

**Ideology and Social Process of Veil Use Among Generation Z:
A Social Construction Approach**

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Abstract

This article examines the ideology behind Generation Z women in Indonesia who wear the veil and how they internalize and externalize it in a society that often views it as an unusual form of modesty. Many studies have been conducted on the veil, but this issue remains intriguing. Although the veil is a global phenomenon, its ideological significance is greatly influenced by sociological and psychological factors. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews with Generation Z students at UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten who wear the veil. The data was analyzed using semi-structured and recorded guidelines, and the results are presented as they are, without editing. Secondary data sources include academic writings, such as books and journals. Using Berger's social construction theory, this analysis explores how these women's understanding of the veil shapes their self-concept and how they promote societal acceptance through the processes of externalization and internalization. The findings show that the use of the veil is not viewed solely as an obligation, but is influenced by psychological factors such as comfort, self-control, and sociological factors like protection, and is not associated with radicalism. To foster a more inclusive and moderate society, university policies should encourage intergroup dialogue and greater acceptance of diverse practices of modesty.

Keywords: *Veil, Ideology; Externalization; Internalization; and Social Process*

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji ideologi di balik perempuan Generasi Z di Indonesia yang memakai cadar dan bagaimana mereka menginternalisasi dan mengeksternalisasikannya dalam masyarakat yang sering memandangnya sebagai bentuk kesopanan yang tidak biasa. Banyak penelitian telah dilakukan tentang cadar, tetapi masalah ini tetap menarik. Meskipun cadar adalah fenomena global, signifikansi ideologisnya sangat dipengaruhi oleh faktor sosiologis dan psikologis. Data primer dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan mahasiswa Generasi Z di UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten yang mengenakan cadar. Data dianalisis menggunakan pedoman semi-terstruktur dan tercatat, dan hasilnya disajikan apa adanya, tanpa pengeditan. Data sekunder bersumber dari tulisan akademis, seperti buku dan jurnal. Dengan menggunakan teori konstruksi sosial Berger, analisis ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana pemahaman perempuan ini tentang cadar membentuk konsep diri mereka, dan bagaimana mereka mempromosikan penerimaan masyarakat melalui proses eksternalisasi dan internalisasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan cadar tidak dipandang melulu sebagai kewajiban, tetapi dipengaruhi oleh faktor psikologis seperti kenyamanan, pengendalian diri, serta faktor sosiologis seperti perlindungan, dan tidak terkait dengan radikalisme. Untuk menumbuhkan masyarakat yang lebih inklusif dan moderat, kebijakan universitas harus mendorong dialog antarkelompok dan penerimaan yang lebih besar terhadap praktik menutup aurat yang beragam.

Kata Kunci: Cadar, Ideologi, Eksternalisasi, Internalisasi, Proses Sosial

A. Introduction

In the midst of rampant stigma and social suspicion against the veil, the use of the veil seems to be growing.¹ In some universities, both religious and non-religious universities, the number of veil users, especially among female students, is increasing albeit in insignificant numbers.² Responses to this phenomenon are quite diverse. Some see it as a phenomenon of ordinary religious understanding as a symbol of piety, fashion trends,³ And there are also those who look at it with suspicion that it is a symbol of the symptoms of the rise of transnationalism. At UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, based on the author's observations, there is an increase in the number of veil users. A number of female students who initially did not wear veils then transformed into veiled female students.

This phenomenon is an interesting issue to study because it reflects the dynamics of identity, religious expression, and ideological influence in the ever-evolving socio-religious context.⁴ In the midst of globalization, digitalization, and information openness, the choice to wear the veil is no longer solely seen as a traditional religious practice to cover the *aurah*, but can also reflect the construction of certain ideologies that young individuals believe and practice. Examining the meaning behind Generation Z's use of the veil is important to

¹ "PSG, Cadar, dan Ideologi yang Tak Terbeli," GEOTIMES, March 12, 2018, <https://geotimes.id/kolom/sosial/psg-cadar-dan-ideologi-yang-tak-terbeli/>.

² Dwi Retno Cahyaningrum and Dinie Ratri Desiningrum, "Jiwa-Jiwa Tenang Bertabir Iman: Studi Fenomenologi Pada Mahasiswi Bercadar Di Universitas Negeri Umum Kota Yogyakarta," *Jurnal EMPATI* 6, no. 3 (2018): 281, 3, <https://doi.org/10.14710/empati.2017.19757>.

³ Perdana Aysha Puteri, "The Objectification of Muslim Women in Indonesia: The Case of Fashionable Niqab in Social Media," *Religia* 25, no. 1 (2022): 69, <https://doi.org/10.28918/religia.v25i1.4271>.

⁴ Andina Dwifatma and Annisa R. Beta, "The 'Funny Line Veil' and the Mediated Political Subjectivity of Muslim Women in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Communication* 34, no. 3 (2024): 284, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292986.2024.2320900>.

understand how religious symbols are rearticulated by this age group, as well as how these choices interact with narratives of identity, resistance, and the formation of meaning in public and community spaces.

To understand this rearticulation, it is necessary to look at how scholarly discourse on the veil has evolved from issues of tradition to complex identity construction. Suzanne Brenner's anthropological research posits that the practice of donning Muslim attire in Java is not simply a "return to tradition" but instead a reconstruction of identity and a novel historical awareness. Brenner posits that for Javanese women, the adoption of Muslim attire represents a manifestation of "alternative modernity" that disconnects from a past deemed less Islamic, while also repudiating Western cultural dominance.⁵ This discovery is crucial for comprehending that the veil for Generation Z may represent an extension of the identity reconstruction endeavor, wherein bodily discipline is perceived as a means of self-mastery amidst swift social transformation.

