Hijab Culture Phenomenon Between Religion, Trend, and Identity

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Abstract: This article discusses the phenomenon of the new trend in wearing the hijab among female students at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta. This trend of wearing the hijab shows a shift in the function of the hijab from a religious attribute to a popular Muslim culture of dress. This article aims to examine the background of the emergence of the hijab trend, as well as explore the reasons behind the use of the hijab between religious piety identities and popular Muslim cultural trends. This research is qualitative research with a descriptive analysis method. The results of the study show that the
background to the emergence of the phenomenon of wearing the hijab is the current development of science and technology and the increasing understanding of Muslim women about the function of wearing the hijab in Islamic teaching. While the function of the hijab is a theological, psychological, political, and fashionable function.

Keywords : Hijab, piety, culture, politic


Kata Kunci : Hijab, kesalehan, budaya, politik

A. Introduction

The use of headscarves in the sense of clothing that covers the entire woman’s body or except for the face and hands has loosened in many Islamic societies since the end of the nineteenth century. This issue has become increasingly widespread and has been raised internationally after the French government planned to even now set a ban on the use of religious symbols in French schools, and one of which they value as a religious symbol is the hijab.¹

Hijab from time to time has finally developed when viewed in terms of fashion. Thanks to this development, the term "hijab" has become more popular. Hijab has a thicker fashion characteristic than its predecessor hijab. Before the development of the Muslim fashion world in the last 2-3 years, the hijab seemed simpler. While today's hijab does not take long to release new creations, styles, motifs, and new trends.

¹ M. Quraish Shihab, Jilbab, Pakaian Wanita Muslimah Pandangan Ulama Masa Lalu Dan Cendekiawan Kontemporar (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2004), 1.
Hijab in Islamic teachings, instills a universal and fundamental tradition to uproot the roots of moral decline, by closing the door to promiscuity. This starkly contrasts Western civilization, which emphasizes the pleasures and pleasures of singleness, and views marriage as a prison and bondage.²

Abdul Halim Abu Suqqah explained that the hijab is a barrier between men and women so that the purity of the heart is maintained.³ This is based on Allah SWT’s word: "That purifies your hearts and their hearts more." In contrast to Ibn Khaldun’s use of the word hijab with the meaning of "veil" and "separation" and not "cover".⁴ This is reinforced by Husein Shahab that hijab according to its literal meaning, is a separator, in the association between men and women. Without this separation, it will be difficult to control the overflow of lust which is a very strong and dominant instinct.⁵

In the 90s, Indonesia had a hijab style with a simple style, namely by using a ciput and a veil. This kind of hijab style is one that covers the genitals but for today’s teenagers, it looks old-fashioned. Then in the 2000s, the hijab, which had been stretched out to cover the chest, was tied at the neck so that it looked concise. Hijab like this is often used by many artists and imitated by many people.

In the last 2 years, hijab styles are colorful and full of creations. Especially young women who like new and fashionable things. The current hijab style does not only play with hijab creations but also increasingly diverse clothes. So modern and beautiful is this hijab style that many women like to wear hijab. But behind all that, many think this is a good idea to inspire many women to use the hijab. Not only public figures, but the students of the State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga also all wear the

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⁴ Murtadha Muthahhari, Hijab, Gaya Hidup Wanita Islam (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), 12.
⁵ Husein Shahab, Hijab Menurut Al-Qur’an Dan Al-Sunnah Pandangan Muthahhari Dan Al-Maududi (Bandung: Mizan, 2013), 15.
hijab with their style and fashion because UIN Sunan Kalijaga students are required to comply with the regulations made by the campus.⁶

Researches on the hijab are very interesting from the past until now and have been carried out by many scientists and previous researchers. As Suzanna Brenner in her article “Reconstructing Self and Society: Javanese Muslim Women and “The Veil”, explores the importance of the modern hijab among Muslims in Java, Indonesia, by analyzing the experiences of young women’s "conversion" to veiling in a larger context than Indonesian Islamic Movement. The sociopolitical background of local Islamic activism shows how the hijab reflects the dynamic interaction between the personal and social as Indonesian Muslims face the uncertainties of modernity.⁷

Ade Nur Istiani, his research on “Konstruksi Makna Hijab Fashion Bagi Moslem Fashion Blogger” says that there is a shift in meaning. Currently, blog users (bloggers) use blog media as a medium of communication or media to display various ideas about Muslim fashion which are the hallmarks of the blogger who represents the trend of Muslim fashion in Indonesia.⁸

