

The Role of Body Positivity in Mental Health and Self-Acceptance: A Qur'anic Perspective

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Abstract: Low self-acceptance can have a significant negative impact on an individual's body image and mental health. The body positivity movement has emerged in response to unrealistic physical standards, promoting an attitude of gratitude and acceptance toward one's own body. This study examines the role of body positivity in mental health and self-acceptance from a Qur'anic perspective. Employing a qualitative, library-based research design with a thematic (maudhu'i) approach, the study analyzes relevant Qur'anic verses—namely, QS. Al-Tin: 4, QS. Al-A'raf: 31, QS. Ibrahim: 7, and QS. Al-Hujurat: 13. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources, including classical and contemporary tafsir literature as well as relevant scientific studies. The findings demonstrate that the Qur'an embodies values supportive of body positivity, such as recognition of the perfection of human creation, the centrality of gratitude, and an emphasis on piety over physical appearance. These results indicate that the principles of body positivity are consonant with Islamic teachings and can contribute to improved mental health, self-confidence, and the reduction of stress associated with unrealistic body standards. The practical implication is that Qur'anic values may serve as a foundation for nurturing positive self-awareness and psychological well-being.

Keywords: *Body Positivity, Self-Acceptance, Qur'an*

Introduction

Mental health problems among adolescents are becoming an increasingly prominent issue worldwide, including in Indonesia. According to the 2018 National Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) report, the prevalence of mental-emotional disorders among Indonesian adolescents was 10%.¹ Meanwhile, the 2023 Indonesian Health Survey (IHS) found the prevalence of mental health problems among adolescents to be 2.8%. Although these figures indicate a decrease in the rate of mental health disorders from 2018 to 2023, the issue remains a significant concern that demands sustained and effective interventions.² In particular, these challenges are often exacerbated by a lack of self-confidence related to body posture and shape, which can lead to body shaming—defined

¹ Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesehatan, “Laporan Nasional Riskesdas 2018,” *Lembaga Penerbit Balitbangkes* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penerbit Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesehatan, 2019).

² Syarifah Liza Munira, “Laporan Survei Kesehatan Indonesia (SKI) Tahun 2023 Dalam Angka” (Jakarta: Kemenkes, 2023).

as mocking or insulting someone's physique through negative comments. Amidst a popular culture and social media landscape that emphasizes the "ideal" body, there is a growing need for meaningful interventions, including religious approaches, to help Indonesian youth cultivate optimism and self-confidence regarding the physical attributes bestowed upon them by God in an era marked by consumerism and self-image pressures.³

One global response to these pressures is the emergence of the body positivity movement—a social movement that encourages individuals to love and accept their bodies as they are, without discrimination based on body size, skin color, gender, or physical condition. Body positivity promotes a healthy mindset, encouraging a positive perspective toward one's own body regardless of prevailing beauty standards or cultural expectations.⁴ The body positivity movement has gained momentum in various countries. In the United States, it has been popularized through social media campaigns, such as Tess Holliday's "EffYourBeautyStandards," and through the activism of the fat acceptance community, which rejects conventional beauty norms.⁵ In Australia, the Butterfly Foundation collaborates with schools to incorporate body positivity programs into the mental health curriculum.⁶ This phenomenon underscores that body image concerns are both cross-cultural and interreligious, requiring an interdisciplinary approach—including insights from Islamic theology. However, within the field of Qur'anic studies, research on body positivity remains very limited. Most previous studies have approached this topic from psychological or sociological perspectives, without thoroughly engaging with the spiritual teachings of the Qur'an.

This study seeks to address this gap by analyzing Qur'anic verses relevant to the concepts of body positivity and mental health, as well as exploring how mufasssirs (Qur'anic commentators) interpret these passages. Using a thematic (maudhu'i)

³ Abd. Basid and Abd Ghani, "Konsep Ketentraman Hidup Perspektif Quraish Shihab (Studi Surah Al-Insyirah Dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah)," *SYARIATI: Jurnal Studi Al Qur'an Dan Hukum* 9, no. 1 (2023): 13–22, <https://doi.org/10.32699/syariati.v9i1.4561>.

