

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**TWO-DIMENSIONAL
VISUAL ART APPEARANCE
FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF
ISLAMIC SHARIAH COMPLIANT**

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ABSTRACT

Visual art is one of the fields that continues to thrive in the Arts Industry in Malaysia. Empowering the development of the field of visual art from the aspect of Islamic compliant, is something that needs to be done to avoid matters arising in the future. This applies to other areas too, to ensure each development is in line with the framework of Islamic understanding and knowledge. Based on the existence of 'Guidelines and Explanations of Visual Art from Islamic Perspectives' (1987); the discussion is only focused on: 1) the type of drawing (two-dimensional image); and 2) the type of carving (three-dimensional form). Moreover, the discussion of the law was limited to a few types of visual appearance that were believed to be important at the time. Based on the researcher's observation and the highlights of previous studies, there are research problems and gaps that have been raised and there is a need to improve the 'guidelines' that have been produced over the 30 years. Therefore, the objectives of this research are: 1) to identify the visual subject and style of visual appearance practiced by Malaysian visual artists; 2) to validate the visual subject and style of two-dimensional visual art appearance through expert review; and 3) to examine the visual subject and style of visual appearance practiced by Malaysian visual artists from the Islamic Shariah interpretation. Using a qualitative approach through the 'intrinsic case study' research design, the researcher has formulated strategies based on research objectives. The first objective was achieved by constructing a comprehensive checklist related to two-dimensional visual art appearance (TDVAA) through the process of triangulation of the following data: 1) open-ended interview; 2) documentation of hadith, fatwa, and guideline; 3) observation of physical artifact; and objective 2 was achieved by validated the TDVAA checklist through expert review. After that, the third objective was achieved by using a semi-structured and prolonged case study interview technique. A checklist of TDVAA (finding from objective 1 and 2) was used in the interview session to facilitate experts in the field of Islamic Shariah, which are the Deputy Muftis in the Federal Territory Mufti's Office, to provide views on the diversity of two-dimensional visual art appearance. After analysing the interview data, a comprehensive Islamic Shariah view of TDVAA (as listed in objective 1) was obtained. The results of objective 3 in this research can be a reference for visual art practitioners, students, audiences, and collectors in producing and appreciating visual art who are compliant with Islamic Shariah. Future researchers have the potential to conduct Islamic compliant research in the areas of sculpture, animation, fashion based on the views of the Islamic Religious Council of the States in Malaysia, and the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). This research practically hopes to change the visual art landscape in Malaysia towards celebrating 'unity in diversity' which adheres to the principles of the National Cultural Policy 2021 and the Federal Constitution of Malaysia.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

It is in the nature of man to wish that everything that is seen should have its own artistic and aesthetic values. Something that is visually unattractive to human is rarely chosen to be pondered, possessed, and appreciated. To ensure that everything adheres to ethics, the relationship in human's life and any discussion on it, with regard to something that appeals to them, cannot be separated from the Islamic shariah. This relationship involves all aspects of life including matters pertaining art, particularly visual art. However, as visual art is accepted as a medium to appreciate the beauty in life, the study on its need for and compliant with the Islamic shariah must be carried out. Sulaiman Esa (1997) envisioned the position of visual art in Islamic shariah to be related to fiqh muamalat which is an interactive medium involving social relationships within humans; this notion is illustrated in Figure 1.1:

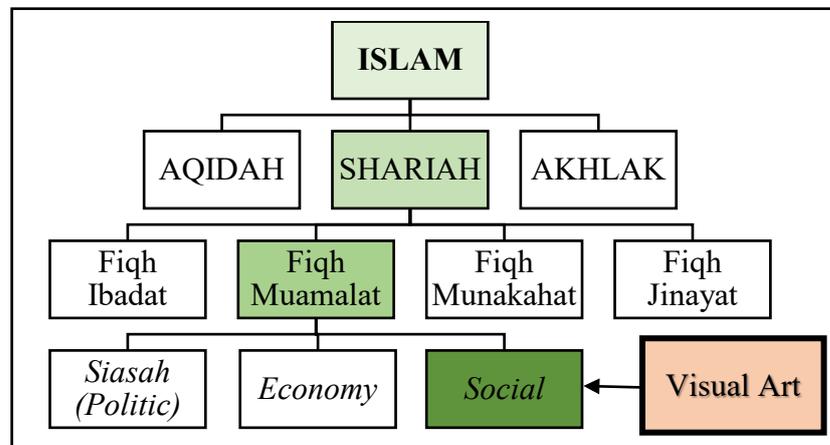


Figure 1.1 Visual art in Islam

Osman Bakar (1993) clearly shared his thoughts in this matter; *“sebagai orang Islam, kita menerima prinsip-prinsip Shariah, dan selagi mana kita taat dan patuh kepada Shariah itu, maka selama itu pula kita terpaksa menerima dalam bidang kesenian ini prinsip-prinsip yang menentukan apakah bentuk-bentuk kesenian yang sesuai untuk karya kesenian”* (As a Muslim, we embrace shariah principles, and as long as we observe and obey these principles, we must accept that in the field of art, they determined the forms of arts which are suitable for artwork). This is in line with the aim