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Original Research

Reinterpreting Tasabbuh in the Context of the Boycott Movement Against Israeli-Linked Products: A Living Hadith Approach

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Abstract: This study addresses a pressing contemporary issue in Muslim communities: the ethical and jurisprudential dilemma surrounding the boycott of products linked to Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. While such boycotts—endorsed by fatwas like MUI No. 83/2023—are framed as acts of economic solidarity, a critical concern arises when Muslims produce alternative goods that resemble boycotted items: does this constitute tasabbuh (imitation of non-Muslims), which is prohibited in several hadiths? The research aims to reinterpret the classical concept of tasabbuh within the framework of a "living hadith" approach, examining whether functional imitation—without intent to emulate beliefs or identity—violates Islamic norms. Using a qualitative methodology, the study combines textual analysis of primary hadith sources (including Sunan Abi Dawud, Sahih al-Bukhari, and Musnad Ahmad) with empirical observation of Muslim consumer behavior and fatwa discourse in Indonesia. Findings reveal that tasabbuh is primarily defined by intention (niyyah) and context, not mere formal similarity. When imitation serves a legitimate purpose—such as resisting injustice, ensuring economic self-reliance, or fulfilling communal welfare—it falls outside the scope of prohibited tasabbuh. This reinterpretation aligns with higher objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharīʿah) and classical legal maxims (qawāʿid fiqhiyyah), particularly the principle that "matters are judged by their intentions." The study's novelty lies in bridging textual hermeneutics with real-world activism, offering a nuanced ethical framework for Muslim economic resistance. It is recommended that Islamic institutions and scholars issue clearer guidelines distinguishing between prohibited cultural imitation and permissible functional replication, especially in contexts of political and economic justice. Such clarity can empower Muslim communities to engage in ethical consumerism without compromising religious identity.

Keywords: Tasabbuh; Living Hadith; Boycott Movement; Islamic Ethics; Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah

1. Introduction

In recent years, the boycott movement against products deemed to support Israel's occupation of Palestine has become a widespread social phenomenon among Muslims globally, including in Indonesia. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) Number 83 of 2023 explicitly encourages Muslims to avoid transactions with products affiliated with Zionism and Israeli colonialism (An Noor, 2024). This movement is not only political, but is also considered a form of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar in the economic realm. However, the effectiveness of the boycott is highly dependent on the availability of substitute products that are not related to Israel. This is where the dilemma arises: when Muslims produce goods that in form or function resemble the products that are boycotted, does that act fall under the prohibition of tasabbuh—i.e., imitating non-Muslim groups? This phenomenon creates tension between political solidarity and normative adherence to the teachings of the hadith, especially in the midst of globalization, which complicates the boundaries of religious identity (Akbar, 2023).

The study of tasabbuh in Islamic literature generally focuses on aspects of identity, creed, and worship, with a strict textual approach. A number of scholars, especially from the Salafi circle, emphasize the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims in all forms as an effort to maintain the purity of Islamic identity (Khamdan, 2018; Jati, 2023). This approach is often symbolic—such as the emphasis on beards, headscarves, or clothing—and tends to ignore the contemporary socio-economic context. On the other hand, thinkers such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Ibn 'Ashur offer a more contextual approach, emphasizing the principle of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah in interpreting the prohibition of tasabbuh (as quoted in the text). However, the academic literature that specifically links tasabbuh to the economic boycott movement—especially in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—is still very limited. Most previous studies have discussed boycotts as a political strategy or form of iqtisādī jihad, without exploring the implications of fiqh on the concept of cultural imitation (Uddin et al., 2024). As a result, there is a gap in understanding how the hadith text interacts with modern economic and political realities.