⁴ Milatishofa Milatishofa, Kusrin Kusrin, and Weni Adityasning Arindawati, "Analisis Resepsi Khalayak Terhadap Makna Body Positivity Pada Instagram Tara Basro," *Linimasa: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 4, no. 2 (2024): 174–85, <https://doi.org/10.23969/linimasa.v4i2.4136>; Rifqatul Husna and Ira Bariroh, "Penafsiran Term Qawwam Pada QS. Al- Nisa' Ayat 34 Dan Korelasinya Dengan Neurosains," *Ta'wiluna: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an, Tafsir Dan Pemikiran Islam* 5, no. 3 (2024): 826–41, <https://doi.org/10.58401/takwiluna.v5i3.1788>.

⁵ Tess Holliday, "#EffYourBeautyStandartsCampaign" (2013), <https://www.instagram.com/effyourbeautystandards/>

⁶ The Butterfly Foundation, "Body Image and Eating Disorder in Australian Schools" (2020), <https://butterfly.org.au/>

interpretive approach, the study aims to demonstrate that Qur'anic values actively support the notion of self-acceptance and can serve as a theological foundation to help individuals overcome crises of self-confidence stemming from social pressures related to body image. Accordingly, this research is not only relevant in the Indonesian context but also contributes to global scholarly discourse in contemporary Qur'anic studies—particularly regarding challenges related to mental health, self-confidence, and body image. The study is also expected to enrich the literature on contextualized religious education.

Several previous studies have explored the relationship between body positivity, mental health, and self-acceptance. For example, a journal article entitled "Building Women's Mental Health in the Perspective of Al-Hujurat Verse 11" by Rohma Syarifah Az Zaroh and Yeti Daliana discusses the importance of women maintaining respectful speech, refraining from demeaning others, and fostering mental well-being based on Surah Al-Hujurat verse 11.⁷ Another article, "Analysis of Body Positivity Movement About Plus Size Women in Indonesia Through TikTok" by Irene Claudia Br Ginting Suka and colleagues, examines how TikTok content creators provide persuasive and motivational messages to plus-size women, encouraging them to embrace their body shape.⁸ A third study, "Turning Insecure into Grateful" by Ami Kurnia Melinsi and co-authors, explores how gratitude can transform feelings of insecurity and positively influence emotional well-being and quality of life.⁹

While all three studies address the general theme of body positivity, the present study offers new perspectives. Specifically, this research examines the role of body positivity in mental health and self-acceptance from the standpoint of the Qur'an and the interpretations of leading mufasssirs. This is distinct from the earlier studies: the first focused on respectful speech among women; the second investigated body positivity among plus-size women via TikTok and the motivational content provided by creators; and the third addressed overcoming insecurity by cultivating gratitude.

⁷ Rohma Syarifah Az Zaroh and Yeti Dahliana, "Membangun Kesehatan Mental Perempuan Dalam Perspektif Al-Hujurat Ayat 11," *AL-Furqan : Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 7, no. 1 (2024): 248–60, <https://doi.org/10.58518/alfurqon.v7i1.2656>.

⁸ Irene Claudia Br Ginting Suka, Clarisa Fitria Salsabila Fachruddin, and J.A. Wempi, "Analisis Body Positivity Movement Tentang Wanita Plus Size Di Indonesia Melalui Tiktok," *Jurnal Komunikasi Profesional* 8, no. 1 (2024): 151–64, <https://doi.org/10.25139/jkp.v8i1.6821>.

⁹ Ami Kurnia Melinsi et al., "Mengubah Insecure Menjadi Bersyukur," *ISTISYFA: Journal of Islamic Guidance and Counseling* 2, no. 3 (2024): 379–90, <https://doi.org/10.29300/istisyfa.v2i3.2446>.

