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Managing Menstrual Cycle Medication During Hajj and Fasting: Juridical Considerations

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Abstract

Every type of worship has pillars and conditions for the worship to be considered valid, as is the case with the worship of fasting during Ramadan and the pilgrimage of Hajj. However, the menstrual cycle often becomes an issue for women in performing the Hajj pilgrimage and fasting during Ramadan, as Islamic law prohibits women who are menstruating from engaging in worship. The advancement of knowledge and technology has given rise to a product, namely medications related to the menstrual cycle, medicines to accelerate or delay menstruation. The use of these medications has sparked discussions among Islamic jurists (*fuqaha*), Muslim scholars, and medical experts, as this issue pertains to the needs of the Muslim community. The absence of clear textual evidence (*nash*) from the Qur'an and the Sunnah has led to debates among jurists regarding deriving legal rulings on the matter of using medications related to the menstrual cycle. Scholars, in formulating the ruling on the consumption of such medications, base their conclusions on the method of *maslahah mursalah* (unrestricted public interest).

Keywords

Menstrual Cycle Medication, Hajj, Fasting during Ramadan, Maslahah Mursalah

1. Introduction

Islamic Sharia teaches worship as a religious ritual that symbolizes human obedience to Allah. This includes acts such as fasting during Ramadan and the Hajj pilgrimage. Fasting in the month

of Ramadan is the third pillar of Islam, while performing Hajj is the fifth pillar. The obligation to fast during Ramadan is mandatory for every Muslim, and the obligation to perform Hajj is imposed on those who are capable. Allah states regarding the obligation of fasting during Ramadan in QS. 2: 183 (Dahlan, 1999). Likewise, the obligation of Hajj is mentioned in QS. 3: 97 (Dahlan, 1999). In addition, Prophet Muhammad also mentioned the acts of fasting and Hajj in one of his sayings (hadith): “Islam has been built on five [pillars]: testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the salah (prayer), paying the zakat (obligatory charity), making the hajj (pilgrimage) to the House, and fasting in Ramadhan.” (Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Every form of worship has pillars and conditions to ensure the validity of the worship performed (Rohman et al, 2022). This applies to fasting during Ramadan and performing the Hajj pilgrimage as well. In executing these acts of worship, there are requirements and pillars that must be fulfilled, as well as specific timing for the worship to be valid and complete.

Fasting during Ramadan is defined as a mandatory act of worship to be observed during the month of Ramadan, involving abstaining from food, drink, and physical desires from dawn (*Fajr*) until sunset (*Maghrib*). The obligatory conditions for fasting include being mentally sound, reaching the age of maturity, and having the ability to fast. The conditions for a valid fast differ from those for an obligatory fast. Validity conditions pertain to the specific requirements that make the act of fasting legitimate. These include being a Muslim, being capable of differentiating right from wrong (*mumayyiz*), being free from impurities (*hadass*) like menstruation (for women) and having knowledge of the timing of fasting (whether it is obligatory, recommended, or prohibited to fast).

Actions that nullify the fast include intentionally eating and drinking, engaging in sexual relations (intercourse) during daylight hours, inducing vomiting intentionally, losing sanity, experiencing menstruation or postpartum bleeding (for women), intentionally ejaculating due to lustful thoughts, and apostasy (leaving Islam).

Hajj is a means of communication between a servant and their Creator. This act of worship was first ordained in the sixth year of Hijrah. Hajj involves intentionally visiting the Kaaba in Mecca to perform a series of ritual acts according to the pillars and conditions set by Islamic law. There are four pillars of Hajj: the intention to enter the state of consecration (ihram), standing in Arafat, circumambulation (tawaf) of the Kaaba, and the Sa'i between Safa and Marwah hills. Failure to perform any of these pillars results in an invalid Hajj. The prerequisites for a complete Hajj include being a Muslim, reaching the age of maturity, being mentally sound, and having the ability and means to undertake the journey and cover the expenses for all the requirements of Hajj (Arfan, 2017).

Menstruation, or *haid*, refers to the discharge of blood from a woman's vagina that is not due to illness or childbirth. Allah has ordained menstruation as a means to maintain human generations and to determine the cleanliness of the uterus (Tan et al, 2017). *Haid* is a natural occurrence in a woman's life. It is a periodic process that happens in all healthy women with functioning reproductive systems. It can even serve as an indicator of fertility. However, this monthly cycle can pose challenges for women, such as when performing acts of worship like Hajj and fasting during Ramadan, as Islamic law prohibits women in the state of menstruation from engaging in worship.

