



## AESTHETIC VALUES OF SPORTS HIJABS DESIGNS BETWEEN MALAYSIAN AND INTERNATIONAL SPORTSWEAR BRAND

Husna Saaidin<sup>1\*</sup>, Hisyam Zakaria<sup>1</sup>, Suriati Saidan<sup>1</sup>, Wan Nadhra Ixora<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fashion Design Studies, College of Creative Arts, University Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam

Email: [husnasaidin@uitm.edu.my](mailto:husnasaidin@uitm.edu.my), [mdhisyam@uitm.edu.my](mailto:mdhisyam@uitm.edu.my), [suria509@uitm.edu.my](mailto:suria509@uitm.edu.my),  
[wannadhraixora@uitm.edu.my](mailto:wannadhraixora@uitm.edu.my)

\* Corresponding Author

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### Abstract:

Sportswear market, normally by slinky legging, crop tops and close-fitting apparel. (Viktoria Hermann, 2022). Recently, the value of sports hijabs in global modest fashion has been growing over the past few year about \$368 billion (Hafsa Lodi, 2020). Traditional hijabs vary from basic scarves to intricate multi-layered pieces, offering a fluid silhouette that covers the head and neck entirely. However, during various athletic activities, these garments can easily slip off or get caught, posing both a modesty concern and a safety risk for the user. In contrast, sports hijabs maintain the same level of coverage but have a snugger and more secure fit. (Palmer G.D., 2023). Objective of this research is to identify the aesthetic value design, features and function of each sports hijab designs in the market. The researcher conducted observations and analyses on two (2) distinct local brand who are focusing in sports hijabs. This paper aims to determine the visual aesthetic design of sports hijabs by evaluating and comparing between international and local sportswear brand in various aspects including details, features and materials.

### Keywords:

Modest Fashion, Sportswear, Sports Hijab Designs

### Introduction

As the modest fashion sector is opening up business opportunities and prospects for brands and retailers. According to the State of the Global Islamic Economy report, there was a 5.7% rise in modest fashion in 2021, from \$279 billion to \$295 billion (Herrmann, 2022). Modest fashion transcends beyond just a choice influenced by religious beliefs, traditions, or regional preferences (Herrmann, 2022). The modest fashion market is undeniably vast, especially in

activewear. Normally, conventional activewear includes leggings, crop tops, and close-fitting apparel. Recently, the world's biggest sportswear brands have recognized this and are inclusive in their products and campaigns to target the modest wear consumer (Benissan, E, 2022).

*“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their chastity, and not to reveal their adornments except what normally appears. Let them draw their veils over their chests and not reveal their hidden adornments except to their husbands, their fathers, their fathers-in-law, their sons, their stepsons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons or sisters’ sons, their fellow women, those ‘bondwomen’ in their possession, male attendants with no desire, or children who are still unaware of women’s nakedness. Let them not stomp their feet, drawing attention to their hidden adornments. Turn to Allah in repentance all together, O believers, so that you may be successful.”*

Surah Al Ahzab ayat 59

According to the above Ayat in Al-Quran, Muslim women have to cover themselves from strangers and distant relatives by wearing the veil or hijab, which includes covering their hair, arms, bosom, feet, and other parts of the body (Abdullah, 1999). The use of hijab or veil is common among Muslim women, covering the head and neck, leaving the face uncovered.

Recently, Malaysian Muslim women have shown their interest in physical and sports activities such as running, swimming, gym, and a lot more. By providing the niche market in sportswear, in 2017 Nike had designed a head cover that was targeted at Muslim and female athletes. This is due to performance issues with a traditional hijab for Muslim athletes (Beaverton, 2017).

### ***Aesthetic Value In Design***

Fashion serves as a medium for individuals to convey and interpret messages, creating meanings that are socially recognized and accepted (Chon H, 2013). Consequently, the act of dressing becomes a social endeavor, wherein one individual's choice of attire can influence the behavior or emotion of another (Chon H, 2013). This positions fashion as a dynamic interchange of meanings, anchored in individual experiences, that communicate aesthetic values. The concept of aesthetic value is a pivotal concept in philosophy, the visual arts, and architecture (Wagner J, 2000). The fashion object, demanding physical and tactile engagement, encapsulates the designer's initial creative knowledge in its final manifestation, serving as a reflection of the design's initial intent and significance.

From envisioning the design, to merging concepts of movement with design, form, functionality, and Islamic spiritual elements, diving deep into rigorous research and development phases with prototype creation into end products.