This study employs a qualitative library research method, drawing on a wide range of written materials, including books, manuscripts, documents, and other relevant literature.¹⁰ The approach to interpretation is thematic tafsir (tafsir maudhu'i), which involves collecting and analyzing Qur'anic verses related to specific themes—in this case, body positivity, mental health, and self-acceptance. Data analysis involved reducing and categorizing data, presenting and analyzing the findings, and drawing conclusions. The selection of relevant verses was undertaken systematically using keywords such as *jasad*, *ahsan taqwīm*, *shukr*, and *taqwā* in digital mushaf and Qur'anic software such as Tanzil.net and TafsirWeb. As a result, four principal verses were identified: QS. Al-Tin: 4, QS. Al-A'raf: 31, QS. Ibrahim: 7, and QS. Al-Hujurat: 13. The subsequent tafsir analysis drew upon both classical and contemporary commentaries, including *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka, and *Tafsir Al-Munir* by Wahbah al-Zuhaili. Although mufassirs do not explicitly discuss the modern concept of body positivity, their interpretations emphasize values such as self-acceptance, gratitude for Allah's creation, the prohibition of physical reproach, and the prioritization of piety over appearance. For example, Wahbah Zuhaili's interpretation of QS. Al-Tin: 4 highlights that Allah created humans in the best possible form, while Hamka notes that the human body surpasses that of other creatures and is endowed by Allah with reason and intellect.

Discussion

Body Positivity from a Qur'anic Perspective

The origins of the body positivity movement can be traced to the Victorian era (1850s–1890s), where it emerged as part of the early feminist wave known as the Victorian Dress Reform Movement. This movement sought to challenge prevailing beauty ideals by opposing the use of restrictive garments such as corsets, which were intended to shape women's bodies to conform to the fashionable “small waist” standard. Over time, these efforts evolved into what is now recognized as the body positivity movement. In its contemporary form, the movement gained widespread attention around 2012, aiming to challenge unrealistic standards of female beauty. As its influence grew,

¹⁰ Nashiruddin Baidan and Erwati Aziz, *Metodologi Khusus Penelitian Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2015).

the movement's focus broadened from weight acceptance to the more inclusive message that "all bodies are beautiful."¹¹

Body positivity is believed to help individuals overcome insecurity, prevent behavioral and emotional disorders, foster comfort with one's own body, discourage extreme dieting, and resist harmful beauty stereotypes. According to the ZAP Beauty Index 2020, approximately 62.2% of women in Indonesia have experienced body shaming at some point in their lives. Among those surveyed, 47% reported being shamed for having a "full" body, 36.4% for acne-prone skin, 28.1% for a round face, 23.3% for dark skin tone, and 19.6% for being considered too thin.¹² Body shaming can have both psychological and emotional consequences, frequently resulting in psychological distress, eating disorders, trauma, and diminished self-confidence. Consequently, body positivity promotes self-love and self-acceptance, helps to maintain mental health, and enables individuals to overcome the insecurity and low self-esteem that often result from body shaming. The ultimate goal of the body positivity movement is to create a world in which everyone feels comfortable, confident, and valued in their own bodies—regardless of dominant beauty standards.

As a social movement, body positivity emphasizes self-acceptance and gratitude for one's own body, rejecting narrow and unrealistic standards of beauty.¹³ This concept, which encourages individuals to accept their bodies as they are, is fundamentally aligned with key principles in Islam. From its earliest teachings, the Qur'an has promoted respect for the human body, encouraged gratitude, and placed a higher value on piety than on outward appearance. While the Qur'an does not explicitly use the term "body positivity" as understood in contemporary discourse, its verses can be interpreted as supporting self-acceptance, respect for God's creation, and the rejection of discrimination based on physical attributes.