Eva Nisa, the title of her research is “Marriage and Divorce For The Sake of Religion: The Marital Life of Cadari in Indonesia”. The results of this study explain that the religious transformation experienced by the veil in Indonesia belongs to two revivalist movements, Jamaah Tablighi and Salafism, which has prompted them to change the habitus movement. Their new pious habitus has shaped these women’s lives, including married life.⁹

The manifestation of this pious habitus can be seen in practices related to marriage, starting from the choice of a life partner, interaction with life partners, marriage practices (matchmaking, early marriage, and mass marriage), and termination of marriage. All of this can be considered

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as their attempt to build a pious self and an ideal Islamic family, a sakinah (harmonious family). Because religious doctrine is very important in Cadari’s life, religious homogamy is an important aspect of their decision to marry or divorce.\textsuperscript{10}

In contrast to previous studies, this study aims to determine the hijab phenomenon with various models and motivations for the wearer. Is the hijab used just to cover the genitals, follow the trend, get self-recognition in the community, or have strong awareness and piety about religious shari’ah? These phenomena are discussed in this study with the formulation of the problems that will be studied: 1) Why does the hijab phenomenon arise among female students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta? 2) How does the hijab function, is it an identity of piety or just following trends?

This research study is qualitative. As Bogdan and Taylor explain that qualitative research is a study aimed at describing and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts of people individually.\textsuperscript{11} Qualitative research has the characteristics of a naturalistic paradigm, namely, reality is dual/holistic. The relationship between the researcher and the researched is interactive, the research results are context and time-bound because in all circumstances simultaneously and not free of value.

The approach used in this study is the first, the phenomenological approach, which is an approach that focuses on life experiences and seeks meaning about reality based on the research subject’s point of view. Brouwer says that a phenomenologist likes to see symptoms (phenomena). Seeing symptoms is the basic and absolute requirement for all scientific activity. It is not a science, but it is a point of view, a method of thinking, a way of looking at things.\textsuperscript{12} Second, the social interaction approach is symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interaction is characterized by attitude.

\textsuperscript{10} Nisa, 797–820.

\textsuperscript{11} Margono, \textit{Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan} (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2009), 36.

and meaning.\textsuperscript{13} In addition, this symbolic interaction is also self-oriented or personal (personality).\textsuperscript{14} Blumer then determines a premise that humans have a "self" (self). It can make itself the object of its actions. This self can also be referred to as self-indication. Self-indication is a communication process within the individual that starts from knowing something, giving it meaning, and deciding to act on that meaning.\textsuperscript{15}

Respondents of this study were students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The data collection techniques used in this study are: 1) Observation, namely by observing students who use hijab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. 2) In-depth interviews, both structured and unstructured. In this case, the researchers interviewed female students who wore hijab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. And 3) Doing a study document about female students who use hijab at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. After the data is collected, then the data is analyzed using the Miles and Huberman flow model steps\textsuperscript{16} as follows: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) conclusion.

**B. Hijab Among Middle-Class Muslim**

This theoretical study of hijab among middle-class Muslim consumers cannot be separated from their higher knowledge (more knowledgeable) and more socially connected. In addition, they are also connected offline (community) and online (social media and blogging). The proliferation of communities of hijabers is a reflection of the social connections of users in the country to actively campaign for the coolness of wearing the hijab and even hold hijab exhibition events.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} Wardi Bachtiar MS, *Sosiologi Klasik Dari Comte Hingga Parsons* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2006), 239.
\textsuperscript{15} Ahmad Nurul Sulthoni, *Studi Interaksionisme Simbolik Tentang Makna Sneaker Dalam Komunitas* (Surabaya: Universitas Airlangga, 2010), 4.
\textsuperscript{16} Miles and Huberman, *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber Tentang Metode Metode Baru* (Jakarta: UII Press, 1992), 47.
\textsuperscript{17} Yuswohady et al., *Marketing To The Middle Class Muslim: Kenali Perubahannya, Pahami Perilakunya, Petakan Strateginya* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2015), 4.
Juneman in his book, *Psychology of Fashion, Women's Phenomenon (Removing the Hijab)*, explains that there are several factors why a woman wears the headscarf (*hijab*). *First*, for good theological reasons because of a long struggle process until finally believing that the hijab is an obligatory clothing in Islam or because of the stress of the fear of sin. daily behavior as a form of manifestation of piety.\(^\text{18}\)

Saba Mahmood says that everyone has a different concept of the relationship between embodied behavior and virtues or norms. For piety, behavior is at the heart of the norm. This means that norms must be realized in behavior.\(^\text{19}\) Pious activists seek to inspire every diverse area of contemporary life with a regulative sensibility that takes its cues from the theological corpus of Islam rather than from modern secular ethics.\(^\text{20}\)

*Second*, wearing the veil because of coercion, such as regulations that require veiling as in certain institutions. Third, for psychological reasons, for example, they do not feel comfortable because everyone in their environment is veiled or because they want to find a sense of security. Fourth, the demands of lifestyle, for reasons of fashion or lifestyle to look beautiful and trendy, as evidenced by the proliferation of Muslim fashion stores.