This article aims to fill this void by offering a reinterpretation of the concept of tasabbuh in the context of the pro-Israel product boycott movement through the lens of the living hadith approach. Different from conventional textual studies, this study not only analyzes the sanad and matan of the hadith, but also traces how the hadith "lives" in the social practices of contemporary Muslims—particularly in response to global injustice. The main focus is to answer the question: can producing substitute goods that in form resemble the boycotted product be categorized as prohibited tasabbuh? By combining classical hadith analysis with empirical observations of fatwa discourse and Muslim consumer behavior in Indonesia, this study aims to provide relevant, contextual, and applicable fiqh guidance. The goal is not only to enrich the hermeneutic discourse of hadith but also to provide an ethical basis for the economic activism of the ummah, thereby defending the collective rights of Muslims in Palestine.

This article argues that the prohibition of tasabbuh does not apply absolutely, but rather depends on the intention, context, and purpose behind the act of resembling another party. Referring to the fiqh rule "al-umūr bi maqāṣidihā" (all things are determined by their intentions), the author hypothesizes that the production of alternative goods—even if in form similar to Israeli products—does not constitute tasabbuh as long as it is done for shari'a purposes, such as upholding justice, protecting the property of the people, or cutting off economic support for colonialism. This argument is supported by the Prophet Muhammad's own practices, such as the use of Roman imperial stamps or the trench strategy (Khandaq) adopted from Persia—evidence that imitating the non-religious aspects of non-Muslims is permissible if it brings benefits (as mentioned in the text). Thus, this article rejects the rigid dichotomy between "imitating" and "different", and instead offers an ethical framework that distinguishes between identity-damaging tasabbuh and tamayyuz (distinction) that is expressed through principled economic action.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Concept of Tasabbuh in Classical and Contemporary Literature

The prohibition of tasabbuh—imitating or resembling non-Muslim groups—is a central issue in the discourse of Muslim religious identity. In classical literature, this concept is often associated with efforts to maintain the purity of faith and worship practices. The most frequently quoted hadith is narrated by Abu Dawud (No. 4031): "Man tashabbaha bi qawmin fa huwa minhum" ("Whoever resembles a people, he belongs to their group") (Assimhastany, 1996). This hadith is also strengthened by the narrations of Ibn Umar, Hudzaifah ibn al-Yaman, and Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, which are found in Musnad Ahmad, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, and Shu'ab al-Iman by al-Baihaqi (Al-Baihaqi, 1992; Al-Thabrani, 1992). Mufasirs such as Imam al-Mahalli and Imam al-Suyuthi in Tafsir Jalalain emphasize that believers should not resemble the People of the Book in matters related to beliefs or rituals, as reflected in the commentary of Surah Al-Hadid verse 16 (Al Mahalli & As Suyuthi, 2000). This prohibition is also reinforced by Surah Al-Baqarah verse 120, which warns that Jews and Christians will not be satisfied until Muslims follow their religion (Al Wahidi, 2003).

However, in the development of contemporary thought, a number of scholars have begun to distinguish between tasabbuh in the aspects of faith and worship—which are absolutely forbidden—and tasabbuh in the social, cultural, or technical aspects—which are contextual. Al-Luwayhiq (1996) emphasized that an act cannot be categorized as a forbidden tasabbuh if it is not accompanied by the intention to imitate the identity or beliefs of another party. This approach aligns with the fiqh principle of "al-umūr bi maqāṣidihā" (everything is determined by its intention), as narrated in the hadiths of Bukhari and Muslim from Umar bin Khattab (Al-Asqalany, 1986; Al-Hajjaj, 2003). In the context of globalization, the boundaries between identity and technical adaptation are increasingly blurred, making a purely textual understanding of tasabbuh inadequate. Therefore, reinterpretation is necessary to distinguish between imitation that undermines identity and functional adoption that actually enhances the sovereignty of the people.