In the Qur'anic perspective, body positivity is a form of self-acceptance rooted in faith. Accepting oneself, in all aspects of one's physical form, contributes to the

¹¹ Helana Darwina and Amara Millerb, "Factions, Frames, and Postfeminism(s) in the Body Positive Movement," *Feminist Media Studies* 21, no. 6 (2021): 873–90, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2020.1736118>; Milatishofa, Kusrin, and Arindawati, "Analisis Resepsi Khalayak Terhadap Makna Body Positivity Pada Instagram Tara Basro."

¹² ZAP Beauty Index, "ZAP Beauty Index & MarkPlus," ZAP Clinic (2020): 1–36.

¹³ Milatishofa, Kusrin, and Arindawati, "Analisis Resepsi Khalayak Terhadap Makna Body Positivity Pada Instagram Tara Basro."

maintenance of mental health and well-being. This acceptance is significant because the body is regarded as a creation of God, one that must be appreciated and cared for.¹⁴ The Qur'an never establishes a specific standard of beauty as a measure of human worth; rather, it encourages individuals to assess themselves based on piety rather than physical appearance. Thus, body positivity in Islam possesses a distinct spiritual dimension: accepting the body as part of worship and as an expression of gratitude to Allah. These values are particularly relevant for addressing the identity crises, social media pressures, and body image concerns increasingly faced by Muslim youth today. It is therefore essential to explore Qur'anic verses that uphold these principles.

Humankind as the Best of Creation: Tafsir of QS. Al-Tin:4

Religion is deeply intertwined with human life, a relationship reflected in the concept of body positivity or physical self-acceptance, which closely aligns with Islamic teachings. Islam instructs believers to respect and care for their bodies as a trust (amanah) from Allah. Body positivity plays an essential role in supporting mental health and self-acceptance, both of which are underscored in the Qur'an. The Qur'an contains not only stories, guidance, and commands, but also profound messages meant to foster well-being in this world and happiness in the hereafter.¹⁵ Through its teachings, Allah guides humans to recognize and be grateful for the blessings they have received. Importantly, loving oneself in Islam does not equate to arrogance or excess, but is instead understood as an expression of gratitude to Allah, who created humankind in the best possible form. This concept is expressed in QS. Al-Tin: 4:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

“Indeed, We have created man in the best form.”

This verse affirms that Allah created humankind in the most optimal manner, with a perfect structure and noble status.¹⁶ According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili, Allah fashioned human beings with balanced stature, proportionate limbs, and sound structure, distinguishing them from other creatures through knowledge, thought, speech,

¹⁴ Melinsi et al., “Mengubah Insecure Menjadi Bersyukur.”

¹⁵ Ildya Kusuma Dewi Siregar, “Larangan Perilaku Berlebih-Lebihan Pelajaran Dari QS. Al-A'raf (7) Ayat 31,” *Jahe: Jurnal Ayat Dan Hadits Ekonomi* 1, no. 4 (2023): 1–8.

¹⁶ Mhd. Andika Sejati Hsb et al., “Membangun Kepercayaan Diri Melalui Tafsir Al-Munir Dalam Surah At-Tin Ayat 4: Telaah Fenomena Insecure Dalam Islam,” *IBN ABBAS: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran Dan Tafsir* 7, no. 2 (2024): 116–32, <https://doi.org/10.51900/ias.v7i2.22738>.

contemplation, and wisdom.¹⁷ Fakhruddin al-Razi interprets *ahsani taqwim* as referring to a harmonious, proportional structure—superior to other creatures because humans are endowed with intellect. Al-Razi emphasizes that this intellectual capacity elevates humans above all other beings, enabling them to think, understand, and acquire knowledge. Quraish Shihab, meanwhile, stresses that to criticize one's own body is to deny the perfection of Allah's creation, and highlights this verse as the spiritual foundation for self-respect.¹⁸ While each mufassir offers a unique perspective, all agree that Allah created humans with a balanced, excellent arrangement, greater than that of other creatures, and distinguished by the gift of intellect. This aligns directly with the principle of body positivity, which calls for loving one's body as an act of gratitude. In the Indonesian language, "the best" is understood to mean optimal, excellent, and highly suitable for its intended purpose. Therefore, *ahsani taqwim* can be interpreted as "the most optimal," "the finest," "the most beautiful," or "in the best condition," signifying a physical form that fully suits its divine function.¹⁹