### ***Sports Hijab***

A sports hijab is specialized in head covering for Muslim women that is designed to cover the neck, hair, and shoulders during physical activities. It comes in a variety of styles and designs, ranging from those that resemble normal hijabs to close-fitting or all-in-one garments, depending on the sport and the preferences of the athlete (Palmer G.D., 2023). The conventional hijab silhouette flows with full head and neck coverage or is more complicated with multi-piece garments. In fact, it is easily prone to falling off or snagging away during physical and sports activities (Palmer G.D., 2023).

Sports hijabs can be categorized into two types: conventional and instant hijab. Conventional sports hijab ranges from simple scarves to more complicated multi-piece garments and provides a flowing silhouette with full head and neck coverage. Examples include a rectangle or square piece of fabric paired with a hijab cap. However, conventional hijabs are more likely to easily fall off or snag during sports activities (Palmer G. D, 2023). Sports hijabs, also known as Instant Hijab in Malaysia, have an easy pull-on design and are close-fitting. They closely resemble conventional hijabs with a convenient design and a draped, scarf-like shape.

### **Design Features For Sports Hijabs**

The basic requirements of designing sportswear include psychological comfort, dexterity, agility for the wearer, breathability, moisture management, lightweight, antimicrobial, and anti-odor properties achieved through the correct selection of fibers, yarns, and fabric variables (Jhanji Y, 2021). Designing hijabs for sports requires consideration of religious and modesty requirements, as well as the functional needs of active individuals (Ali D, 2020).

#### ***Breathable and Moisture-Wicking Fabric***

Choose high-performance, moisture-wicking fabrics such as polyester or a blend of polyester and spandex. These fabrics should allow sweat to evaporate quickly, keeping the athlete cool and dry during physical activities.

#### ***Lightweight Material and Anti-Odor Technology***

A lightweight hijab is essential for ease of movement and comfort during sports activities. Look for materials that are thin and breathable while still providing adequate coverage. Some sports hijabs come with anti-odor technology to help stay fresh even during intense workouts.

#### ***Secure Fit***

A sports hijab should have a secure fit to stay in place during vigorous activity. This can be achieved through an elastic band or an adjustable closure system, such as Velcro or drawstrings.

#### ***No-Pin Design and Flat seam***

Many sports hijabs are designed to be worn without pins or additional accessories. This reduces the risk of injuries and eliminates the need for athletes to constantly readjust the hijab during sports. Use flat seams to prevent chafing and irritation during prolonged physical activity.

#### ***Mesh Panels for Ventilation***

Incorporate mesh panels in strategic areas to improve ventilation and airflow, enhancing comfort during physical exertion.

#### ***Reflective Elements***

For athletes who train in low-light conditions, consider adding reflective elements to the hijab for visibility and safety.

#### ***Modesty, Coverage And Stylish Aesthetic.***

Maintain the hijab's primary purpose of providing modesty and coverage. Ensure that it covers the hair and neck appropriately while allowing for mobility. Although functionality is essential, consider incorporating stylish and trendy designs, colors, and patterns to make the sports hijab appealing to athletes.

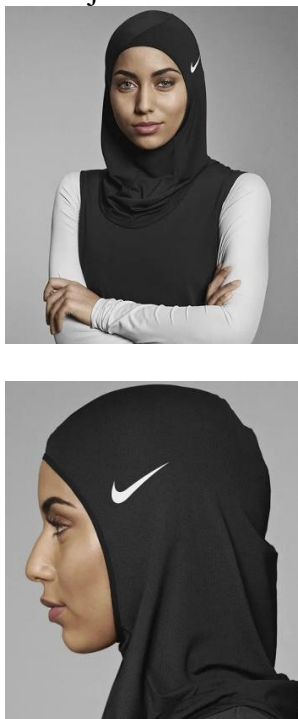
Designing sports hijabs involves a balance between functionality, comfort, and style. It is important to gather feedback from athletes who will be using the hijab to ensure that the design meets their specific needs and preferences. Collaborating with professional athletes can be invaluable in creating a sports hijab that truly enhances their performances.



### Comparison Of International And Local Sports Hijabs Brand.

The researcher has chosen three international sportswear brands and local sports hijab brands for analysis of designs in terms of materials, features, and specifications for sports (if applicable). International sportswear brands often focus on sports specifications because different sports involve different movements and physical activities. In Malaysian local brands, most Muslim women show interest in Recreational Sports or swimming, leading to specific design considerations. The products in this range typically cost between RM 89 and RM 180, making them accessible for purchase through various websites.