Furthermore, the discourse has expanded into the realm of lifestyle and pop culture. In recent developments, Annisa R. Beta emphasizes the rise of the "Hijabers" phenomenon in Indonesian cities, where the hijab is perceived as fluid, vibrant, and intertwined with middle-class consumer culture rather than monolithic.⁶ Beta indicates that young Muslim women are reconstituting their identities through a synthesis of devotion and cosmopolitanism. Conversely, Wiwik Setiyani et al. present an alternative viewpoint by emphasizing the accounts of Muslim women activists who opt not to don the hijab (non-hijabi).⁷ Setiyani's research highlights that Islamic identity in the post-secular context is multifaceted; the hijab (or its absence) serves as a malleable cultural directive rather than a strict theological requirement. This indicates that the significance of head coverings for Muslim women is highly dynamic and multifaceted.

However, specific to the niqab (veil), the sociological challenges are more pronounced. The scholarship indicates that the niqab presents more significant sociocultural issues than the conventional hijab. A phenomenological study conducted by Annas Azizil Alim and Mohammad Zakki Azani (2024) at a university in Surakarta indicated that female students donning the niqab experience dual discrimination in both academic and non-academic domains. They are frequently characterized by unfavorable preconceptions, such as exclusivity or radicalism.⁸ Alim and Azani discovered that the motivations for donning the niqab ranged from theological reasons to self-protection, aligning with the notion of safeguarding against sexual harassment.

This struggle for meaning is now heavily mediated by digital platforms, the natural habitat of Generation Z. Sweden's Mia Lövhem and Linnea Jensdotter found that Instagram has become a forum for "banal religion" arguments on the hijab, gender equality, and national identity. Social media lets Muslim women fight marginalizing discourse.⁹ In the Indonesian

⁵ Suzanne Brenner, "Reconstructing Self and Society: Javanese Muslim Women and 'The Veil,'" *American Ethnologist* 23, no. 4 (1996): 673-97.

⁶ Annisa R Beta, "Hijabers: How Young Urban Muslim Women Redefine Themselves in Indonesia," *International Communication Gazette* 76, nos. 4-5 (2014): 377-89, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048514524103>.

⁷ Wiwik Setiyani et al., "Beyond the Veil: Deconstructing Gender Activism and Islamic Identity in Post-Secular Public Spaces among Muslim Women in Indonesia," *Al-Ahwal: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 17, no. 2 (2024): 167-84, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ahwal.2024.17202>.

⁸ Annas Azizil Alim and Mohammad Zakki Azani, "Exploring Discrimination in Education: A Phenomenological Study of the Niqab Restrictions in Higher Education," *Journal of Islamic Education* 9, no. 2 (2024): 448-72, <https://doi.org/10.52615/jie.v9i2.406>.

⁹ Mia Lövhem and Linnea Jensdotter, "Veiling as Free Choice or Coercion: Banal Religion, Gender Equality, and Swedish Identity on Instagram," *Nordic Journal of Media Studies* 6, no. 1 (2024): 36-56, <https://doi.org/10.2478/njms-2024-0003>.

setting, Andina Dwifatma and Annisa R. Beta examine the phenomenon of the *Cadar Garis Lucu* Instagram account. This hijab-wearing society uses social media to construct a novel political identity that amalgamates piety with progressive ideals, including tolerance and feminism.¹⁰ This study demonstrates that hijab-wearing individuals are actively participating in counter-narratives to dismantle the stereotype of passivity and extremism, portraying themselves as genuine and inclusive entities.

Despite the research on modernism, lifestyle, educational stigma, and digital activism, significant gaps remain in the sociological study of the temporal evolution of these social processes. There is a lack of research utilizing Peter L. Berger's Sociology of Knowledge regarding Generation Z in Banten. An investigation was undertaken to examine the veil phenomena, entitled "**Ideology and Social Process of Veil Use Among Generation Z: A Social Construction Approach**". The research seeks to clarify the viewpoints of veil wearers concerning the legitimacy and function of the veil, along with their methods of externalizing and internalizing it, thus incorporating it into social reality, as described by Berger in his theory of the social construction of reality.

B. Research Methods

This paper is the result of qualitative research with an *interpretive* or *constructivist perspective approach* because it describes, understands, and interprets social behavior data,¹¹ in this case the use of veils among female students of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten.

Data sources consist of primary sources and secondary sources. The primary source is Generation Z from among the students of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten who use the veil. Generation Z is the generation born between 1997 and 2012. The informants who were contacted were six students with the initials Rh, If, Nz, Ns, Ml, and Al. They were active Generation Z students who consistently donned the veil in the academic setting of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten. This study employed a purposive sampling strategy for the selection of informants. This methodology was used in accordance with the phenomenological-interpretive framework of the study, necessitating the participation of subjects having significant experience significance to the phenomenon under investigation. The inclusion criteria were explicitly established for active Generation Z students who don the veil inside the academic environment of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten.

Data collection techniques were carried out through *in-depth interview* techniques. Interviews were conducted in person using semi-open and recorded guidelines. The results of the interviews quoted in this paper are presented as they are according to their answers without editing. The secondary data sources used are published writings, both books, journals, and other academic scientific works related to the issue of veils.