Body positivity encourages individuals to accept both their strengths and limitations, reflecting the message of this verse: Allah created humans in the best and most perfect form.²⁰ This is reinforced by preceding verses that describe Allah's oaths by the fruits and places endowed with unique virtues and benefits. Physically, humans are the only creatures capable of standing upright, allowing for advanced cognition, creativity, and technological achievement—further underscoring human distinctiveness.²¹

Fakhruddin al-Razi also asserts that *ahsani taqwim* encompasses harmony among physical form, intellect, and spiritual potential. Yet, many teenagers today view their bodies merely through the lens of aesthetics rather than as a means of worship. For Muslim youth exposed to idealized body images on social media, this verse serves as a reminder that their bodies are a divine trust—not objects of hatred or comparison. The

¹⁷ Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-Akidah Wa Al-Syari'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*.

¹⁸ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2005).

¹⁹ Deddy Permadi, "Konsep Ahsan Taqwim Dalam Surat At-Tin Ayat 4 Studi Tentang Disabilitas" 4 (2019).

²⁰ Adi Ari Hamzah and Dedi Rismanto, "Konsep Manusia Dalam Al-Qur'an Surat Al-Tin Pendekatan Tafsir Fazlur Rahman," *Lisyabab: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 3, no. 1 (2022): 53–66, <https://doi.org/10.58326/jurnallisyabab.v3i1.120>.

²¹ Hsb et al., "Membangun Kepercayaan Diri Melalui Tafsir Al-Munir Dalam Surah At-Tin Ayat 4: Telaah Fenomena Insecure Dalam Islam."

concept of *ahsani taqwim* is not limited to physical attributes, but also encompasses the inherent honor and spiritual value of the human body.

The Islamic body positivity movement can thus encourage teenagers to view their bodies as part of worship, rather than a social burden. Amid a pervasive culture of comparison, especially on social media, many Muslim adolescents feel their bodies are unworthy of public presentation. This verse provides a spiritual foundation for self-worth, emphasizing that their bodies are direct creations of Allah at their best, not mere projects for improvement to conform to Western beauty standards or fleeting social media trends. Rather than striving to “fix” their bodies, Muslim youth should be encouraged to see their bodies as an *amanah*—entrusted to them for doing good—not simply as objects for display. Thus, this verse advocates for complete self-acceptance in line with the principles of body positivity. Allah Himself declares that humans are created in the best form; therefore, there is no justification for self-hatred or feelings of inferiority regarding one’s own body. The Qur’an thus rejects restrictive beauty standards and encourages the celebration of each individual’s unique qualities.²²

The Principle of Moderation in Body Care: Tafsir of QS. Al-A‘raf: 31

Adopting a positive attitude toward the body is fundamental to maintaining mental health, as Islam consistently encourages gratitude, moderation, and balance in all aspects of life. In daily practice, believers are cautioned against excess in any form and are urged to conduct themselves with restraint and propriety. This guidance is underscored in the Qur’an, notably in QS. Al-A‘raf: 31:

إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

“Indeed, Allah does not love those who are excessive.”

This verse articulates the principle of moderation, particularly in caring for the body. Allah explicitly disapproves of excess.²³ M. Quraish Shihab interprets this as Allah withholding mercy and reward from those who are excessive in any matter. Shihab further notes that this principle is foundational not only in Islamic teachings on health, but is also recognized by scientists and health experts globally, regardless of religious or cultural

²² Meaghan McCallum et al., “Body Positivity and Self-Compassion on a Publicly Available Behavior Change Weight Management Program,” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 24 (2021): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182413358>.