2.2. Boycott as an Economic and Political Strategy in an Islamic Perspective

The boycott movement is not a new phenomenon in Islamic history; it has strong historical roots dating back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. One of the early examples was the economic boycott of the Banu Qaynuqa and the Banu Nadhir—Jewish communities in Medina that were considered to have betrayed the agreement with Muslims (An Noor, 2024). This action is not just a social sanction, but part of a political strategy and community defense. In the modern context, the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel is adopted by many global Muslim communities as a form of non-violent resistance to the occupation of Palestine. Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) Number 83 of 2023 explicitly supports the boycott of products affiliated with Zionism and Israeli colonialism, arguing that it is part of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar in the economic realm (An Noor, 2024). The boycott was seen not only as a political act, but also as a form of iqtisādī jihad—an economic struggle to protect the collective rights of Muslims.

From a sharia perspective, the boycott can be attributed to the principles of hisbah (social supervision) and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah, especially in safeguarding the souls (hifẓ al-nafs) and property (hifẓ al-māl) of the oppressed. Uddin et al. (2024) note that, in Abu A'la Al-Maududi's view, Islam does not separate religion, the world, and the state; therefore, economic action has a theological and political dimension. The boycott of Israeli products is not just a choice of consumption, but an expression of transnational solidarity rooted in the value of justice and the rejection of oppression. However, the effectiveness of the boycott depends heavily on the availability of alternatives. This is where the dilemma arises: does producing substitute goods that are in shape similar to Israeli products include tasabbuh? This question necessitates a reevaluation of the hadith prohibiting tasabbuh within the context of contemporary economic ethics, not merely in the symbolic framework of identity.

2.3. Living Hadith: A Contextual Hermeneutic Approach to Hadith

The concept of living hadith offers a new paradigm in the study of hadith, where the text is not understood statically but rather as a dynamic guideline that is "alive" in the social practice of the ummah. This approach emphasizes that hadith must be understood not only through sanad and matan, but also through the way Muslims actualize it in the face of the challenges of their time. In the context of boycotting Israeli products, the hadith on tasabbuh is no longer seen as a rigid prohibition against any form of imitation, but rather as an ethical principle that emphasizes intention, context, and social impact. As explained in the text, living hadith can be categorized into three forms: normative (as a legal basis), contextual (as a legitimacy of social movements), and symbolic (as moral inspiration) (An Noor, 2024). This approach enables a responsive reinterpretation of the hadith in light of global realities, including structural injustices and the international political economy.

Thinkers such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Ibn 'Ashur—who are quoted in the text—became intellectual representations of this contextual approach. They emphasized that the purpose of sharia (maqāṣid al-sharīʿah) should be the main axis in interpreting the text, including the hadith prohibiting tasabbuh. If an action—such as producing alternative goods—aims to protect the rights of the Palestinian people and cut off the flow of funds to the

occupation machinery, then it is in line with the spirit of sharia, not contrary to it. In the framework of living hadith, hadith is not only a legacy of the past, but a tool to build justice in the present. Therefore, the reinterpretation of tasabbuh in the context of the boycott is not an aberration, but an authentic actualization of prophetic values in the face of global injustice. This approach expands the horizon of hadith study from the textual realm to the realm of social ethics and transnational activism.

3. Methods

3.1 Material Objects

The material object of this research includes two dimensions: first, the hadith texts that prohibit tasabbuh, especially the narrations of Ibn Umar, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, and Hudzaifah Ibn al-Yaman, documented in Sunan Abi Dawud (No. 4031), Musnad Ahmad, Sahih al-Bukhari, and Shu'ab al-Iman (Assimhastany, 1996; Al-Baihaqy, 1992; Ash-Syaibany, 2000). Second, the social practices of contemporary Muslims in responding to the movement to boycott products that are considered to support Israel's occupation of Palestine, as directed by MUI Fatwa No. 83 of 2023 (An Noor, 2024). These two objects were chosen because they represent the interaction between normative texts and the ethical realities of the global economy.

3.2 Research Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with a living hadith study design—a methodological framework that emphasizes how hadith is not only studied as a dead text, but is actualized in the social practices of the ummah (Brown, 2021; Sirry, 2014). This design enables researchers to integrate textual hermeneutics with empirical investigations of Muslim collective discourse and actions within the context of boycotts. This approach is relevant because the issue of tasabbuh is no longer purely symbolic, but is instead related to economic and political decisions that require reinterpretation in light of the context and objectives of sharia.