The data analysis in this study is descriptive. Data analysis is not intended for hypothesis testing and generalization.¹² The analysis began from the time the data collection began. The data that has been obtained is confirmed with each other and then described. Documentation data was analyzed using a *heuristic*¹³ with the approach of the social construction theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann. The stage of field data analysis is carried out by conducting interviews, identifying, revising and rechecking the data, explaining the categorization made, explaining the categorization relationship, and drawing conclusions.

C. Results and Discussion

The phenomenon of the veil has a very complex meaning. The issue is closely related to various problems, both local and global, both classical and contemporary. The interpretation is

¹⁰ Dwifatma and Beta, "The 'Funny Line Veil' and the Mediated Political Subjectivity of Muslim Women in Indonesia."

¹¹ Sharan B Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (Jossey-Bass, 2009), 11.

¹² Saifuddin Azwar, *Metode Penelitian*, 6th ed. (Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), 11.

¹³ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative & Quantitative Approaches* (KIK Press, 2012), 4.

related to various perspectives, namely religious, social and cultural. In the local space, the veil is associated with traditions and cultures that apply differently in each place and era, in the global space, the veil is associated with the issue of restrictions on women's freedom and progress as independent individuals and the issue of its relationship with transnational ideology and acts of terrorism. This worldwide phenomenon is distinctly observable in the disparities of rules and public sentiments across different nations. A comparative analysis indicates that France maintains a robust collective aversion to the veil, attributable to its stringent secularist principles, whereas nations like the United Kingdom and Spain exhibit a more tolerant stance, prioritizing respect for cultural identity within educational settings.¹⁴ Recent scholarship has attacked stringent prohibition models, such as those in France, as a manifestation of gendered and racial governance that restricts the rights of Muslim women instead of liberating them.¹⁵

The ideology of the veil referred to in this study is a comprehensive abstract system of thought and vision related to the normative arguments of the use of the veil, the process of externalization, objectification, and internalization of the use of the veil, and the meaning behind the use of the veil.

With a social construction approach, the ideology of the veil will be understood as a knowledge and at the same time a social reality. How a knowledge of this veil is formed objectively and at the same time subjective in society and then externalized by individuals and groups so that it becomes a social reality is dismantled by the analysis of the sociological theories of social construction from Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann.

In this theoretical framework, research on the veil will begin from understanding the knowledge that is used as the basis or norm of the veil which Berger termed legitimacy.¹⁶ Furthermore, it will be understood how the process of externalization, objectification, and internalization of the veil so that it becomes a social reality that is not easy to negate.

1. Veiled Women in the Process of Shaping Social Reality

The choice of using the veil in an environment where the majority do not use it is something very sensational. Although it is not something foreign in terms of knowledge,¹⁷ but in action it is still something that is considered foreign and shocking, both because it is political, different interpretations of religion and culture, or just social prejudice. In different interpretations of religion and culture, for example, the veil is considered foreign because it is not in accordance with the Indonesian culture which is hospitable, has a spirit of mutual cooperation and there is no segregation between men and women. The *fiqh* used by the majority of Indonesian people does not require it.¹⁸ So that the veil is considered to have no legitimacy both sociologically and normatively.

In contrast to the use of other local clothing, the veil is not only limited to socio-cultural issues but also related to its legal status in Islam. The law on the use of *mukena*, for example, is not a controversial discussion among religious experts because it is considered a cultural adaptation in understanding the requirements for covering the *awrah* in prayer. The use of the veil is a world issue both related to its legal status and related to its existence in society. In the midst of such conditions, this section will reveal the extent to which veil wearers have resilience

¹⁴ Vicente Llorent-Bedmar et al., "The Use of Religious Signs in Schools in Germany, France, England and Spain: The Islamic Veil," *Religions* 14, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14010101>.

¹⁵ Shilpi Pandey, "Beyond Emancipation and Oppression: Post-Secular Intersectionality and the Muslim Woman in the French Republic," *Religions* 16, no. 9 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16091206>.

¹⁶ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Penguin Adult, 1991), 110.

¹⁷ Nurul Afifah, "Cadar Dan Ruang Kontestasi Penafsiran Otoritatif," *Religia*, April 30, 2019, 18, <https://doi.org/10.28918/religia.v22i1.1605>.

¹⁸ Muh Sudirman, "Cadar Bagi Wanita Muslimah (suatu Kajian Perspektif Sejarah)," *DIKTUM: Jurnal Syariah dan Hukum* 17, no. 1 (2019): 50, 1, <https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v17i1.651>.

in terms of knowledge of the existence of the veil and the legitimacy of their actions, which Berger, in his theory of social construction, calls *the stock of knowledge*.

The female students who use the veil who are informants in this study all follow and know issues related to the existence of the veil in this contemporary period. They understand that in some universities, both religious and general universities, the use of the veil is prohibited for various reasons. Among them is associated with the problem of terrorism which has become a global issue. Public attitudes of face coverings are dynamic and can fluctuate according to broader socioeconomic situations. Recent studies underscore how the Covid-19 crisis has contested entrenched beliefs regarding face coverings; the widespread adoption of medical masks during the pandemic has inadvertently diminished the stigma associated with face coverings and facilitated a reexamination of "face politics" in public domains, potentially enhancing the social experiences of Muslim women who don the niqab.¹⁹

Responding that the veil has something to do with radical ideology, If and Al emphasized that only ordinary people assume that the veil is synonymous with terrorism. These two things are not related at all. Meanwhile, Rh and Ml said that it was because there were individuals and even groups of people who abused the veil. They damaged the name of the veil with the crimes they committed to cover up the activities or behaviors they were going to do so that the veil was considered bad and even accused of being a characteristic of terrorism. In the same way as Rh, Nz said that if anyone associates the veil with terrorism, it is an inappropriate view, especially to the point of labeling the veil as if it is a characteristic or identity of a certain group.