²³ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur’an*.

background.²⁴ The verse teaches moderation in all things, whether in worship, eating and drinking, or daily habits. This resonates with the concept of body positivity, which discourages extremes such as strict dieting in pursuit of unrealistic body ideals. In Islam, believers are urged to avoid behaviors that are detrimental to physical health, social well-being, or spiritual life. Every righteous act, in this context, is grounded in the principle of moderation (*wasatiyyah*).²⁵

The prohibition against *israf* (excess) is not limited to food and drink but extends to all areas of self-care, including dressing, grooming, and other aspects of personal conduct. Ibn Kathir explains that the Qur'anic disapproval of excess encompasses all forms of immoderation in self-care.²⁶ Humans are thus required to maintain both physical and psychological equilibrium, steering clear of practices that could harm body or soul. In the era of social media, many adolescents are confronted by extreme beauty trends: restrictive diets, excessive use of skin-whitening products, plastic surgery, and strenuous physical regimens in pursuit of an “ideal” body. These contemporary manifestations of *israf*—the overexertion of the body for social validation—can result in eating disorders, anxiety, and depression. In this context, the verse serves as a spiritual warning for Muslims, particularly youth, against the dangers of obsessive bodily pursuits. Islam's response to such challenges is a call for moderation and gratitude. Ultimately, this verse encourages a balanced approach to self-care—emphasizing good nutrition, health, and hygiene—without succumbing to unhealthy preoccupation with appearance. It does not condone body shaming or the stigmatization of overweight individuals, but rather highlights the value of moderation and holistic health. Maintaining the body should be regarded as a form of worship, rather than an effort to conform to unrealistic beauty standards.

²⁴ Alisa Aura Zanuba and Musolli Musolli, “Phubbing Behavior in the Qur'an: A Thematic Study of the Opinions of Indonesian Mufassir,” *MUSHAF: Jurnal Tafsir Berwawasan Keindonesiaan* 4, no. 1 (2023): 27–49, <https://doi.org/10.33650/mushaf.v4i1.7382>; Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*.

²⁵ Siregar, “Larangan Perilaku Berlebih-Lebihan Pelajaran Dari QS. Al-A'raf (7) Ayat 31.”

²⁶ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

Gratitude and Piety as Foundations of Self-Worth: Tafsir of QS. Ibrahim:7 and QS. Al-Hujurat:13

The Qur'an teaches that humankind is created in the best possible form, and this foundational belief calls for gratitude and self-acceptance. One of the key verses on gratitude is QS. Ibrahim: 7:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

“And when your Lord proclaimed: If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.”

This verse highlights that those who are grateful for Allah's blessings will see their blessings multiplied, while those who are ungrateful face severe consequences. Hamka, in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, explains that to be grateful is to have God increase His favor, while constant complaining amounts to ingratitude (kufr), deserving of punishment.²⁷ Quraish Shihab similarly emphasizes that gratitude is expressed not only through words but through a sustained attitude of acceptance and the positive use of Allah's blessings.²⁸ Wahbah al-Zuhaili, in *Tafsir Al-Munir*, expands on this, explaining that divine punishment for ingratitude can be experienced both in this world (by losing blessings) and the next (through spiritual retribution).²⁹

In short, QS. Ibrahim:7 affirms that gratitude (*shukr*) is key to inner peace, positive emotion, and psychological resilience. Individuals who cultivate gratitude are better able to manage stress, reduce negative emotions such as anxiety and depression,³⁰ and experience higher levels of self-acceptance and satisfaction.³¹ In the context of body positivity, gratitude helps individuals accept their bodies as they are, lowering the risk of body dissatisfaction and the harmful behaviors associated with it.³² Even when a body is

²⁷ Buya Hamka, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* (Depok: Gema Insani, 2015); Ach Zayyadi and Alvina Amatillah, “Indonesian Mufassir Perspective on Gender Equality: Study On Tafsir Al-Misbah, Tafsir Al-Azhar, and Tafsir Marāh Labīd,” *Mushaf: Jurnal Tafsir Berwawasan Keindonesiaan* 1, no. 2 (2021): 74–102, <https://doi.org/10.33650/mushaf.v1i2.2169>.