3.3 Data Source

The primary data consisted of hadith texts related to tasabbuh and in-depth interviews with 12 key informants—including scholars who are members of the MUI Fatwa Commission, scholars of hadith studies, and activists of the boycott movement in Jakarta and Yogyakarta—who were selected through purposive sampling. Secondary data include MUI fatwas, classical jurisprudence literature (such as Al-Luwayhiq, 1996), academic journals on Islamic consumption ethics, as well as reports from the BDS Movement and Who Profits? for verification of the company's affiliation with Israel. These sources were chosen because they provide complementary normative, empirical, and global perspectives.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was carried out through documentation, semi-structured interviews, and media analysis. The documentation includes takhrij and sharia hadith using classical methods to ensure the validity of the sanad and the historical context (Al-Asqalany, 1986). The interviews were conducted online and offline during the January–March 2025 period, with thematic guidelines that included perceptions of tasabbuh, justification for boycotts, and attitudes towards the production of substitute goods. In addition, social media discourse analysis (Instagram, Twitter/X) was used to capture public representation of the boycott movement, following a discourse analysis approach in the style of Fairclough (1995).

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis combines content analysis of hadith texts and critical discourse analysis (CDA) of social narratives (Fairclough, 1995). Content analysis is used to identify literal meanings, historical contexts, and

comparative interpretations by classical and contemporary scholars (Al Hajjaj, 2003). Meanwhile, the CDA helped uncover how the ban on tasabbuh was reconstructed in the boycott discourse as a form of transnational solidarity and economic resistance. The integration of these two methods allows researchers not only to understand "what the hadith says", but also "how the hadith is used" in constructing the collective ethics of contemporary Muslims.

4. Results

4.1. The Meaning of Tasabbuh in the Context of Hadith and the Development of Fiqh Hermeneutics

Linguistically, tasabbuh comes from the root of the word sy-b-h, which means "to resemble" or "to be similar" (Faris, 1990). In fiqh usage, this term refers to the act of imitating a non-Muslim group in a particular belief, worship, or custom. The prohibition of tasabbuh is based on several hadiths scattered throughout authoritative books, with varied redactions but a consistent core message. As shown in **Table 1 (Comparison of Matan Hadith Tasabbuh**), at least five major narrations—from Abu Dawud (No. 4031), al-Thabrani (No. 8327), al-Baihaqy (No. 1199), Ahmad bin Hanbal (2/50), and al-Tirmidhi (No. 2695)—use the phrase "man tashabbaha bi qawmin fa huwa minhum" ("Whoever resembles a people, he belongs to their class"). Differences in the context of delivery are also noticeable: al-Tirmidhi places it in the chapter on salam, while Abu Dawud places it in the chapter on clothing, illustrating the flexibility of applying this prohibition in various social domains.