From the above opinions, it can be understood that the veil in their opinion cannot be linked at all to the radicalism movement. The veil is not a particular school that has a political ideology. The veil is just a Muslim woman's clothing like other Muslim women's clothing. Its use is only a matter of personal choice, not driven by the movement of a certain group. Veil community organizations, such as the Niqab Squad Banten, also exist as facilitators of social movements, not agents of ideology. The existence of radical groups that use the veil in their movements is only a coincidence, not caused by the ideology of the veil itself. The ideology of the veil is more related to moral issues than national or transnational politics. It can be seen that those who wear the veil have different arguments both in terms of their legal status and the factors that encourage them to wear the veil.

In the condition that there is a lawsuit against the existence of the veil, all do not feel worried about continuing to use and adapt to the community. Some have stated the possibility of removing the veil, but it is not due to social issues and prejudices. Ml, for example, emphasized that using the veil can be removed, sunnah can be used according to the environmental conditions around us. Nz revealed that he had thought about removing the veil but then undid his intention not because of sunnah or obligatory issues but he felt comfortable using it.

The issue of the veil has a transnational ideology that rejects the democratic system and the *nation state* system is also their concern. They know about the development of the discourse. They denied this issue by explaining that they were involved in a democracy party organized by the government. They always give their voting rights in every election, both regional heads, regional and central representative councils, as well as presidential and vice presidential elections. For them, the veil has nothing to do with the anti-NKRI ideology. Veils are only a matter of choosing clothes that are suitable for each Muslim woman. Don't imagine that the veil has a global network and ideology. The veil is very personal and only directly related to moral issues. The ideology of the veil is the ideology of morality.

Their knowledge of the law of the veil has something in common. Except for Nz who stated that wearing the veil was obligatory in the presence of men who were not *mahrams*, others said that they knew and realized that the wearing of the veil was not obligatory. The law of the veil is sunnah. Some of them explain it simply, some explain it perfectly with deep

¹⁹ Shaimaa Ballout, "Revisiting the Veil Ban during the COVID-19 Epidemic: The Shift in the Social Context," *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences* 50, no. 4 (2023): 306-17, <https://doi.org/10.35516/hum.v50i4.5645>.

arguments. If briefly said that the veil is not an obligation. In her view, Muslim women should not wear a veil but should still cover the *aurah*, that is, all parts of their body are careless of the palms and face. She herself uses the veil for personal comfort and the bonus is the reward of the sunnah. In line with that, Rh said that there is no problem with Muslim women not wearing the veil which is important to be involved in *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* activities.

In the process of forming this reality, veiled women generation Z, who in the context of this research are students of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, are practically involved. Several informants who were asked for their opinions on the process of externalizing the veil in the community had different views. Generally, they do not depart from the impetus of veiled law but rather from psychological and sociological impulses. Further explanation of this drive will be presented in the discussion "Challenging the Mainstream About Veils: Motivation and Action". The process of externalization in this discussion is as conceptualized by Berger, namely a process that is carried out continuously both verbally and non-verbally by members of the community about something so that it is accepted and considered natural. In turn, it forms into a knowledge and culture that is ready to be absorbed by society, which in Berger's theory of social construction is called internalization.

Returning to the discussion of the practical involvement of the veil users, they have their own view on why the veil needs to be externalized in society. IF, the abbreviated name of the informant majoring in Islamic Faith and Philosophy, revealed that in the process of verbal externalization, the veil in society just flows. For him, the veil is more personal than communal. He did not make efforts to influence the community in a structured way. In terms of the *da'wah* model, this action can be said to be *da'wah bil-hāl*. He also does not feel exclusive in front of the public. For him, *the fashion of the veil is no different from* other fashions, it is only a matter of choice. If it is related to the issue of Islamic law, he sees it not as an obligation but just a desire to be more perfect in closing the limits of the *aurah*. For him, women do not have to wear a veil as long as they are able to maintain their honor. He also did not deny that in society there are those who see the veil as the clothing of certain groups whose religious understanding is different from theirs. In sociological terms, the wearer of the veil is seen as *an outsider*. More than that, he also realized that there are people in the community who are of the view that the veil is structurally related to the network of hardline religious sects and terrorism. But over time, If believes that people's views will change and will accept the veil as a social reality and as part of its culture.

Meanwhile, Rh, an informant from the same department, majoring in Islamic Faith and Philosophy, carried out the same act using the veil in a community that was not familiar with the clothing of the veil. Although it was not easy to live in an environment that had social prejudice²⁰, Rh maintains it to this day. For Rh, the encouragement to wear the veil is actually not due to sharia motives but the motive of self-protection from certain conditions that are not friendly to women. As he explained, the first time he decided to wear a veil was when Rh was confronted with mischievous behavior from the street youths around where he boarded. This condition occurred when she was studying at one of the universities in the Tangerang area. For some reason, she moved her studies to UIN SMH Banten at this time. For her, the environment where she currently lives, which is close to the UIN campus, is relatively safe. However, this condition did not encourage her to take off the veil even though his initial action of using the veil was due to safety factors. Now the veil has become a reality in his life and he also hopes that the veil will become a reality in society. The veil has made his life feel safer and more comfortable, not the other way around, the veil is considered a source of conflict linked to terrorist activities. She realized that the community's assumption began with the reality of certain Muslim women who committed acts of violence by wearing veils. What she has to do is interact with the community, not keep his distance, not feel exclusive. So that in the end the public sees the veil as a choice of ordinary and good Muslim women's clothing.