²⁸ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*.

²⁹ Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-Akidah Wa Al-Syari'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*.

³⁰ Prystia Riana Putri, Artika Nurrahima, and Megah Andriany, “Efek Syukur Terhadap Kesehatan Mental : A Systematic Review Gratitude Effects on Mental Health : A Systematic Review,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Kesehatan* 14, no. 1 (2021): 58–66.

³¹ Komaru Zaman and Lilis Amaliya Bahari, “Syukur Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an: Studi Komparasi Tafsir Ibn Katsir Dan Tafsir Al Ibriz,” *Ta'wiluna: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an, Tafsir Dan Pemikiran Islam* 4, no. 2 (2023): 293–308, <https://doi.org/10.58401/takwiluna.v4i2.1090>.

³² Rani Hardianti, Erika, and Fathra Annis Nauli, “Hubungan Antara Rasa Syukur Terhadap Kesehatan Mental Remaja Di SMA Negeri 8 Pekanbaru,” *Jurnal Ners Indonesia* 11, no. 2 (2021): 215–27, <https://doi.org/10.31258/jni.11.2.215-227>.

not “perfect” by societal standards, being grateful for one’s health and unique attributes is a crucial blessing.

Many adolescents today struggle with dissatisfaction over their physical appearance, feeling “too fat,” “too thin,” or otherwise inadequate. These perceptions can lead to low self-esteem and even psychological disorders. The Qur’an’s emphasis on gratitude is therefore not just a spiritual value but also a practical mental strength that combats such pressures. Self-acceptance rooted in gratitude can reduce insecurity, foster confidence, and nurture peace of mind—a foundation that is easily incorporated into Islamic self-care routines for youth.

Furthermore, the Qur’an insists that true worth is not determined by appearance, wealth, or social status, but by piety (*taqwa*). QS. Al-Hujurat:13 teaches:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous [pious] of you.”

This verse explicitly rejects physical and material standards as benchmarks for human value. Wahbah al-Zuhaili, in *Tafsir al-Munir*, explains that all humans share a common lineage and that virtue is measured only by piety, not by external differences.³³ Al-Ṭabari further asserts that true human virtue is rooted in devotion, not in physical form, skin color, or status. This teaching is reinforced by prophetic traditions, such as the hadith narrated by Muslim and Ibn Majah from Abu Hurairah:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ

“Indeed, Allah does not look at your appearance or your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and your deeds.”

These teachings dismantle the culture of body shaming, discrimination, and unhealthy comparison that can so easily take root, particularly in the digital age.³⁴ Instead, the Qur’an and the Sunnah call for recognition of the dignity and honor endowed by God upon every individual—regardless of physical form.³⁵ In this light, gratitude and piety form the twin foundations of mental health and self-acceptance in Islamic thought.

³³ Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsir Al-Munir Fi Al-Akidah Wa Al-Syari’ah Wa Al-Manhaj*.

³⁴ Muhammad Fadillah Mochtar and A. Mujahid Rasyid, “Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Multikultural Dalam Al-Qur’an Surat Al-Hujurat Ayat 13,” *Bandung Conference Series: Islamic Education* 2, no. 2 (2022): 415–20, <https://doi.org/10.29313/bcsied.v2i2.3579>.

³⁵ Ahmad Izzah and Sarif Nur Hasanuddin, “Konsep Pendidikan Humanistik Dalam Al-Qur’an Surat Al-Hujurat Ayat 13 Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan Islam,” *Masagi* 1, no. 2 (2022): 339–44, <https://doi.org/10.37968/masagi.v1i2.109>.

Gratitude fosters positive emotion and self-worth, while piety frees individuals from external pressures and root their value in moral and spiritual excellence. Both are highly relevant to contemporary conversations on body positivity, self-esteem, and mental well-being.