Table 1. Comparison of *Matan* Hadith *Tasabbuh*

No	Narrator	Number	Matan
Tasabbuh			
1	Tirmidzi	2695	لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِغَيْرِنَا لاَ تشبهوا باليهود ولا بالنصارى فإن تسليم اليهودِ الإشارةُ بالأَصابِعِ وتسليمَ النصارَى الإشارةُ بالأَكُفِّ
2	Dawud	4031	مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُم
3	Thabrany	8327	مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُم
4	Al-Baihaqy	1199	بُعِثْتُ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ السَّاعَةِ بِالسَّيْفِ، حَتَّى يُعْبَدَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَجُعِلَ رِزْقِي تَحْتَ ظِلِّ رُمْحِي، وَجُعِلَ الذِّلَّةُ وَالصَّغَارُ عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَ أَمْرِي، وَمَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ
5	Ahmad bin Hanbal	2/50	بُعِثْتُ بِالسَّيْفِ حَتَّى يُعْبَدَ اللَّهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَجُعِلَ رِزْقِي تَحْتَ ظِلِّ رُمْحِي، وَجُعِلَ الذِّلَّةُ وَالصَّغَارُ عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَ أَمْرِي، وَمَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ
Ittiba'			
1	Bukhari	7319	لاَ تَقُوْمُ السّاعة حتّى تأخذ أمّتي بأخذ القرون قبلها شبراً بشبرٍ وذِراعاً بذراعٍ فقيل يا رسول الله كفارس والروم؟ فقال ومِنَ النَّاسُ إلّا أولئك
2		7320	لَتَتْبَعُنَّ سَنَنَ من كان قَبْلَكُمْ شِبْرًا شِبْرًا وَذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ حَتَّى لَوْ دَخَلُوْا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ تَبِعْتُمُوْهُمْ. قُلْنَا: يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ، اَلْيَهُوْدُ وَالنَّصَارَى؟ قَالَ: فَمَنْ؟
3	Muslim	2669	لَتَتْبَعُنَّ سَنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ شِبْرًا بِشِبْرٍ وَذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ حَتَّى لَوْ دَخَلُوْا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ تَبِعْتُمُوْهُمْ. قُلْنَا: يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ، اَلْيَهُوْدُ وَالنَّصَارَى؟. قَالَ: فَمَنْ؟

Further analysis of the sanad (**see Table 2: Comparison of Hadith Sanad**) reveals that the majority of the narrations have ittishal al-sanad (the connection of the chain of narration) and involve tsiqah (trusted) narrators such as Zaid bin Aslam, 'Atho' bin Yasar, and Abu Munib al-Jurasyi. The only exception is the narration of al-Tirmidhi (No. 2695), which involves Ibn Lahi'ah—a narrator who is considered majhul (unknown)—so that his degree is dha'if (weak). However, this weakness is compensated by the existence of shahawahid (reinforcer) from other paths, so

that overall the hadith of tasabbuh reaches the degree of hasan li ghayrihi (either because of the reinforcer) or even mutawatir ma'nawi (meaning mutawatir) because of the many paths that reinforce each other (Assimhastany, 1996; Al-Thabrani, 1992; Al-Baihaqy, 1992).

Table 2. Comparison of *Sanad* Hadith Schemes (*Naqd Isnad*)

No	Mukharij ul Hadis	Narrator 1	Narrator 2	Narrator 3	Narrator 4	Narrator 5	Narrator 6 dst
		Sanad	Sanad	Sanad	Sanad	Sanad	Sanad
1	Bukhari	Abu Hurairah	Ibnu Abi Dzaab Al-Maqbary	Ahmad bin Yunus			
		Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri	'Atho' bin Yasar	Zaid bin Aslam	Abu Umar Shon'any Al-Yamani	Muhammad bin Abdul Aziz	
2	Muslim	Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri	'Atho' bin Yasar	Zaid bin Aslam	Hafsh bin Maisaroh	Suwaid bin Sa'id	
		Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri	'Atho' bin Yasar	Zaid bin Aslam	Muhammad bin Muthorfi (Abu Ghossan)	Sa'id bin Abi Maryam	
3	Tirmidzi	Jadd Amri bin Syu'aib	Abu Amri bin Syua'aib	Amri bin Syua'ib	Ibn Lahi'ah	Qutaibah	
4	Dawud	Ibnu Umar	Abi Munib Al-Jurasiyyi	Hassan bin Athiyyah	Abdurrahman bin Tsabit	Abu Nadhr (Hasyim bin Al Qasim bin Muslim bin Miqsam)	Usman bin Abi Syaibah (Usman bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Usman)
5	Thabrani	Hudzaifah bin Yaman	Abi Ubaidah bin Hudzaifah	Muhammad bin Sirrin	Hisyam bin Hassan	Ali bin Ghurab	Abdullah bin Al-Khattab dari Muhammad bin Marzuqi

Therefore, the understanding of tasabbuh should not be absolute textual, but must consider the intention (niyyah), the context (siyaq), and the purpose (maqṣad). As emphasized by Al-Luwayhiq (1996), an action does not constitute prohibited tasabbuh if it is not accompanied by the intention to imitate the identity or beliefs of another party. This principle is in line with the hadith of Umar bin Khattab: "Innama al-a'māl bi al-niyyāt" ("Indeed, all deeds depend on his intention") (Al-Asqalany, 1986; Al-Hajjaj, 2003). Thus, tasabbuh is not a prohibition against any form of similarity, but against imitation that blurs the boundaries of the theological and ethical identity of Muslims.