In the era of Industry 4.0, as we experience it today, all forms of human activities have become exceedingly easy to undertake. The term “Industry 4.0” stems from the concept of the fourth industrial revolution. This development signifies a major leap forward, marked by the creation of digital technologies. In tandem with this progress, all fields must keep up with the advancements, including the realm of healthcare. Technological advancements in this field play a crucial role in the continuity of patient care, treatment, and surgical procedures. The advancement of knowledge and technology has given rise to products like medications to regulate the menstrual cycle – drugs to expedite or delay menstruation.

Menstrual delay medications are stimulants given to patients with menstrual disorders or for specific purposes, such as the Hajj pilgrimage, fasting, the wedding night, and others. These estrogen-based medications are considered prescription drugs due to their potency. They are available in various pharmacies that provide prescription medications; however, they are not typically found in small drugstores or kiosks in public spaces. These medications usually require a doctor's prescription for certain categories. One commonly used medication for regulating the menstrual cycle is *Primolut N*. It contains progestin and progesterone hormones and is employed to expedite or delay the onset of menstruation.

Regarding the use of menstrual delay medications, new issues arise regarding the legality of their use and the opinions of scholars on their usage. Therefore, the author is interested in delving deeper into the legal aspects of consuming menstrual delay medications during Hajj and Ramadan fasting, aiming to provide understanding and answers to the public concerning this practice.

2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach, delving into Islamic jurisprudence literature to explore the juridical considerations surrounding the use of menstrual cycle medications during Hajj and fasting. It entails an in-depth review of classical and contemporary Islamic texts, including hadiths and scholarly opinions. A comparative analysis of scholars' viewpoints is conducted, considering both consensus and divergence. The study examines the application of the *maslahah mursalah* principle – unrestricted public interest – in deriving legal rulings where textual evidence is absent. By synthesizing these findings, the research aims to provide nuanced insights into the implications and perspectives regarding the use of such medications within the context of Islamic worship practices.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Understanding *Haid* in Physiological, Religious, and Legal Aspect

Menstruation, commonly known as the first menstruation, is an event experienced by adolescent girls. Menstruation is a crucial topic that should be discussed and addressed informatively and reassuringly before it occurs. For teenage girls, it's essential to become familiar with their bodies beforehand. The onset of menstruation also entails complying with all of Allah's commands and abstaining from His prohibitions. Menstruation serves as an indicator of a woman's health. Women's health encompasses physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being, with reproductive health being a pivotal aspect. Recording the timing and pattern of menstruation

is crucial for accurately observing one's menstrual cycle. This precision is linked to the perfection of worship and prayer (MUI, 2016).

Puberty occurs during a girl's adolescent years, marking the transition between childhood and adulthood, typically between ages 10 and 18. Adolescents undergo numerous physical and mental changes. Physical changes include the maturation of reproductive organs due to hormonal shifts, while mental changes involve an increased interest in the opposite gender. Before entering adolescence, girls usually experience puberty first. Puberty brings about accelerated physical growth and development from childhood to adulthood, along with the maturation of sexual reproductive organs. Puberty in girls involves rapid physical growth, the onset of menstruation (menarche), psychological changes, and the emergence of secondary sexual characteristics. The maturity of a female child is indicated by breast development and the onset of menstruation, signifying that she has reached the age of religious maturity. This marks the obligation to perform religious duties and all obligatory acts (MUI, 2016).

In Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), menstruation is referred to as “*haid*.” Linguistically, “*haid*” is derived from “*ha-dha*,” “*yahi-dhu*,” “*haidon*,” signifying flowing water. In Islamic terminology, “*haid*” refers to the blood that exits the end of a woman's uterus when she is healthy, not during childbirth or illness. This blood is discharged during a specific period. Menstruation is the blood that flows from the uterus of a woman who has reached the age of religious maturity. It occurs at specific times. The wisdom behind menstruation is that the fetus in the mother's womb cannot consume food in the same way as a child outside the womb. It is impossible for the mother to provide nourishment directly. Therefore, Allah has ordained the process of menstrual blood discharge in women. This blood serves as nourishment for the fetus within the womb, transmitted through the umbilical cord, nourishing the fetus's body through the blood.