If we look closely, the birth of the hijab revolution phenomenon cannot be separated from the changes in values that occur among Muslim middle-class consumers. There are two changes in the most basic values of Muslim middle-class consumers today. First, the increasing importance of religious values in everyday life. Second, the hijab revolution is driven by an increasingly open-minded way of thinking among Muslim middle-class consumers to various changes, such as technology and fashion. This increasingly open way of thinking is driven by high insight/knowledge and broad social connections. This openness in thinking affects product

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\(^{20}\) Mahmood, 47.
choices that are increasingly rational and pay attention to religious principles.\textsuperscript{21}

According to Gallup survey results in the world in 2009, Indonesia is included in the list of the 10 most religious countries. Gallup found that 99\% of Indonesians value religion as important in their daily lives. When Indonesians' incomes increase, they become more religious. We can see this phenomenon in various ways, the increasing number of Indonesians wearing the hijab, the high need for prayer rooms in various public facilities, such as malls, cafes, or restaurants, the high public interest in religiously educated schools, the growth of industries that comply with sharia provisions. The sensitivity of the issue of halal labels in food or cosmetics, the proliferation of various hijab outlets or store outlines, the rise of the religious entertainment world, the hectic Islamic Book Fair, and others.

Although religiosity is thick in the life of the Indonesian Muslim middle class, they also have an open, modern, and tolerant way of thinking. A prominent form of openness to modernity is the increasing acceptance of trendy, stylish, and colorful Muslim clothing. We can see the acculturation of Islam and modernity from the hijab trend which has begun to adopt Western-style modern fashion, such as the recent Threeva Style, Sarangheo Style, and Bergo Europe Zoya Style. In terms of design and naming, the three types of hijab began to follow the trend of modern developments and did not use Arabic names to use names.\textsuperscript{22}

Third, psychological reasons, are to get a sense of comfort because the surrounding environment is wearing a hijab. Fourth, at this time, the hijab or headscarf is not only limited to a form of individual piety, but more than that, it is a social phenomenon that has social and political arguments. The response to the development of the modeling world is to make it look fashionable so that it looks fashionable, beautiful, and attractive as

\textsuperscript{21} Yuswohady et al., Marketing To The Middle Class Muslim: Kenali Perubahannya, Pahami Perilakunya, Petakan Strateginya, 4.

\textsuperscript{22} Yuswohady et al., 5–8.
evidenced by the number of Muslim fashion stores, and acceptable in certain groups and society.\textsuperscript{23}

\textit{Fifth}, political reasons, namely to meet the demands of certain Islamic groups that prioritize religious symbols as political merchandise.\textsuperscript{24} This existential belief is a multidimensional concept that includes activities to create meaning (Meaning Making). So this existential belief is closely related to the human need to seek and create meaning.\textsuperscript{25}

Juneman offers a new understanding through the results of his research on women who take off their headscarves. The results of Juneman's research show that the hijab cannot be a measure of women's level of religiosity. The pattern of religious orientation has nothing to do with the reason a person wears or does not wear the hijab, because the identity of piety is reconstructed by social life. Hijab has a pious identity if the hijab used is realized in shaping attitudes and behavior by Islamic law or the provisions of Allah SWT.

\section*{C. The Causes of the Hijab Trend Phenomenon}

The hijab phenomenon occurs among Indonesian people, especially among UIN Yogyakarta students. It is inseparable from the development of science and technology in the era of globalization. The development of information technology such as online mass media, TV, and the Internet talks a lot about the importance of hijab for Muslim women and also displays hijab models with attractive fashion and not inferior to women who do not use hijab, in addition to fashion/style, the purpose shari’a is achieved. This is the reason Kahirunnisa' (student of the Islamic Business economics faculty), Devanida Lika (student of Physics Education) in using the hijab, said that “I use the hijab by imitating the models on TV, Muslim magazines and information from the media.”\textsuperscript{26}

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\textsuperscript{24} Juneman, \textit{Psychology of Fashion Fenomena Perempuan (Melepas) Jilbab}, viii.