²⁰ Muh Sudirman, "Cadar Bagi Wanita Muslimah (suatu Kajian Perspektif Sejarah)," *DIKTUM: Jurnal Syariah dan Hukum* 17, no. 1 (2019): p.95, <https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v17i1.651>.

An in-depth view was also conveyed by An, a student of the Department of Arabic Language and Literature. In the process of forming the veil as knowledge and social reality, what must be done is an approach to good behavior, which in Islamic literature is called the term *mahmudah* morality. Let the public see that the veil is not part of reality that needs to be transformed, but the public must be convinced to see the good morals of the veil wearer. In this regard, he sees that the involvement of veil users either directly or indirectly with acts of terrorism is the impact of the failure to practice good morals in society. The veil is an ideology (read: faith) and the veiled behavior is morality. The two are highly correlated conceptually but not practically. Conceptually, the veil is an ideology that encourages its users to live respectfully and respectfully in their society. If the action is to do damage, then the purpose of the veil ideology becomes unattainable. In Alfred Schutz's phenomenological theory, what veil wearers do in a society that is not yet familiar with the fashion is the process of forming meaning.²¹ Meanwhile, in Berger's theory of social construction, it is called the process of externalizing knowledge.

The process of externalizing the veil is also carried out with a social work model. Together with the community of veil users in the Banten region, Al, a student of the Department of Arabic Language and Literature, often involves herself in compensation and assistance events both for the poor, orphans, and to people affected by natural disasters. In a religious perspective, this activity is driven by a high level of spirituality. Meanwhile, from a sociological perspective, the activities carried out by the veil community are a form of externalization so that the public accepts the veil as a good reality, has no social prejudice, and treats its users as *insiders* rather than *outsiders*. The approach of transitioning from marginalized individuals to active actors is referred to in academic literature as the concept of "outsiders-within." Research on veiled educators in Sweden demonstrates how veiled women leverage their marginal status as outsiders within the system to confront stereotypes, affirm their cultural identity, and illustrate that the veil does not impede effective communication or instruction.²²

As for Nz and Ml, veil informants from the BSA Department, almost have the same argument. In the process of externalizing the veil, they are not involved in the special organization of the veil community. They adapt to reality through their confidence to behave well or have noble morals. They see the veil as a good outfit. Doing good doesn't have to worry about social prejudice. Instead, they must succeed in eliminating that social prejudice. Social prejudice is a negative attitude of one group towards members of another group without any prior investigation. The social prejudices that are usually pinned against veil users are that they are very closed (exclusive), have networks with extreme understandings, have textual (fundamentalist) views, do not accept the concept of the Republic of Indonesia, tend to have Arab culture, and are not modern in thinking and appearance.

Based on the results of interviews with informants, all have mainstream religious views in Indonesia, namely *sunnah waljamaah* experts as understood by the two largest organizations in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Nz, for example, is culturally and structurally directly related to the NU organization. He has a boarding school managed by his extended family who belong to the Shafi'iyah sect. Through this institution, Nz also tries to build an image and externalize that the veil is not the clothing of a certain community that has a different religious view from the Nahdlatul Ulama tradition. Among them were also veiled female students affiliated with the Muhammadiyah organization. Rh, for example, was a student of one of the Muhammadiyah universities before moving to UIN Banten. He knew that Muhammadiyah does not legally require the veil. But for Rh, the veil is a teaching in Islam that is very good to be practiced and adapted to society.

²¹ Stefanus Nindito, "Fenomenologi Alfred Schutz: Studi Tentang Konstruksi Makna Dan Realitas Dalam Ilmu Sosial," *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 2, no. 1 (2005): 80, <https://doi.org/10.24002/jik.v2i1.254>.

²² Hoda Fattali and Åsa Wahlström Smith, "Learning from the Outsiders-within: Wearing the Niqab in Swedish Teacher Profession and Training," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 28, no. 6 (2025): 1044–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2023.2183515>.

In a study conducted by Dwi Retno and Dinie Ratri²³ it was explained that there are main factors and supporting factors that encourage female students of public universities in the city of Yogyakarta to use the veil. The main factors consist of two things, namely the search for identity in religious life and the closeness of relationships or admiration for the figure of veiled women that trigger the modeling process. Meanwhile, the supporting factors consist of three things, namely feelings of insecurity towards the opposite sex, the desire to protect oneself from crime, and the existence of personal principles.²⁴

The results of the research conducted by the author at UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten confirm the results of the above research. The motivating factors for informants to use the veil are more influenced by psychological and sociological factors. This is reinforced by the findings of another phenomenological study at a private university in Yogyakarta, which concluded that students' consistency in wearing the veil is greatly influenced by a strong self-concept that enables them to face environmental resistance. This means that the ability to persist in wearing the veil is not solely due to radical doctrine, but rather due to psychological resilience in maintaining identity amid social challenges.²⁵

Psychological factors are related to self-comfort, determination to have better behavior, and training themselves to have a Muslim woman's personality in accordance with the *sunnah*. Sociological factors are related to protection and self-limitation from an environment that is not friendly to women.