4.2. Boycotting Pro-Israel Products: Between Transnational Solidarity and Islamic Consumption Ethics

The boycott movement against products deemed to support Israel's occupation of Palestine has become a normatively recognized form of iqtisādī (economic struggle) jihad in Islam. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) Number 83 of 2023 explicitly encourages Muslims to avoid transactions with products affiliated with Zionism and Israeli colonialism (An Noor, 2024). This boycott is not only a political act, but also a manifestation of the principle of hisbah—the obligation of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar in the economic realm. In historical perspective, a similar strategy was employed by the Prophet Muhammad against the Banu Qaynuqa and the Banu Nadhir, who were considered to have betrayed the covenant (An Noor, 2024), demonstrating that the boycott has historical roots in prophetic practice.

In a global context, this movement aligns with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, which seeks to exert non-violent economic pressure on Israel. However, the effectiveness of the boycott depends heavily on the availability of alternatives. In Indonesia, Muslim consumers tend to boycott multinational brands such as Unilever, Puma, HP, KFC, Starbucks, Coca-Cola, and Nestlé—assuming that these brands support Israel (An Noor, 2024). While these claims need to be verified through independent sources, such as Profits, the collective intention of the ummah to cut off the flow of funds to the occupation machinery reflects a high level of ethical awareness. Boycott is understood not as a form of hostility to individuals, but as a rejection of a system of structural injustice.

From the perspective of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah, the boycott can be justified as an effort to preserve the hifẓ al-nafs (protecting the soul) and hifẓ al-māl (protecting property) of the oppressed Palestinian people. Abu A'la Al-Maududi emphasized that Islam does not separate religion from politics and economics; therefore, consumption decisions have a theological and political dimension (Uddin et al., 2024). Within this framework, choosing products that do not support Israel is not just a personal preference but a form of collective moral responsibility. Thus, the boycott is part of the living hadith—the actualization of prophetic values in the face of global injustice.

4.3. The Production of Substitute Goods as Tamayyuz, Not Tasabbuh: A Reinterpretation Based on Maqāṣid and Qawāʿid Fiqhiyyah

One of the main dilemmas in the boycott movement is whether producing substitute goods that in form or function resemble Israeli products constitutes a form of tasabbuh. The answer to this research is no, as long as the intention and goal are in accordance with Sharia. The practice of the Prophet Muhammad himself provides an important precedent. For example, during the Battle of Khandaq, the Prophet accepted Salman Al-Farisi's proposal to dig trenches—a Persian military strategy foreign to the Arabs—in order to protect Medina from the Quraysh attacks (Hisham, 1995). Similarly, the Prophet established an official seal with the inscription "Muhammad the Prophet" after observing the practice of the Roman and Persian empires, which required a seal on official letters (At-Tirmidhi, 2000; Demichelis, 2021). Both of these examples show that imitating the non-religious aspects of non-Muslims is permissible if it brings benefits.

Furthermore, the Prophet also practiced tamayyuz (identity differentiation) through cultural modification. Upon learning that the Jews fasted on the day of 'Ashura to commemorate the salvation of Moses, the Prophet said: "We have more right to Moses than to you", and then commanded Muslims to fast on that day, but by adding one day before or after it to be different from Jewish practice (Al-Hajjaj, 2003). This shows that Islam does not reject all forms of equality, but emphasizes distinctions in intention and expression. In the context of a boycott, producing substitute goods is not a form of tasabbuh, but tamayyuz—an effort to build the economic independence of the ummah while maintaining ethical integrity.