According to the Hanafi school, the minimum duration of menstruation is 3 days and 3 nights. Meanwhile, the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools stipulate a minimum duration of one day and one night, equivalent to 24 hours. The Maliki school mentions that even a single drop is sufficient, but it's not counted for the waiting period (*'iddah*), which is only valid if the blood flows for at least half a day or a whole day. Generally, women experience menstrual bleeding for 6 or 7 days. The maximum duration of menstruation according to the Hanafi school is 10 days and 10 nights. Imam Malik doesn't specify a maximum duration due to variations among women, except he sets 15 days for those experiencing their first menstruation (*mubtada'ah*). In contrast, Imam Shafi'i and Imam Hanbali state that the maximum duration is 15 days. The clean period between two menstruations varies based on the length of a woman's menstrual cycle. Most scholars, except Hanbali, state a minimum clean period of 15 days, matching the maximum menstrual period. Imam Hanbali sets a minimum of 13 days. Jurists add that bleeding lasting less than the minimum or exceeding the maximum is called “*istihadhah*” or “abnormal bleeding (Al-Jaza'iri, 2011).”

3.2 Menstrual Cycle Medication

Menstrual cycle medication can be used to regulate the timing of menstruation in women, depending on their preference, by either advancing or delaying the onset of menstruation. There are several types of menstrual cycle medication, and combination birth control pills are a commonly prescribed option for use as a means of delaying menstruation. However, it is advisable to delay menstruation only when it is deemed necessary. Indirectly affecting the

reproductive endocrinology system of women, the use of hormonal menstrual cycle medication can disrupt the woman's menstrual cycle if used irrationally. These medications can be in the form of injections, shots, or pills. Both types contain the hormone progesterin. These menstrual cycle delay pills are typically taken starting approximately 14 days before the expected start of the woman's usual menstruation cycle. If a woman wishes to resume her menstrual cycle, she should stop taking the medication around 3 days before the desired cycle (Djuwantono et al, 2012).

To delay or advance menstruation, medication containing hormones is used. Usually, the hormone progesterone is used. Many of the progesterone that have been used are actually derivatives of testosterone, a male hormone, which, when used in the long term, can lead to masculinization in women. Hence, alternatives that do not have this masculinization effect have been sought. Therefore, the use of these hormones undoubtedly affects the human reproductive endocrine system, and inappropriate use is not recommended.

There are two ways to use menstrual cycle medication. First, if the medication is used to delay menstruation, progesterone is administered 10 days before the expected menstruation or 7 days before the next menstruation. Menstruation usually occurs 2-3 days after discontinuing the medication. The recommended dosage of medroxyprogesterone acetate, abbreviated as MPA, is 10 mg. However, progesterone can be administered for weeks and usually has rare side effects, provided that contraindications are considered first. The second way is to advance menstruation. This method is rarely used as most women want to delay menstruation for specific reasons. Nevertheless, menstruation can be advanced up to 6 days at the latest. This is done by administering progesterone from the fifth (5th) to the nineteenth (19th) day of the menstrual cycle. After using this medication, spotting may occur. In such cases, no medication is needed, but if it becomes bothersome, an additional 10 mg can be administered. Persistent spotting does not interfere with religious obligations. The blood observed is not menstrual blood (Zein, 2003).

When using menstrual cycle medication, according to Umar Zein, there are several considerations. First, it should be discontinued if headaches occur. Second, it is recommended for women with heart, kidney, epilepsy, or migraine conditions that require treatment. Third, if used by women with depression requiring supervision. Fourth, if women with diabetes mellitus (DM) use this medication, monitoring is necessary. Fifth, if there is weight gain, monitoring during medication administration is required. Sixth, inform the doctor of any disturbing complaints (Zein, 2013).

3.3 Islamic Legal Review on the Use of Menstrual Cycle Medication

The issue of delaying menstruation poses a unique intellectual challenge that must be addressed by Muslim scholars and medical professionals alike, as this matter concerns the well-being of the Muslim community in general. On one hand, they must reinterpret the Quran in line with scientific and objective demands. On the other hand, there is a moral imperative to interpret the Quran in accordance with the present-day needs. These two sides are not inherently contradictory or mutually negating, but rather, they complement each other like two sides of a coin. The awareness of the existence of worldly realities and various new problems has triggered the emergence of new *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) products to meet contextual scientific standards.

Fundamentally, there are two factors that serve as reasons for Muslim women to use menstrual cycle medication: for religious purposes and for non-religious purposes. The use of menstrual cycle medication can be categorized into two main types. In the first type, women use pills or tablets containing estrogen hormones or a combination thereof to expedite the end of the menstrual period. Islamic legal scholars (fuqaha) have differing opinions on this matter. If menstrual cycle medication is used to hasten the end of menstruation before its natural time, scholars have debated whether it is considered pure (*tahir*) or not. Some scholars state that a Muslim woman using menstrual cycle medication to accelerate the end of her period is considered pure. However, others argue that using such medication to hasten menstruation is not permissible, and the woman remains in a state of menstruation (Humad & Al-Mutawali, n.d.).