Different arguments about the factors that encourage the use of the veil were explained by Nz. Nz used the veil not driven by the kind of bad experience that Rh had experienced. At that time, he was not ready to start because he did not understand the meaning of the veil well and still had the assumption that the veil was extreme. He is also worried about being considered part of a certain school that is not accepted in society. The desire to use the veil strengthened after seeing that many of his friends on the UIN Banten campus were wearing the veil. From there, he was then encouraged to study the veil. Another factor, which Nz calls the second factor, is preventive measures to protect oneself from the possibility of disturbance or disturbance from unwanted things because it has been preached (preached) by someone. The distance between *khitbah* and marriage is approximately six months, so there are concerns that Nz's marriage will encounter obstacles due to various unwanted factors. Sheets are Nz's choice as a protective tool.

Veils in this case are perceived by Nz as clothes that can protect themselves from unwanted things both internal and external. For internal ones, as also perceived by Rh, the veil is used as self-control so as not to do things that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings because the veil not only means a face covering but also a guard of bad behavior. In the context of Nz's experience, for example, she was tempted again by another man. For the external ones, Nz perceives the veil as a protection for herself from external behavior that is not good for her as a girl.

The urge to wear the veil due to security considerations seems to be among the common reasons of all informants. Not only at UIN Banten but also at several other universities. This argument is actually very empirical and historical. Abdurrahman Hakim explained that in historical studies, the culture of the veil is a custom of the Iranian Sassanid society. The veil became a way out for women to avoid evil because at that time priests and princes had a bad habit of taking the beautiful women they wanted. By wearing a veil, women's identities and faces can be hidden so as to minimize crimes against themselves.²⁶

²³ Cahyaningrum and Desiningrum, "Jiwa-Jiwa Tenang Bertabir Iman," 285.

²⁴ Cahyaningrum and Desiningrum, "Jiwa-Jiwa Tenang Bertabir Iman," 291.

²⁵ Hanif Cahyo Adi Kistoro et al., "Islamophobia in Education: Perceptions on the Wear of Veil/Niqab in Higher Education," *IJIMS: Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 10, no. 2 (2020): 227-46.

²⁶ Abdurrahman Hakim, "Cadar Dan Radikalisme Tinjauan Konsep Islam Radikal Yusuf Qardhawi," *Ijtima'iyya: Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam* 13, no. 1 (2020): 107-8, 1, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ijpmi.v13i1.5808>.

2. Communication in the Process of Internalizing Veils

As a minority group in terms of the use of fashion symbols, veil users need reinforcement to be able to interact well in society. Because no matter how stigmatized they are in today's society, they are still an inseparable part of society. Belief in the self-concept of a good personality according to Islamic teachings on the one hand and the existence of social prejudice and stigma on the other hand make them have to think strategically in building appropriate communication. Building this communication is done personally and some are built together through the community.

Communication that is built personally between veil users serves to confirm the self-concept of the veil and a good personality. Nz's experience, for example, shows that female students who wear veils in the UIN Banten environment have a great influence in affirming themselves using the veil. The veil that has long been conceived by him as good (*religious feeling*) does not immediately encourage him to use it. The decision to use it strengthened after intense communication with the veil users. As she said below:

I used to think that the veil was extreme, or I was afraid that it would be said that there was a difference in understanding/flow etc by other people. Finally, I decided not to wear a veil first, because it was really ready. When they entered the lecture, it turned out that there were also many female students who wore veils. From there, I started trying to figure out what to do with this thread. Because honestly, I don't want to taqlid/follow people, worried that I will be brought to different streams than me.

What she said above is a form of communication in the process of searching for self-concept or identity. The search for meaning that is considered good to be internalized in his life. Self-concept is a broad terminology that a person uses to describe who he or she is. Self-identity can contain physical attributes, membership in a community, beliefs, goals, expectations, moral principles, or social styles. Although it is often formed unconsciously, self-identity is something that the individual is aware of and recognizes as something that explains himself and makes him different from others.²⁷

As explained, Nz was strengthened by religious *beliefs*, goals, hopes, moral principles, and social styles that she had been thinking about for a long time. The interaction that was built with the students who wore the veil eventually established her to start studying what the veil is in Islamic teachings before finally she decided to use it consciously and on the basis of correct knowledge according to her. In Berger's terms of social construction, this condition is called the process of internalization.

Rh's experience is almost no different from Nz. Her interaction in the UIN environment both with veil users and those who do not further strengthen his concept of the veil. It's just that there has been a slight shift in understanding its function. The veil that used to function as a tool for security from social disturbances turned into a self-identity, which she called part of her life history. This shift is influenced by her view and experience that the environment of UIN and the surrounding environment is relatively safe from social disturbances. As she explains:

I moved to UIN so the environment was different, at first I wanted to take off the veil because it seemed like the environment was safe, but after I thought about it again I decided to be *istiqomah* in wearing the veil, because the veil has become part of the history of my life.

When a person is in the adolescent phase, she is in the stage of searching for identity. The search for self-identity is the process of becoming a unique person with a role that lives and can be recognized in society. In the search for self-identity, the determination of goals, values, and beliefs that a person holds firmly becomes very important and decisive. This is a vital and healthy process that is based on the achievement of the previous stage.²⁸ Rh's experience in the

²⁷ Zikri Fachrul Nurhadi, *Teori-Teori Komunikasi* (Ghalia Indonesia, 2015), 53.

²⁸ Sasha Praditiani, "Interpretasi Wanita Cadar Pada Tayangan Propaganda Kelompok Isis," *Jurnal Visi Komunikasi* 16, no. 2 (2017): 114, 2, <https://doi.org/10.22441/visikom.v16i2.6505>.

search for her identity is currently focused on the formation of a good Muslim woman's identity through the veil she wears.