This reinterpretation is supported by three main qawāʿid fiqhiyyah. First, "al-umūr bi maqāṣidihā" (all things are determined by his intention)—if his intention is to defend Palestine, then such an action does not constitute tasabbuh. Second, "al-dharāri' yujabu sadduhā" (the means to haram must be closed), but if there is a greater benefit—such as

cutting off economic support for colonialism—then the closure can be relaxed. Third, the principle of darūrah (emergency): when boycott is the only effective way to fight injustice, then alternative production becomes a need for sharia (An-Nadwi, 2008). Thus, the reinterpretation of tasabbuh in this context is not an aberration, but an authentic actualization of sharia values in the face of global reality.

5. Discussion

This study found that the prohibition of tasabbuh—as stated in a number of hadiths such as the narration of Abu Dawud (No. 4031), al-Thabrani (No. 8327), and al-Baihaqy (No. 1199)—is not absolute, but depends on the intention (niyyah), context, and purpose. Analysis of sanad and matan shows that the majority of the narrations have the degree of sahih or hasan li ghayrihi, except for the narration of al-Tirmidhi (No. 2695), which is dha'if but corroborated by shahawahid. The main finding states that producing substitutes that in shape resemble Israeli products is not considered taboo, as long as the intention is to defend the rights of the Palestinian people and cut off economic support for the occupation. Similar practices were carried out by the Prophet Muhammad, such as the use of stamps in the style of the Roman Empire, the trench strategy (Khandaq) from Persia, and the 'Ashura fast with modifications. All three point out that imitating the non-religious aspects of non-Muslims is permissible if it brings benefits. Thus, the pro-Israel boycott movement and its alternative production are in fact a form of tamayyuz (differentiation of identity through ethical actions), not tasabbuh.

These findings reveal the tension between textual and contextual understandings in Islamic law. Salafi groups tend to reject any form of similarity with non-Muslims as a form of identity violation (Khamdan, 2018; Jati, 2023), while the maqāṣid-based approach emphasizes that the prohibition of tasabbuh aims to protect the faith, not limit technical adaptation. Critical reflection shows that fear of tasabbuh is often rooted in colonial trauma—in which Muslim identity is perceived as threatened by Western culture—but in the context of boycotts, the opposite is true: Muslims actively take over economic agency by producing alternatives. This is not passive imitation, but active reproduction based on transnational solidarity. Furthermore, these results challenge the rigid dichotomy between "Islam" and "Western", as it shows that technical aspects—such as product design or business strategy—can be separated from their ideological value. Thus, tasabbuh is not a matter of form, but a matter of ethical orientation and collective goals.

The main interpretation of this study is that tasabbuh should be understood through the prism of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah and qawāʿid fiqhiyyah. First, the rule of "al-umūr bi maqāṣidihā" (all things are determined by their intentions) affirms that the production of substitute goods does not constitute tasabbuh if the intention is justice and resistance to oppression. Second, the principle of sadd al-dharā'i' (closing the means to haram) actually supports the boycott, because transactions with Israeli products can be a means of supporting tyranny. Third, in conditions of darūrah (state of emergency)—such as the continued occupation of Palestine—actions that would normally be avoided may become mandatory. This interpretation is in line with the Prophet's practice of modifying Jewish tradition (fasting 'Ashura) and adopting the Persian military strategy (Khandaq), not to imitate, but to Islamize the practice through intention and modification. Thus, tasabbuh is not a prohibition against formal equality, but rather against surrendering one's moral identity to those who are contrary to Islamic values.

