Beauty Myth of Muslim Women

When Hijab and Beauty are Featured in Instagram

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Abstract --- This research examines beauty myth of muslim women ie when hijab and beauty are featured in instagram using an discourse analysis and cyberfeminism approach. Several theories are employed in this research including the theory of discourse analysis, sociology of body and the concept of mythology. Results indicates that the presentation in *instagram* contributes to construct the discourse about the beautiful concept of a muslim. Contemporary muslim women are more aware of creating their own identity regardless of the social interpretation attached to them. In instagram accounts, women become producers as well as consumers of their own beauty discourse. The implications of this research are this study is expected to contribute information and enrich the repertoire of social science especially sociology also for the development of research on women body, hijab and beauty.

Keywords: muslim women, social media, hijab, beauty myth, instagram.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rise of *hijabers* communities in major cities in Indonesia has given rise to a new identity of Muslim women in urban areas. The discovery of styles adapted to Islamic values generally indicates the phenomenon of the transformation of hijab as a symbol of modernity that has implications for the emergence of a new identity of urban Muslim women. The identity of urban Muslim women built in modern culture without leaving their identity as Muslim women [1].

Indonesian Muslim women talk more about the beauty of nature and the need to take care of her body. They see cosmetics as an increasing need for special occasions, especially when attending social occasions with their husbands. The term language for cosmetics, "grooming" which is literally translated as "care", reflects this distinction, focuses on things added to the natural beauty [2].

Muslim women create a cultural space for autonomous self-development through the use of powerful religious symbols. It emphasizes their Muslim identity and gives them some measure of autonomy, depending on their personal circumstances, from: a) the dominant non-Muslim American culture; b) their westernized and assimilated parents; or c) un assimilated parents who hold hope for those who are rooted in Arab or Indo-Pakistani culture. Wearing a hijab for them is a practical, useful response to living as a young woman in the relationship between two cultures and as a member of a minority faith [3].

Hijab is not just clothes, but hijab is also a symbolic medium that connects the subject with ideological (religious) beliefs. In addition, hijab also communicates the subject community affiliation. Wearing the hijab also communicates certain social status so that hijab is not only done on the religious order but also as an effort to improve the social standard of a Muslim woman [1].

Hijab as a symbol of Islam harmoniously met with global / western youth trends. Hijaab and its relation to religious courtesy somehow become retarded because the ideals of being young in this global era are stronger [4].

For Muslim women, beauty is about success and happiness. At work, it means feeling confident and authoritative, during leisure time, the need to feel relaxed and comfortable, and in relationships, the need to feel sexy and appreciated [2].

The importance of beauty as an important value for women is actually reproduced by the explicit and unrelenting focus of movement on beauty. Such as companies and industry magazines, fitness and beauty [5].

Finding a way to celebrate the rules of decency imposed by Islam is also one of the important themes of fashion blogs. They want to tell others that following the roots of religion by wearing the suggested outfit should not be boring or be invinsible or invisible. More importantly to know that it is actually possible to feel beautiful without having to be sexy. It's all about following the Muslim religion while keeping up with the latest trends. Also, they use blogs as a way to make themselves visible to the world and break the common stereotype of Muslim women. This blog is not just about fashion, but also about how to be more attractive to many people [6].

II. RESEARCH METHOD

All feminist theory and philosophy in cyberfeminism is an active effort to change gender inequality through information and communication technology. According to Wilding, cyberfeminism is seen not only as an opportunity to create a new formulation of the theory and practice of feminism, but cyberfeminism also as a new way to overcome the

complexities of social conditions created by global information technology. Cyberfeminism is presented as a space where digital information is freely accessible, and transmitted electronically, without any traditional theoretical, emotional, existential, and political cultural prerequisites [7].

This research uses cyberfeminism approach supported by discourse analysis based on Sara Mills perspective focusing on feminism discourse, that is how women are displayed in text, either in picture, photo, or media. There are two core concepts in Mills analysis, ie the position of the subject-object and the position of the author-reader. Analysis of visual discourse and narration in instagram account aims to know the values or standardization of ideal Muslim women who try offered by Muslim women through instagram that undergoes a transformation into a beauty myth and commodified. With the growing myth of beauty for Muslim women, there will be demands of the need to look beautiful and fashionable [7].