The internalization of the veil was also carried out by several informants through the community of veil users. Al and Ns are actively involved in a community called the Niqab Squad Banten (NSB) Community. Niqab Squad Banten is a community that provides space for veiled women to communicate with each other and become facilitators of science studies and social movements. It is a branch of the Niqab Squad Indonesia community. In the internalization process, the existence of an institution or organization is very important. Through institutions, veil users perceive reality, in this case veils, then transform them back from an objective world structure (common understanding) to a subjective world structure (self-conception).²⁹ The activities carried out in this community are very diverse. As explained by Al as follows:

Bismillah Actually, there is a community of Niqab Squad Banten but previously there was no community for veiled *akhwat* and in that community always holds offline or online studies and always holds social assistance activities for the underprivileged or those affected by natural disasters, in the community there are also rules that we must obey such as not uploading photos or communicating with the opposite sex because our founder does not deserve it even though we can without his knowledge but there is always someone watching over us, namely Allah.

Studies conducted both offline and online are not only related to *fiqh*, interpretation, and contemporary Islamic issues, but also related to self-strengthening in society. They are fully aware that it is not easy to live in a society that is not yet familiar with the veil. For them, social stigma and prejudice, as explained in chapter 3, are the toughest challenges that need to be addressed and faced wisely. This challenge is tougher than the long journey they went through when they wanted to convert from hijab to veil.

As explained by Dwi and Dinie in their research on the phenomenology of the psychological meaning of veiled women at PTU Yogyakarta, ³⁰ that the decision making of participants to wear the veil has involved five religious dimensions, which include:

1. *Religious belief*, which is the individual's acceptance of dogmatic things in religion.
2. *Religious practice*, which is the effort of individuals in carrying out various obligations in religious rituals
3. *Religious feeling*, which is feelings about various religious experiences that have been experienced.
4. *Religious knowledge*, which is the level of individual knowledge of his religious teachings.
5. *Religious effect*, which is religious motivation that influences individual behavior in social life so that the decision to wear the veil involves this dimension as the final stage of individual decision-making by involving the other four dimensions.

Through studies held in the Banten Niqab Squad Community, they deepened their knowledge about the veil, including differences of opinion about the law. The communication built through these studies empowers them to use the veil. As explained, five out of 6 informants stated that the veil is not mandatory, the law is sunnah. Only Nz tends to see the veil as a must for Muslim women (mandatory). For the other five, the legitimacy of sunnah or obligatory is not a problem for them. A stronger veil impulse for them is more functional, both sociological and psychological. Conditions like this actually, to borrow the term religious psychology, are already at the stage of *being religion*, no longer *having religion*.

In addition to Islamic studies, the Community also has a social service program. Normatively, this activity is driven by Islamic teachings on *infak* and almsgiving, sociologically, this program aims to form a positive view from the community not only towards the wearer of the veil but also to the veil itself.

Obstacles in establishing interaction with the community are caused by differences in cultural characteristics and relationship opportunities. If one party is able to think positively about the other party, it will present low social distancing and vice versa. As Sears expressed in

²⁹ Praditiani, "Interpretasi Wanita Cadar Pada Tayangan Propaganda Kelompok Isis," 114.

³⁰ Cahyaningrum and Desiningrum, "Jiwa-Jiwa Tenang Bertabir Iman," 282.

Resti Amanda, if there are two ethnicities in an area that do not blend closely, then the possibility of prejudice in that area is quite large. On the contrary, prejudice also gives birth to social distancing. The greater the prejudice that arises, the greater the social distance that occurs.³¹

Research conducted by Nuryu Wahidah and Ezzah Nuranisah shows that the veil is still not well received by the public. The use of veils is considered to be an inhibiting factor in the process of interpersonal relationships in society. There is an assumption that the veil is an obstacle to creating better conditions. Positive relationships between people become difficult to establish, because seeing faces is something fundamental in social communication.³²

Al and Ml admitted that they faced difficulties interacting with the community in the early days of their existence in the boarding house in the neighborhood. To deal with these communication barriers, in addition to the belief that gradually people will get used to the cultural reality that is considered new, they also try to build a positive outlook both verbally and non-verbally. Verbally, they try to communicate as friendly and as appropriate as possible with the teachings of Islam, such as preceding greetings when they meet. Non-verbally, it is done by showing that their friends are also those who do not wear the veil and by being directly involved in social activities carried out by the general public and by the Niqab Squad Banten community.

A different experience was felt by Nz. The people in the neighborhood where he lives according to him no longer see strangers with veils, even among them it seems that some of them are already using it too. As she said the following:

In the village itself, there are already some who use the veil, and the community is used to it and does not think it is a strange thing. Maybe those who think it's weird are usually small children, but I'm just normal. Meanwhile, in the neighborhood where I live now, Ma'had Askar Quran Bogor *Alhamdulillah* is very supportive, and the environment is Islamic. In fact, we often had guests of the Sheikh and his wives from Yemen.

In relation to their interaction specifically with the community, they try to be involved in social services facilitated by the NSB community. Socio-religious movements such as providing assistance to the poor and communities affected by natural disasters. In the perspective of symbolic interaction, the NSB community is constructing the same symbols as the community on things that are considered good and are common needs. In this context, NSB activities have the impact of building positive public assumptions. About the activity, Al revealed the following:

Actually, there is a member of the Niqab Squad Banten community, but previously there was no community for veiled women and in that community always held offline or online studies and always held social assistance activities for the underprivileged or those affected by natural disasters, in the community there are also rules that we must obey such as not uploading photos or communicating with the opposite sex because our founder does not deserve it even though we can without his knowledge but there is always someone watching over us, namely Allah.