This finding expands the academic discourse that has tended to limit tasabbuh to symbolic aspects (hijab, beard) or ritual (Al-Luwayhiq, 1996). In contrast to previous studies that viewed boycotts solely as a political strategy (Uddin et al., 2024), this study integrates them with hadith hermeneutics, thereby providing a robust normative basis. The approach of living hadith used is also in line with the thought of Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Ibn 'Ashur—who emphasized the contextualization of texts based on maqāṣid—but further applies it to global economic issues. In addition, this study challenges the assumption that tasabbuh always undermines identity; On the contrary, in the context of boycott, the similarity of forms becomes a tool of ethical distinction (tamayyuz). This differs from the Salafi approach, which considers any likeness a threat (Khamdan, 2018), and is closer to Walisongo's strategy in Islam Nusantara, which

transforms local traditions (such as the bedug and prayer) into a medium of da'wah without compromising the essence of Islam (An Noor, 2024).

The main implication of this study is the need for a follow-up fatwa from authoritative institutions such as the MUI that distinguishes between prohibited tasabbuh and the production of ethical alternatives. The first recommendation is for scholars and academics to develop practical guidelines for Muslim MSME actors on how to produce substitute goods that comply with Sharia principles. Second, Islamic research institutions need to verify the company's affiliation with Israel through independent sources (e.g., Who Profits?) to avoid misinformation-based boycotts. Third, this living hadith approach can be applied to other issues, such as technology, education, or governance, where Muslims need to adapt without losing their identity. Finally, further research is suggested to explore the perceptions of global Muslim consumers towards boycotts and alternative production, as well as their economic impact on the Palestinian community. Thus, the reinterpretation of tasabbuh is not only a theological discourse, but also a foundation for a just contemporary Islamic economic ethics.

6. Conclusion

This study found that the prohibition of tasabbuh—as stated in hadiths such as the narration of Ibn Umar (Abu Dawud, No. 4031), Hudzaifah (al-Thabrani, No. 8327), and Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (Bukhari-Muslim)—is not absolute, but rather depends on intention, context, and purpose. Analysis of sanad and matan shows that the majority of the narrations have the degree of sahih or hasan li ghayrihi, except for the narration of al-Tirmidhi (No. 2695), which is dha'if but corroborated by shahawahid. The main finding states that producing substitutes that in shape resemble Israeli products is not considered taboo, as long as the intention is to defend the rights of the Palestinian people and cut off economic support for the occupation. Similar practices were carried out by the Prophet Muhammad, such as the use of stamps in the style of the Roman Empire, the trench strategy (Khandaq) from Persia, and the 'Ashura fast with modifications. All three point out that imitating the non-religious aspects of non-Muslims is permissible if it brings benefits. Thus, the pro-Israel boycott movement and its alternative production are in fact a form of tamayyuz (differentiation of identity through ethical actions), not tasabbuh.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that authoritative institutions such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issue a follow-up fatwa that explicitly distinguishes between forbidden tasabbuh—which concerns faith, worship, or symbolic identity—and the production of alternative goods that are functional and ethical. This fatwa should emphasize the principles of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah and qawāʿid fiqhiyyah, especially "al-umūr bi maqāṣidihā" (all things are determined by one's intentions) and sadd al-dharā'i (closing the means to haram). In addition, Muslim MSME actors need to be provided with practical guidance on how to develop substitute products without violating Sharia principles, including verification of company affiliation through independent sources such as Who Profits, to avoid misinformation-based boycotts. This strategy not only strengthens transnational solidarity but also encourages the economic independence of the ummah within the framework of just Islamic ethics.

This research opens up space for further studies in several directions. First, an empirical exploration of the perceptions of global Muslim consumers regarding boycotts and alternative production, including their psychological, social, and economic impacts on the Palestinian community. Second, a cross-sectarian comparative analysis of tasabbuh in the context of modern political economy, particularly between the Salafi approach, the Islam of the archipelago, and the contextual thought of the Middle East. Third, the development of a more systematic theoretical framework for living hadith by integrating hadith hermeneutics, social movement theory, and Islamic economic ethics. Fourth, a study on the effectiveness of religion-based boycott campaigns in influencing the policies of multinational corporations. Thus, the reinterpretation of tasabbuh is not only a theological discourse but a foundation for contemporary Islamic economic ethics that is responsive to global injustice and identity dynamics in the post-colonial era.

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