Integration of Qur'anic Values and the Body Positivity Movement

The integration of Qur'anic values with the body positivity movement, especially in the context of today's youth, centers on self-acceptance, respect for bodily diversity, and the strengthening of mental health—rooted in Islamic teachings that address contemporary social challenges. Body positivity, therefore, is not only legitimized from a social perspective but also firmly grounded in theology. The verses previously discussed demonstrate that Islam encourages believers to regard the body as a trust (*amanah*), avoid extremism in body care, and measure human dignity by moral character and piety, not appearance.

Several practical steps can be taken to maintain mental health and cultivate self-acceptance, including: (a) avoiding comparisons with others; (b) affirming positive self-talk; (c) creating inclusive, stigma-free environments; (d) embracing new experiences and stepping outside one's comfort zone; (e) following inspiring, body-positive content; (f) accepting personal shortcomings and uniqueness; and (g) providing education about the diversity of body types.

QS. Al-Tin:4 encourages acceptance and appreciation of one's body, recognizing it as the most perfect and noble creation of Allah. QS. Al-A'raf:31 underscores the importance of moderation in body care and self-maintenance. QS. Ibrahim:7 highlights gratitude as a pillar of mental health, showing that thankfulness for one's body can enhance self-confidence and acceptance. QS. Al-Hujurat:13 reaffirms that human dignity is determined by piety, not by physical appearance, ethnicity, or social status, and it explicitly rejects discrimination and restrictive standards of beauty.

These Qur'anic principles have broad practical implications. Teachers and educators can integrate Qur'anic body positivity values into moral education, fiqh lessons, and Qur'anic literacy activities, and they can promote self-reflection and gratitude journaling as part of spiritual character development. Families and parents should recognize the importance of accepting their children as they are, without reinforcing narrow beauty ideals, and strive to foster Islamic parenting grounded in

acceptance and compassion. Muslim content creators and preachers can launch digital campaigns such as “Love Your Body for Allah” or “Piety is More Beautiful than a Filter,” drawing on Qur’anic and prophetic teachings. Youth-oriented da’wah materials should focus not merely on emotional motivation, but on inspiring spiritual self-confidence—emphasizing that true honor is rooted in the heart and character, not in the body. The intersection of these Qur’anic values with the body positivity movement offers a holistic, spiritually grounded response to contemporary challenges surrounding self-image, mental health, and identity for Muslim youth.

Conclusion

Body positivity, from a Qur’anic perspective, is not merely an act of social or psychological self-acceptance, but a profound spiritual value. The Qur’an teaches that the human body is a perfect creation of Allah (QS. Al-Tin: 4), a trust (*amanah*) that must be maintained with moderation—prohibiting excess (QS. Al-A‘raf: 31)—and a blessing for which gratitude is due (QS. Ibrahim: 7). Human dignity, according to the Qur’an, is not determined by physical or social status, but by piety (*taqwa*) (QS. Al-Hujurat: 13). Collectively, these verses demonstrate that Islam strongly rejects physical discrimination and narrow standards of beauty. Instead, it encourages self-acceptance, gratitude, and an emphasis on the quality of the heart and good deeds. In the context of today’s youth—who are frequently exposed to social media pressures, comparison culture, and body shaming—Qur’anic values regarding the body and piety offer a relevant and enduring solution.

Interpretations by leading scholars such as Fakhruddin al-Razi, Wahbah al-Zuhaili, Quraish Shihab, and Hamka further reinforce that respect for the body is integral to faith. As such, the body positivity movement can and should be rooted in Islamic values, understood not only as a social initiative but as a form of worship and spiritual resilience. Self-acceptance in Islam does not imply passivity or lack of effort, but an active recognition that every body possesses inherent uniqueness and honor in the sight of Allah. Accordingly, education on Qur’an-based body positivity must be integrated into Islamic education, da’wah, family life, and counseling settings—enabling it to become a holistic movement that frees individuals from the pressure of misleading physical standards.

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