The difference in the view of the veil between the public and the veiled women as explained above is not a simple problem if it is related to the importance of social interaction or the need to cooperate in seeking social harmonization. The difference is related to the problem of belief principles and cultural commonality that is often difficult to find a solution. Its handling requires a broader communication role. The role of social concern played by the veil user community seems to help to influence people to objectify the veil as part of the social reality of the knowledge structure of society.

³¹ Resti Amanda and Mardianto, "The Relationship Between Public Prejudice Against Muslim Women in Veiled and Social Distancing," *Journal of RAP (Actual Research in Psychology, Padang State University)* 5, no. 1 (February 24, 2017): 74-75, <https://doi.org/10.24036/rapun.v5i1.6642>.

³² Nuryu Wahidah and Ezzah Nuranisah, "Diskriminasi Perempuan Bercadar Dalam Perspektif Hegemoni," *Al-Mada: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya* 3, no. 1 (2020): 40, 1, <https://doi.org/10.31538/almada.v3i1.530>.

Meanwhile, the communication they built with their friends who did not wear a veil did not find any obstacles. All the informants admitted that they blended and were friendly well without any restrictions. This is because it is preceded by a good perception of the veil users towards those who do not wear the veil. As explained, most informants are of the opinion that using veil is sunnah. The hijab that is commonly known in society is enough to cover a woman's aura. Sheets are used more for sociological and psychological considerations, not for the bond of obligation. In fact, they have a critical awareness that those who wear a veil are not necessarily better in their personalities than those who do not wear a veil. As Al explains:

I have never looked down on a woman who does not wear a veil because I feel that even though I have worn a veil, I am not necessarily good before Allah, and maybe even a woman who has not worn a veil is much better before Allah, wearing a veil is sunnah so it is not obligatory for a woman to wear a veil at all but when Allah has given her guidance anything that is impossible according to us but according to Allah it can happen.

Al's perception of the virtue of her friend who did not wear a veil was not related to the use of a veil. According to her, the veil serves as a reminder not to do things that are not or are not in accordance with Islamic teachings. The most decisive thing for righteousness is the self itself. No different from the view above, Ml sees that the most important thing is to cover the *aurah*. Although opinions about the limits of the *aurah* itself differ among scholars. Both those who wear the veil and those who wear the veil do not automatically indicate a person's righteousness. As she explains:

If from my self, it's normal, but we pray that Allah will open the door to happiness, namely by wearing a hijab, even if she wears a veil, her heart is not necessarily the same as what we see outside of her, covering the *aurah* perfectly, not necessarily good morals, but if she wears a hijab or covers the *aurah*, there is already a law.

The awareness that the veil does not guarantee a person's righteousness is related to the phenomenon of the connection of the veil with the terrorist movement. For them, the informants, the existence of this phenomenon strengthens their view that there is no guarantee that the veil can make a person a pious Muslim woman. The veil can even be used as a protection from its properties that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings. As conveyed by Ml as follows:

Why sometimes people are afraid or also think that the veil is a terrorist, according to me why do terrorists use the veil because the first veil is good, sunnah, so it is considered good but they damaged the name of the veil with the crimes they committed to cover up the activities or acts that they will do, But back to the intention of our intentions are good, God willing, God will take care of you.

This condition is different from the results of Ibrahim Azzis' research which said that female students who wear veils are less open than other students who do not wear veils. Veiled female students usually gather at the 2nd floor of the *Mushola*. Among the respondents to his research, there are also those who say that there are usually some female students who are a little afraid if they see female students wearing veils and it seems that there are also those who have never said hello to female students who wear veils.³³

This is indeed about perception. The same object can be perceived differently. As Jalaluddin Rahmat said, a perception arises based on a person's experience of objects, events or relationships. obtained by inferring information and interpreting messages. Everyone's perception is different even though what they observe is exactly the same. This is because each individual in observing or living a certain object is in accordance with various determinant factors related to that individual.³⁴

³³ Ibrahim Azzis, "Pola interaksi mahasiswi bercadar di lingkungan kampus (studi kasus: mahasiswi Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta" (bachelorThesis, Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2019), 53-54, <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/45377>.

³⁴ Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *Psikologi Komunikasi*, 8th ed. (PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 1993), 51.

D. Conclusion

As Berger says in his theory of the social construction of reality, a person's actions are greatly influenced by the *stock of knowledge* he has. All informants in this study had a good stock of knowledge about the veil. They understand that the legitimacy of the use of the veil among Islamic religious experts, both commentators and jurisprudence, has caused differences of opinion. Some argue that the veil is a mandatory covering for women, while others are of the view that its legal status is only sunnah. Five out of six informants said that the veil is a sunnah covering garment. The use of the veil among them is driven more by psychological and sociological factors. Psychological factors are related to their feeling that the veil can control themselves from doing things that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings, encourage them to be able to do good, and give rise to a sense of security and comfort. Sociologically, the use of the veil functions as a shield from a social environment that is not friendly to women. Consequently, the findings indicate that the veil is influenced by psychological (comfort, self-control) and sociological (protection) factors rather than radicalism; this suggests the need for inclusive campus policies, the reduction of social prejudice, and the promotion of intergroup dialogue to foster harmony in a moderate Indonesian society.

With a good stock of knowledge, they externalize the veil with confidence in the midst of a society that still considers the veil as unusual clothing, some even have social stigma and prejudice. Socialization and adaptation carried out in this externalization process is by showing good behavior and carrying out positive activities, which are personal or group or community, such as social service. Similarly, strengthening self-concept (internalization) about the veil is carried out through communication either individually or in groups through the community.

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