Sports hijabs come in two primary fits: regular and secure. The regular fit is generally looser in cut compared to the secure fit, which is more snug and clings to the neck. Regular fits are ideal for recreational activities, running, and gym workouts. In contrast, the secure fit is designed for activities that involve a lot of movement, such as water sports or extreme sports, where the hijab needs to stay firmly in place.

**Table 3.1.1 Design Features of International Sports Hijab Brand**

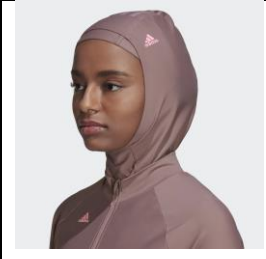
Sports Brand: Nike	Material	Features	Types of sports
Pro Hijab 	Dri-FIT Technology  Lightweight  92% Polyester 8% Spandex	Constructed from soft mesh – wicking tech for optimal breathability.  Fully cover your head and neck.  Interior Strap to secure coverage and prevent slipping  Sizing are based on face opening as below;  XS/S: 8.5”/ 21.5cm M/L: 9.4”/ 24cm  Measuring from below hairline to bottom of jawbone	All Sports
Pro Hijab 2	Dry-FIT Technology – help to locked in and cool when heats up	Constructed from soft, wear-wicking mesh with tiny	All Sports

	<p>Lightweight mesh helps increase ventilation</p> <p>92% polyester/8% elastane</p>	<p>holes for optimal breathability.</p> <p>Interior Strap to secure coverage and prevent slipping</p> <p>Panel at the forehead to more fit on faces.</p>	
<p>Victory collection Swim</p> 	<p>82% nylon 18% spandex</p> <p>Lightweight</p> <p>Chlorine-resistant</p> <p>UPF 40+ sun Protection</p>	<p>Secure Fit with fit with freedom to move in the water</p> <p>Interior elastic band to holds hair in place.</p> <p>Elastic and gathers at the back of hijab heads.</p>	<p>Water sports</p>


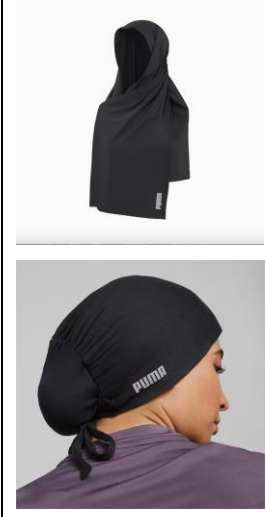
**Table 3.1.2 Design Features of International Sports Hijab Brand**

Sports Brand:	Material	Features	Types of sports
<b>Adidas</b> Run Icons 3-strips sport Hijab 	85% recycled polyester, 15% elastane interlock	Regular Fit  Pull on design for effortless wear and soft  Lightweight fabric for optimal comfort  Sweat-wicking AEROREADY technology to keep feels dry throughout workout.  Soft and breathable  Reflectivity	Walking Running
Cycling Hijab 	84% recycled polyester, 16% elastane single jersey	Moisture-absorbing AEROREADY  Hook-and-loop adjuster strap  Regular fit	Cycling
	ECONYL®  InfiniTex Fitness Eco 78% recycled nylon, 22% elastane tricot	Adjustable inner cap  Ultra-flat, lightweight, chlorine-resistant fabric  UV 50+ factor	Water sports

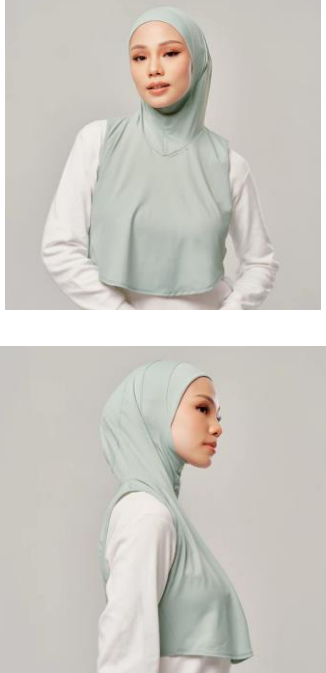



			
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**Table 3.1.3 Design Features of International Sports Hijab Brand**