Cyberfeminism today describes social and cultural strategies using information and communication technologies. The desired goal is to get opportunities for women to connect with each other, and to help them learn and in producing their own work online. In particular cyberfeminism is intended to exclude women from cyberculture isolation. Women also as part of the digital society, have rights as creators and users of information and communication technology. It is important for cyberfeminists to form active groups to facilitate the development of cross-national and cross-cultural movements [7].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. *When the hijab is not only a sign of wholeness*

The capitalist creates a new meaning of hijab and shifts the true meaning of hijab, the meaning of the hijab ie the hijab is identified with the impression of intelligence and identical to the elegant. When the hijab has become a commodity, the veil has become part of mass culture and pop culture. Hijab that has become pop culture and mass culture has a positive and negative impact. The positive impact is that the hijab becomes better known and used by more people. The negative impact is the decline of philosophy and aesthetic hijab. Mass culture and pop culture tend to exclude aesthetic values, because the product is produced only for the benefit of the capitalist party [8].

In her research, Budiastuti reveals several meanings of hijab, namely:

1. The veil has become a unified phenomenon and becomes a part of everyday life.

2. Veiling not only as a form of religious practice or the realization of religious teachings (Islam), but also influenced by psychological factors (sense of comfort and self-awareness), as well as social influences in the environment

3. Jilbab has meaning as imaging, religious identity and social identity which nuanced culture and influenced by human civilization

4. Hijab can be used as a marker (symbol) that represents the collective identity of the values and behavior of the user community, so as to distinguish between social identity and cultural representation of each individual or community of the wearer.

5. Hijab is also a part of the reality and actions of a person who encourages a person to express in the appearance that is motivated by the motive of religion, aesthetics and ethics as well as tradition.

6. Hijab can also lead to the formation of glocalization in Muslim dress, which combines between 'Western' and 'Eastern' cultures, as well as local culture.

7. Hijab is an effort to practice (some) teachings of Islam, and reflects the existence of process of integration or 'hybridization' between the good values (which come into contact with the aspects of morality and behavior), the value of truth (based on shari'ah and religious norms), and the value of virtue (which relates to aesthetic problems and taste in appearance). In the end the veil reflects more of the value of kebagusan, which is oriented on aspects of appearance and fashion [9].

Fig. 1. Muslim women celebgram, Mega Iskanti

Following the views of Francis Bacon regarding the idol, the hijab that is part of the commodity is part of the market idol. Market idol is one form of product worship (fetish) to the product being sold. The meaning or marker of the hijab becomes ambivalent, the meaning of hijab may be related to femininity, masculinity and can be both at once. The ambivalent meaning of hijab that occurs is caused not only by the synthesis of the syntagm (elements) of clothing that form the full hijab also due to the role of the capitalist labeling the meaning of hijab being sold to the market whose aim is that the hijab can be consumed by all circles of society with various backgrounds [8].

B. Instagram and the identity of Muslim women

When talking about blogs, there are several types of fashion blogs. The first, and also the most common is the blogger's everyday outfits. The second is hijab-oriented blogs. The third is Makeup-oriented blogs. The latter are designers and bloggers with their own brand chain or online store [6].

In the blogging world of the online Islamic fashion industry, the new space of marketing and networking is open to Muslim women's fashion bloggers. One of the most developed platforms in the industry is instagram. Driven for accessibility and ability to provide massive networking opportunities, the app allows its users to access the space that opens new channels for identity creation, especially among marginalized groups [10].

In contrast to blogs, with instagram media social accounts, the hijahed programmers become role models in terms of outfit, makeup and beauty to sharing their daily activities. Instagram becomes a 'space' in itself, a place where young Muslim women can show where they are. Places such as malls, restaurants/cafes, and tourist attractions become important. While this may not be specific to Muslim women, it shows how photologging sites such as instagram have become a middle-class lifestyle repository [11].

Instagram as a mythical creator through the hypes he created, has managed to bring a hijab as an ideologically charged object, so that it is not neutral anymore. That is a fashion and clothing may be neutral or sincere, but the wearer, the function he runs is not neutral because the use and function of fashion is social and cultural so there is potential for direkontruksi by certain parties one of them follower and reader [12].

Fig. 2. Muslim women celebgram, Dwi Handaanda

Instagram becomes a place for Muslim women to share. According to Latifah,; there are three ways to share information between them. The first, muslim women with fashionable hijab style, want to show fashion style hijab elegant and trendy. Likes to show something different with other people and igin be a fashion model. The second, muslim

women with ordinary hijab style, look in accordance with the style and character of self and what it is. The third, muslim women with hijab style syar'i, berhijab accordance with the rules of Islamic religion [13].

Instagram as a social media with narrative principles and connectivity is a way for Muslim women to form and display their identity. In this context the identity does not present itself but through the process of presentation and representation. In this process the discourse that contains the ideology and myths that want to be displayed. In instagram Muslim women can display ideologies and beauty myths related to the hijab style of text and images in the Instagram interface [12].

There is no single definition regarding the identity of Indonesian Muslim teenage girls today, who live in a popular Islamic cultural landscape [14].

