖ مَرَضٌ وَّقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًاۚ

Meaning: *O wives of the Prophet, you are not like anyone among women. If you fear Allah, then do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech* (QS. Al-Ahzab: 32)

This verse explains the proper etiquette when speaking with members of the opposite sex who are not *mahrams* whether in person, via text, or on social media. To protect themselves from slander, women and men who converse or exchange messages with members of the opposite sex who are not *mahrams* should exercise self-restraint.

The Tafsir Jalalain explains: "O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other group of women if you are God-fearing for indeed, you are noble women. (So do not be submissive in your speech) with men (lest those with sickness in their hearts) that is, hypocrisy (be tempted, and speak kindly) without being submissive.

In Ibn Kathir's commentary, it is explained: "*O wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women if you are God-fearing.*" So do not be soft in speech, lest those with sickness

in their hearts be tempted; speak kindly; stay in your homes; do not adorn yourselves or behave like the women of the pre-Islamic era; establish prayer; pay zakat; and obey Allah and His Messenger.

If a joke involves a conversation between members of the opposite sex, there is bound to be an element of attraction. An ordinary conversation can become something special if Satan interferes, so remain vigilant and do not let your guard down for Satan does not lead us astray directly but rather gradually. Regarding the matter of speech alone, the Prophet once said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَ اليَوْمِ الأَخِرِ فَلْيَقُوْلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُوتِ

Meaning: *"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak kindly or remain silent."*

In essence, when communicating with the opposite sex, there are etiquettes that must be observed especially by Muslim women including: not softening one's voice, avoiding seclusion, speaking kindly, and lowering one's gaze.

In Quraish Shihab's exegesis, it is explained that: "*O wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women if you are God-fearing.*" So do not speak in a submissive tone that might arouse the desires of those with sickness in their hearts; speak kindly; remain in your homes; do not adorn yourselves or behave like the people of the pre-Islamic era; establish prayer; pay zakat; and obey Allah and His Messenger.

Indeed, Allah intends to remove sin from you, O People of the House, and to purify you most thoroughly. And remember what is recited in your homes from the verses of Allah and the wisdom (Sunnah of your Prophet). Indeed, Allah is Most Gentle and All-Knowing. What is mentioned in these verses constitutes the ethical conduct recommended by Allah to the Prophet's wives, while the women of His community follow their example in this regard. For this reason, Allah says to the Prophet's wives that if they fear Allah in accordance with what He has commanded them, then indeed no woman is their equal, and no woman can match their virtue and status.

In the Tafsir al-Jalalain, it is explained: "*O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other group of women; if you are God-fearing, for indeed you are noble women. (So do not be submissive in speech) toward men (lest those with sickness in their hearts that is, hypocrisy be tempted), and speak kindly without being submissive.*

The fifth theme not having physical contact with non-*mahrams* is found in Surah al-Mulk, verse 14:

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ ٱللَّطِيفُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ

Meaning: *Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?* (QS. Al-Mulk: 14)

In Ibn Kathir's Tafsir, it is explained: Indeed, those who fear their Lord whom they cannot see will receive forgiveness and a great reward. And whether you conceal your words or utter them aloud truly, He is All-Knowing of what is in the hearts. Does not Allah, who created all things, know (what you utter and what you conceal)? And He is the Subtle, the All-Knowing. It is He who has made the earth easy for you, so travel through its regions and partake of His provision. And to Him alone will you be resurrected. Allah describes the one who fears his Lord's judgment regarding what lies between him and his Lord; when he is alone, unknown to others, he restrains himself from sinful acts and, instead, performs acts of obedience, even though no one else is watching. For he realizes that Allah sees him and that Allah will grant him forgiveness and a great reward. That is, Allah will erase his sins and reward him with abundant blessings.

The Tafsir Jalalain explains: "*Does the Lord who created you not know*" what you keep secret that is, does His knowledge not extend to such matters (while He is the Subtle) in His knowledge (and the All-Aware) (Adhim, 2023). A hadith explaining the prohibition against physical contact between men and women who are not *mahrams*.

عَنْ أَبِي العَلاَءِ حَدَّثَنِي مَعْقِلُ بْنُ يَسَارٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَأَنْ يُطْعَنَ فِي رَأْسِ رَجُلٍ بِمِخْيَطٍ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يَمَسَّ امْرَأَةً لَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ (رواه الطبراني والبيهقي ورجال الطبراني ثقات رجال الصحيح)

Meaning: *Abu 'Ala narrated to me from Ma'qil bin Yasar (as reported), who said: The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "It would be better for a man to have an iron stake driven through his head than to touch a woman who is not his mahram"* [Narrated by ath-Thabrani in al-Mu'jam al-Kabir 20: 212].

In Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Quraish Shihab explains that this verse serves as a logical argument that strengthens faith. Allah, as the Creator of the universe, certainly knows every aspect of His creation (Makatangin, 2015). He also highlights Allah's attribute of being the most gentle (*Lathif*), meaning that Allah knows even the most minute and hidden details, as well as the All-Knowing (*Khabir*), meaning that Allah understands the consequences of everything. Quraish Shihab invites readers to reflect on this verse as a form of self-introspection so that people always act based on the awareness that Allah knows everything. Both emphasize the importance of understanding that Allah is All-Knowing, so that people must behave with full awareness of Allah's presence and oversight.

In his exegesis, Buya Hamka explains that this verse reminds humanity that Allah, as the Creator, certainly knows everything both what is visible and what is hidden. He emphasizes Allah's attributes of being the Most Subtle (*Lathif*) and the All-Knowing (*Khabir*), indicating that Allah not only understands great matters but also the small and hidden things within the human heart. Buya Hamka invites readers to reflect on the fact that Allah knows every human intention and action, so people must always be mindful of His watchful eye (Iwani et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study examined the etiquette of social interaction between men and women in Islam through five fundamental aspects derived from the Quran, Hadith, and scholarly interpretations: lowering the gaze (*ghadul bashar*), covering the *aurat*, avoiding *khalwat*, speaking appropriately, and refraining from physical contact with non-mahram individuals. These five dimensions provide a comprehensive ethical framework that encompasses physical, moral, and spiritual conduct, thereby fostering a society characterized by dignity, purity, and social harmony. In addressing the article's objective, the findings reaffirm the relevance of Quranic principles in guiding contemporary youth to navigate modern social challenges while preserving Islamic identity and values.

The novelty of this article lies in its application of the living Quran approach, which bridges normative textual analysis with empirical observation of youth social practices. Unlike prior studies that remain largely textual or doctrinal, this research demonstrates how Quranic values are internalized in everyday interactions, such as conscious efforts to lower the gaze, adopt modest dress codes, and maintain respectful communication across genders. The implications highlight the necessity of integrating Quranic ethics into character education, youth moral development, and Islamic-based social policy. Such integration not only enriches theoretical discourse on Islamic etiquette but also contributes to the creation of healthy, dignified, and spiritually grounded social environments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this research.

DECLARATIONS

Author contribution

Muhammad Khatami: data curation, writing-original draft preparation, analysis, **Fauzi Akmal:** conceptualization, methodology, **Nurhaya Azzahra**: visualization, and editing.

AI Statement

The data and the grammatical structure in this article have been validated and verified by English language experts and no AI-generated sentences are included in this article.

Funding statement

The author(s) declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that this research was conducted without any conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical clearance

The research company has agreed to carry out the research and is willing if the results of this research are published.

Publisher's and Journal's Note

Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta in collaboration with Asosiasi Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Tafsir (AIAT) as the publisher and Editor of Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir state that there is no conflict of interest towards this article publication.

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