<b>Sports</b>	<b>Brand:</b>	<b>Material</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Types of sports</b>
	<b>Puma</b>	93% polyester, 7% elastane	DryCELL (Draw moisture away from the skin to keep you dry and comfortable)  FIT (adjustable internal toggle for nonslip full coverage)	All sports
	<b>Puma</b>	88% polyester, 12% elastane	DryCELL (Draw moisture away from the skin to keep you dry and comfortable)  Running sports need to be paired with under cap.  Can be style in many ways.	All Sports



**Table 3.1.4 Design Features of Local Sports Hijab Brand**

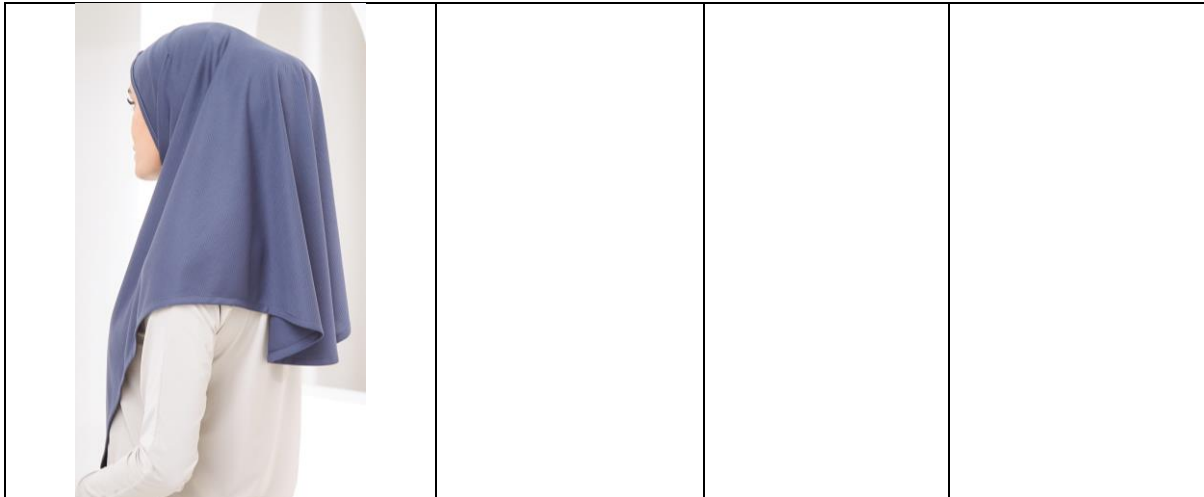
Sports Brand: Tudungpeople	Material	Features	Types of sports
	<p>Spandex Matt Nylon</p>	<p>Vest with attached hijab</p> <p>Finishing: Folded Hem</p>	
	<p>Quick-dry Mesh Jersey</p> <p>Lightweight and breathable</p> <p>Antimicrobial nanotechnology</p>	<p>Attached inner</p> <p>Soft awning for sun protection and ventilation</p>	<p>Recreational activities</p>



	<p>Spandex Matt Nylon</p>	<p>Close-fitting instant hijab</p> <p>Longer curves cut front coverage and shorter back for better ventilation</p> <p>Sporty cut for better fit</p> <p>Reflective trim front and back low light activities</p> <p>Attached inner</p>	<p>Water sports</p>
			

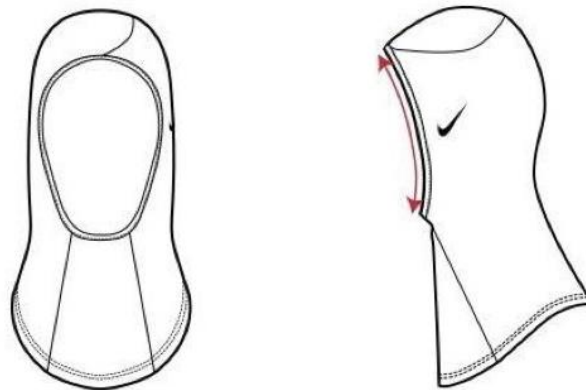
**Table 3.1.4 Design Features of Local Sports Hijab Brand**

Sports Brand: Olloum	Material	Features	Types of sports
	<p>100% RPET (Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate)</p>	<p>UPF 50</p> <p>Anti-Bacterial</p> <p>Attached Inner</p> <p>Reflector</p>	<p>Recreational activities</p>
	<p>100% RPET (Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate)</p>	<p>UPF 50</p> <p>Anti-Bacterial</p> <p>Attached Inner</p> <p>Reflector</p>	<p>Water sports</p>