C. Celebgram as a shaper of Muslim women's beauty myths

Beauty in accordance with the view of Islam lies in the clothes worn by a woman, because it must contain three elements of conditions, namely halal, good, and not excessive [15].

The use of hijab is no longer limited to certain groups of Muslim women who have brought hijab as a fashion trend with the increasing use of hijab, but also gave rise to the hijab industry, even representation of women wearing hijab began to appear in various media. Beauty myths are always attached to elements such as make up and fashion. Both elements greatly influence the appearance of Muslim women today. This raises the assumption that Muslim women and their fashion trends have contributed to shaping the concept of beauty today [12].

Fashion and hijab can be seen as a point of liberation for women, liberation from ancient stereotypes and kampungan and liberation in expressing themselves in public spaces. Through hijab fashion, for example, Muslim women try to negotiate the values and norms of existing women, get out of their domestic space, but still hold fast to the concept of beauty such as dressing and guarding awrah. They are free to take to the streets and prestigious places wearing their hijab and fashion [12].

The fashion phenomenon of young Muslim Indonesian women is now part of popular Islamic culture since the media, through commercials, soap operas, music videos, and more that expose it. Instagram has an important role in promoting hijab fashion. Hijab fashion or 'hijab clothing today' is more accessible because the term hijab has recently emerged among users of instagram. The program itself stands for celebrities on Instagram or people who become celebrities because of its popularity on instagram. The hijab program is a celebrity on instagram who usually starts his career as a hijab stylist, and most of the hijab celebrations, and of course, are Muslim women. The hijab program is often a reference and inspiration for young Muslim women to experiment with their fashion styles [4].

Fig. 3. Muslim women celebgram, Nabila Hatifa

Roland Barthes (2006) revealed that modern societies have been surrounded by myths in every day of their daily culture. Mythology involves the naturalization of historical objects, events and ideas historically to the false appearance of immortality and universality. Myth is an important element that can change something that is cultural or historical to be natural and easy to understand. Associated with the spread of myths of beauty through social media (instagram) also occurs naturalization and naturally [12].
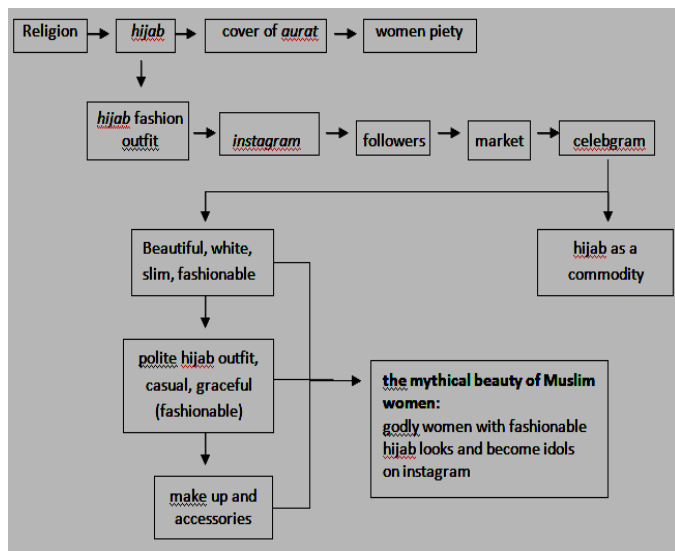

Fig. 4. Analysis of beauty myths and hijab in social media

Beautiful representation still refers to the existing criteria, but with the development of technology, the criteria for beauty have expanded. Beautiful criteria that have undergone expansion are thick and neat eyebrows; the eyelids that look big and colorful; supple, thick and long eyelashes; eyes that look big; under eye or the bottom of a bright eye; perfect, smooth and flawless face; red cheeks flushed; and colored lips so as not to look pale. Beautiful criteria are still oriented to western culture. This was evidenced by the figure of Rachel

Goddard who became a vlog model and the number of foreign language makeup and vocabulary products she used [16].

IV. CONCLUSION

Presentations on instagram contribute to constructing a discourse about the beautiful concept of a Muslim woman. Because in Instagram, photos and narratives are made with art and interesting language choices. This makes Instagram chosen as a source of style inspiration and ideas by Muslim women's groups who are interested in the current hijab style that is connected to the network of Instagram accounts [12].

Contemporary Muslim women are more conscious of creating their own identity regardless of the social interpretations attached to them. They constantly struggle against popular stereotypes about passivity and obedience that are tied to clothing and appearance [6].

In instagram accounts, women become producers and consumers of their own beauty discourse. Stereotypes about women were created to get closer to the myths of beauty. Diversity, novelty and differences that emerge from the fashion hijab have created a new definition of beauty that is Islamic, modern and postmodern [12].

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