In the second type, women take pills containing progesterone or a combination thereof to induce menstruation before its usual timing. Differences of opinion also exist among scholars regarding the permissibility of Muslim women using menstrual cycle medication to accelerate menstruation. The question arises whether a woman who uses such medication to expedite menstruation should still be considered menstruating. Does this imply a prohibition on certain acts of worship, or should the woman be considered pure? Some scholars argue that using menstrual cycle medication to accelerate the onset of menstrual bleeding is not considered menstruation. This is because the blood does not naturally flow out in issues related to iddah (waiting period after divorce) and istibra (purification after menstruation). In matters of worship, the opinion tends to lean toward considering the woman pure, thus she must still fulfill her obligations as a *mukallaf* (responsible individual). On the other hand, some scholars hold that using menstrual cycle medication to accelerate menstruation for worship-related issues deems the woman to be in a state of menstruation, resulting in prohibitions for menstruating women (Humad & Al-Mutawali, n.d.).

The absence of explicit textual evidence (*nash*) from the Quran or the Sunnah has led to scholarly discourse among the fuqaha regarding deriving the legal rulings for the use of menstrual cycle medication. Scholars such as Ibn Qudamah al-Hanbali, al-Hattab al-Maliki, and al-Ramly al-Shafi'i do not consider the use of menstrual cycle medication for the purpose of facilitating the observance of Ramadan fasting and other acts of worship to be problematic. Similarly, Ibn Taymiyyah permits women to delay their menstruation to complete their fasting during Ramadan. In other words, the majority of fuqaha establish the default ruling for using menstrual cycle medication as permissibility (*mubah*) (Qudamah, n.d.).

A slightly different perspective is presented by Al-Juwaini, who categorizes the legal rulings on using menstrual cycle medication into two types. The first is *makruh* (disliked) if the intention is to prevent the onset of menstrual bleeding or to reduce its duration; the second is haram (*forbidden*) if the intention is to prevent pregnancy. Therefore, from the perspective of Al-Juwaini, delaying menstruation to complete fasting would fall under the category of *makruh*.

In the field of *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), one method of deducing Islamic legal rulings that emphasizes practical benefit in decision-making is the concept of *maslahah mursalah* (unrestricted public interest). According to al-Ghazali, *maslahah mursalah* refers to an interest that is neither endorsed nor prohibited by Sharia law (there is no specific evidence that validates or negates it). Therefore, al-maslahah is about achieving benefit and averting harm in order to preserve the shari'a objectives. One condition of *maslahah mursalah* is the absence of specific

evidence that nullifies or validates it. Thus, in the legal issue of using menstrual cycle medication, where there is no explicit text that regulates it, scholars formulate their legal rulings based on the method of *maslahah mursalah*. This is in line with the foundational rule in *usul al-fiqh*: “The default ruling for everything is permissibility unless there is evidence that prohibits it.”

The fundamental principle for everything is permissibility, unless there is evidence that prohibits it. According to Imam Yusuf al-Qaradawi, in the Qur'an, there is no specific verse that prohibits the use of such means to delay menstruation. Thus, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, in his book “*Fatawa Muashirah*,” concludes that the consumption of menstrual delay medication is permissible. He emphasizes that fundamentally, things should follow their natural course, including menstruation, which is a natural process for women. However, due to advancements, medications have been developed that can delay and regulate the menstrual cycle for women, and they can also help in delaying pregnancy (Qardawi, 1985).

Yusuf al-Qaradawi relies on two legal foundations, the first being the Quranic verse Surah Al-Baqarah: 185: “God intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify God for that [to] which He has guided you, and perhaps you will be grateful.”

He interprets this verse to mean that if something is difficult for the community, it can be made easier. Since there is no explicit prohibition of menstrual delay in the Qur'an, al-Qaradawi concludes that using medication for this purpose is permissible (Qardawi, 2000). The second legal principle is “Difficulty brings about ease.” This legal principle supports the concept that everything difficult should be accompanied by ease in the context of worship to Allah (Qardawi, 2013)

On the other hand, Sheikh Ibn al-Uthaymeen holds that using menstrual delay medication is permissible under two conditions, as detailed in his book “*Risalah Fi Ad-Dima' Ath-Tabiiyah*.” These conditions are: first, there should be no anticipated harm; second, the permission of the husband is required, especially if extending menstruation would affect financial responsibilities or if the medication is used to prevent pregnancy. While it is allowed, it is preferred not to use it except in cases of necessity (Ibn Ustaimin, n.d.).

Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen employs different evidence from Yusuf al-Qaradawi, relying on Quranic verses. He argues that using such medication can pose risks in the future, advocating for natural means of preserving one's well-being. Furthermore, the reasoning behind using the medication is also derived from the hadith of the Prophet, narrated by Imam Daruqutni from the companion Abu Sa'id Al-Khudry, where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, “Do not cause harm to yourself.” Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen suggests that it's better for women not to use the medication. Instead, they should practice other acts of worship during their menstruation, such as remembrance, supplication, charity, and kindness towards others through words and actions. He emphasizes that abstaining from using the medication is in line with the natural disposition and nature of women, as suppressing the menstrual cycle may pose risks to women's health.

The legal basis for the consumption of menstrual cycle regulating medication in Indonesia is established on the basis of a Fatwa Commission session of the Indonesian Ulema Council on January 12, 1979, which made the following decisions. The use of anti-menstruation pills for the purpose of facilitating the performance of the Hajj pilgrimage is considered permissible (*mubah*). Similarly, the use of such pills with the intention of completing fasting

during Ramadan before its full duration is considered disliked (*makruh*). However, if a woman finds it difficult to make up missed fasting days on other occasions, using the pills is permissible (MUI, 2018).

The use of anti-menstruation pills for purposes other than those mentioned above is dependent on intention. If the intention is for actions that are contrary to religious laws, it is considered prohibited (*haram*). The advancements in knowledge and technology in the field of hormonal therapy have enabled the regulation of the timing of menstruation according to desire, either advancing or delaying it. Regarding the use of menstrual cycle regulating medication during the Hajj pilgrimage, there is no specific evidence prohibiting it. Thus, based on this, the permissibility of using such medication has been formulated. However, this still remains a topic of discussion among scholars.

For Indonesian pilgrims, the use of menstrual cycle regulating medication is based on several reasons. Among these reasons is the concern that not using such medication may lead to the invalidation of a crucial aspect of Hajj, rendering the pilgrimage incomplete. Hajj pilgrimage in Indonesia requires significant financial resources, and the waiting list for performing Hajj can extend beyond 15 years. Based on these considerations, the use of such medication aligns with the legal principle that “hardship brings about ease.” If not using the medication results in a woman's Hajj being invalidated due to unfulfilled requirements, she would need to wait even longer for her turn and incur greater costs. Therefore, the use of menstrual cycle regulating medication for Indonesian Muslim women during Hajj can be justified, as it follows the principles of Islamic jurisprudence by alleviating difficulties.

The use of menstrual cycle regulating medication to complete fasting during the full month of Ramadan is not prohibited according to Islamic law, as there is no evidence prohibiting it. However, if the consumption of such medication poses a threat to health, it becomes prohibited. In such harmful situations, consuming menstrual delay medication becomes forbidden. Thus, it is advisable for women considering the use of such medication to consult with medical specialists.

Sheikh Ibn al-Uthaymeen suggests that it is better not to use menstrual delay medication, as explained in his book “*Majmu’ Fatawa*.” He states that menstruation is a natural occurrence decreed by Allah for women, and they should exercise patience rather than endanger themselves. Some doctors have stated that menstrual delay pills can have adverse effects on health and the uterus (Utsaimin, 1413). During Ramadan, it is better for women not to use such medication, as they can engage in other acts of worship, such as remembrance, supplication, charity, and kindness to others through words and actions. These are considered the best deeds, and the missed fasting days can be made up later. This perspective differs significantly from the conditions surrounding the Hajj pilgrimage.

4. Conclusion

The general usage of menstrual cycle regulating medication is permissible, as it is not explicitly prohibited or regulated in religious texts. This practice is grounded in the concept of *maslahah* (benefit), applicable across various domains including worship, transactions, and marital affairs. Regarding the utilization of menstrual cycle regulating medication in the context of the Hajj pilgrimage in Indonesia, its validity can be justified. This aligns with the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*ushuliyah*) and legal maxims (*fiqhiyah*). The rationale behind such usage

is rooted in *masyaqqah* (hardship), which could lead to the omission of a Hajj pillar. If a pilgrim is compelled to repeat the pilgrimage in subsequent years due to missed obligations, it would further burden Indonesian pilgrims. The extensive waiting list and substantial costs associated with the Hajj pilgrimage in Indonesia amplify this challenge.

Concerning the observance of the Ramadan fasting month, the use of menstrual cycle regulating medication is permitted. Nonetheless, Sheikh Ibn al-Uthaymeen suggests that abstaining from such medication is preferable. This is because if a woman experiences menstruation, she can engage in alternative forms of worship, including remembrance, supplication, charity, and benevolent actions expressed through words and deeds. These endeavors epitomize the finest aspects of worship, and any missed fasting days can be compensated for later.

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