\textsuperscript{26} Interview, 9 March 2019.
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Unlike the case with Mu'arifatul Maulidiana, a student of the Arabic Language Education Department, explaining that "I wear the hijab because as a Muslim woman, it is obligatory to cover my genitals as according to Islamic law, protect myself and save my parents from hellfire."\textsuperscript{27} What is explained by the researcher's observation that with the increasing development of science and knowledge and technology at this time, the phenomenon of hijab among Muslim women is also increasing, and the online hijab trade in the mass media.

D. The function of the hijab for UIN Sunan Kalijaga students

1. Theology

Hijab worn by Muslim women has different purposes. Some use the hijab to improve their practice of worship and some don't have any impact. It all depends on the purpose of each hijab. A Muslim woman who uses the hijab to cover her aurat because of Allah SWT, of course, not only wants to be seen as more beautiful, and more graceful, but also wants the hijab she wears to motivate her in carrying out Allah’s commands. And conversely, a Muslim woman who uses the hijab just considers daily clothes to follow a model/fashion or follow an idolized artist, or get a mate, of course, the hijab that is worn does not necessarily have an impact on her personality, morals, and worship.

As stated by Annisa Khodista Syaka, (a student of the Department of Informatics Engineering), and Indah Parhani, (student of the Department of Islamic Religious Education), "The function of the hijab is for me to comply religious shari’ah, in addition to feeling comfortable and my goal is to become a Muslim woman. good, then I cover my nakedness.”\textsuperscript{28}

2. Psychology

The phenomenon of hijab experiencing changes in model and clothing can have a psychological impact on the wearer, eliminating anxiety, fear, and other physical and psychological disorders.

\textsuperscript{27} Interview.
\textsuperscript{28} Interview.
Nurdini Eka Wati (Arabic Literature Student) who was also a respondent in this study explained "Women who wear the hijab like me can make Muslim women more confident and can express themselves in terms of religiosity and style. Besides that, most important, hijab can make hijabers feel safer and calmer from disturbances that are not good and negative perspectives in society.\textsuperscript{29}

Research respondents, Garina Rahmi (student of the Department of Biology Education), and Annida Safavueli, (student of the Department of Biology) said "I am still not istiqomah in using the hijab, but I intend to wear the hijab to protect myself, covering my nakedness makes me safer and comfortable."\textsuperscript{30}

3. Fashionable

Students who use Hijab, sometimes not only symbolize the identity of a Muslim woman but also become feminine, elegant, stylish, and more respected in their group or the wider community.\textsuperscript{31} The hijab that they wear is considered a tradition that is used at home and is socially constructed with various kinds and styles. Hijab is not monotonous and rigid, but it can be varied with more attractive models and styles, to make it look more beautiful.

Arin (a student of the Industrial Engineering Department) and Ririn Ismawati, (a student of the Islamic Counseling Guidance Department) explained that ‘I agree to use hijab in a stylish way that looks more elegant, fashionable and attractive, as long as the hijab used does not conflict with sharia.' at the religion of Islam. This makes me believe that wearing the hijab covers my aurat and makes me look prettier and more confident.’\textsuperscript{32}

The student statements above are supported by the observations of researchers at the State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, that students who wear the hijab with various models and various fashions, such as syar'i hijab, veil hijab, rectangular hijab, and also a long fashion that

\textsuperscript{29} Interview.
\textsuperscript{30} Interview.
\textsuperscript{31} Indarti, 'Modern Hijab Syle in INdonesia as an Expression of Cultural Identity and Communication', 2016, 1.
\textsuperscript{32} Interview.
is wrapped around the chest. Each has a different social and cultural message. If we group there are three characteristics: First, the principle of modernity in the sense of following the trend. Second, fundamentalist principles in the sense of emphasizing religious shari’ah or symbols of piety, and third, fundamentalist principles of modernity, meaning that the hijab or headscarf worn following contemporary fashion is stretched long and covers the chest and does not conflict with religion.

E. Conclusion

The hijab phenomenon, on the one hand, brings many benefits, meaning that it increases the motivation to wear the hijab among Muslim women. But on the other hand, there is a shift in the meaning of hijab which is far from Islamic law. Therefore, it is necessary to improve and have a correct understanding of the hijab today, especially for women who wear the hijab. The fundamentalist principle of modernity is more suitable to be applied to hijab users.

Hijab is not just a symbol of headgear or just to get recognition as a Muslim identity for the wearer. However, the hijab is synonymous with beauty and modesty, meaning that the hijab worn must be by the Islamic model, has an element of sincerity in carrying out Islamic Shari’ah commands and has an impact on aspects of daily attitude and behavior and not just following a (stylish) model, fashion or style. Looks elegant, beautiful, and attractive.

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Interview, 9 March 2019.


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