### Analysis And Finding Between International And Local Sports Hijabs

Based on observations made between international and local sports hijabs in Malaysia, each brand adopts a different perspective in creating and designing sports hijabs concerning fitting and cutting, technological materials, design details, and colors. Nike introduced the Pro Hijab in 2017, utilizing Dry-FIT Technology for all-purpose sports, which helps to lock in and cool when it heats up. The lightweight mesh enhances ventilation. As depicted in Figure 1 below, the design is created to provide a secure fit, and the panel for the center back has an S-shape to conform to the rounded surface of the head. The available colors are limited to white and black, except for swimwear, which offers a variety. An interior strap is included to ensure coverage and prevent slipping.



**Figure 1: Pro Hijab Technical Drawing**

Adidas, a leading sportswear brand, takes a distinct approach in designing sports hijabs for various activities such as running, working out, cycling, or swimming. The material used is 85% recycled polyester and 15% elastane interlock. The running or walking hijab features a regular fit, pull-on design for effortless wear, soft lightweight fabric for optimal comfort, sweat-wicking AEROREADY technology to keep you dry throughout your workout, and reflectivity for visibility. The cycling sports hijab includes a visor, Moisture-absorbing AEROREADY, a hook-and-loop adjuster strap, and a regular fit, available in black only. Adidas also offers swim hijabs made from sustainable Econyl material, consisting of infinite

Fitness Eco (78% recycled nylon, 22% elastane tricot). Features include ultra-flat, lightweight, chlorine-resistant fabric, an adjustable inner cap, and UV 50+ factor.

Puma's sports hijab incorporates design elements that prioritize both sustainability and functionality, made with 20% recycled material. Features include an adjustable toggle for a snug fit, reflective elements for enhanced visibility, and an overlapping pattern with gathers beneath the chin for ease and comfort during wear. An awning is integrated for a secure fit, and Puma offers a specialized running under-cap as part of their athletic line to enhance hair coverage.

Tudungpeople, a renowned sports hijab brand in Malaysia, is recognized for sponsoring the National Sports Council (MSN) and supporting national female athletes. The brand offers a diverse range of sportswear hijabs, including shawls, instant versions, athleisure, and swimwear. All designs prioritize modesty, covering the head, neck, and chest. Many instant styles come with an attached inner cap and offer a regular fit. A distinctive design in their collection features a vest with an attached hijab and inner grip, ensuring enhanced coverage for full motion during sports activities. Moreover, the brand also provides hijabs for recreational activities with looser fits and coverage. Most materials are quick-dry Mesh Jersey, lightweight, breathable, and feature antimicrobial nanotechnology.

The Olloum brand presents a 'Performance Instant scarf' that offers dual wearing methods. It can be worn in two ways: firstly, by securing the front around the head, and secondly, by customizing its fit using three buttons on the scarf. The majority of the material used is upcycled, crafted from RPET (Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate), featuring UPF 50, anti-bacterial properties, an attached inner, and a reflector. The sports hijabs from this line are tailored to cater to activities such as HIIT & Crossfit, Strength training (Pilates, Gym, and Weights), and water sports.

## Conclusion

In Malaysia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, the attire of female athletes continues to be a topic of debate. Typically, women who wear hijabs would resort to using their everyday hijabs for athletic activities. However, these are usually not crafted from materials suitable for sports, lacking the breathability and comfort essential for athletes. The mass production of an athletic version of the hijab has been predictably expected from Malaysian Muslim women. Specialized hijab and sportswear apparel for Muslim women are offered by brands like Nike, Adidas, and Puma. A local brand, tudungpeople, has collaborated with the National Sports Council (MSN) under the Ministry of Youth and Sports to empower local athletes and foster a community of fans with shared values, reinforcing its reputation as a brand that truly understands the desires and necessities of women.

International sports hijab brands are likely to focus more practically on physical activities. The length of hijabs is enough to cover the head and neck. Compared to local Malaysian sports hijab brands, they cover from the head, neck to the chest, providing more coverage for the front and back. Some sports brands are focusing on upcycled materials using RPET and Econyl, especially for water sports, to contribute to environmental conservation. Local brand designers have invested considerable thought into incorporating an attached inner cap, providing secure hair coverage. As the market for sports hijabs targeting Muslim women is poised for significant growth within the fashion industry, especially given the substantial number of Muslim women

athletes, this research may be extended by including participants to analyze the suitability of designing sports hijabs for different sports activities.

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