

Religiously Fashionable: Constructing Identity of Urban Muslimah in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The rise of hijabers community in various major cities in Indonesia has led to a new identity of Muslimah (Muslim women) in urban areas. By focusing on Hijabers Community Bandung (HCB), this paper outlines the facts about how this community responds to modernity and globalization in a positive way by creating its own global tastes. The inventions of styles those adjusted with the Islamic values generally showed the phenomenon of hijab transformation as a symbol of modernity which was implicated in the emergence of new identities of urban Muslimah. Using participant observation and in-depth interview, this study reveals several things, among others; *First*, HCB members have attempted to construct their identity by means of legitimizing identity, resistance identity and projecting identity. *Second*, HCB proves that their existence is not only manifested through the appearance, but also the implementation of a number of socio-religious activities. *Third*, HCB demonstrates that wearing hijab is part of a symbolic communication over ideological identity, community affiliation, and social status. In general, the identity of urban Muslimah that constructed by HCB are those are accommodated modern culture without leaving their identity as Muslimah.

Keywords: *Identity construction, hijab, hijabers community, modes of existence*

INTRODUCTION

The word "hijab" is culturally as well as historically, comes from the Arabic terms and lexically meaning curtains, barriers, and something which limit between two things. Functionally, the hijab is also translated as "cap, wrap, curtain, veil, screens, partitions, screens, walls or coverings" (El-Guindi, 2006: 250). When a Muslimah wears a hijab, she aims to cover her beauty from the sight of others besides her husband and relatives. So, wearing hijab is basically aimed at covering their *aurat* (part of the body that forbidden to be seen) as one of the fundamental teachings of Islam.

Scientifically, hijab itself refers to the procedures of how to wear an appropriate dress in accordance with the guidance of religion (Islam). There are a number of terms that have the same meaning as the word hijab. In Arabic repertory during the Prophet time, women's clothing was known in several terms, among others: *khimar*, a special clothing that covers head; *dir'*, a special clothing that covers body; *niqab* and *burqa*, special clothing that covers the face area except the eyes; *idzar*, seamless clothing that covers all body to the toe; *rida'*, outer clothing that covers the upper body to the toes; and the *jilbab* that covers the outside of the head (Umar, 1996: 36-37). There is also a term *satr* that means clothing which often worn by jurists (Muthahhari, 2003: 2).

Hijab is also sociological. The meaning of hijab depends on where a woman lives, their context, and how they tried to define themselves. The general term hijab in the Middle East means separating or dividing walls which later evolved into covering the entire women's body, while in Indonesia, hijab has different meaning and interpretations. In 1980s and 1990s, the term hijab previously known as *jilbab* or *veil*. *Jilbab* is clothing to cover the entire female body except for their face and palms (Shihab, 2004: ix). *Jilbab* is also a formation and affirmation of religious identity (Al-Guindi, 2006: 167) and was considered a symbol of fashion of fringe and worn only on events

associated with religious rituals. In addition, it was only a woman who holds *hajjah*—those who have gone to Mecca for *hajj*—who keep wearing the hijab wherever they went (Azra, 2002: 45).

Meanwhile, according to Fatima Mernissi (1999) the term hijab has caused controversy since the word “hijab” means dividers or veils that convey the same to the word “curtain” in English, but then there was a phenomenon called by Nasarudin Umar (1996) as “depolitization” in history that changed its meaning into veil. Umar asserted that the term hijab was initially only known in the Middle East, but today the term hijab in Southeast Asia and especially in Indonesia is becoming more famous or more commercial than the other terms. Perhaps this is caused by the use of the word “hijab” is more global.

At some point, this factor implied to the differentiation between the “hijab” with the “jilbab” in Indonesia that were previously more familiar with the term jilbab. The popularity of the term hijab in Indonesia is closely linked to the emergence of a group of urban Muslimah those are Muslim fashion designers who later called themselves as Hijabers Community. This community, according to Agustina as cited by Fakhruroji (2015: 443) had a role in improving the image of hijab socially. As the development, Hijabers Community then expands its influence to some other big cities in Indonesia, including Bandung.

Comparing to other cities, Hijabers Community Bandung (HCB) has a different background. Fakhruroji (2015: 443) noted that the establishment of HCB is metamorphosed from Forum Annisa Bandung (FAB), which is a forum of religious teaching of young professionals and college students. Significant growth of members makes FAB was targeted by Hijabers Community who wishes to expand its influence in Bandung. Therefore, since March 2011, FAB was officially changed to Hijabers Community Bandung or HCB.

One of the main characteristics that can be identified from HCB members is always trying to show hijab with the latest model, both in colors and designs. Also, they usually applied some accessories to their hijab. Such hijab style has indicated a significant change of the meaning of covering *aurat* which was associated with theological aspects. Through this kind of hijab styles, they can cover their *aurat* as part of Islamic taught but still able to show how to be fashionable with the latest trends. By using the principles of hijab as introduced in this community, members became very creative in creating new styles and modern trends, unique and stylish hijab.

However, this community is not only sharing information related to new hijab designs but also held a number of social and religious activities. The presence of a new style in covering *aurat* has opened up new opportunities in urban Muslim identity construction. Through HCB, they improve the “rules” Islamic dress in manner and prove that Muslim dress will actually make their appearance become more attractive.

Theoretically, the urban community which incidentally is part of modern society has better chance to construct their identity. In contrast with the characteristics of traditional communities who see identity as rigid and established, modern society is actually seen identity as something that deals with relationships, engagement with other people so the concept of identity becomes more complicated and confusing (Weeks in Weedon, 2004: 1). Not surprisingly, Stuart Hall (2003) later confirmed that the identity of modern society is not a given, but a production that was never finished and always constructed through signification or representation system. Thus, identity is a social construct that culturally never been stable and always changes.

To understand the construction of identity conducted by HCB, this paper uses scheme offered by Manuel Castells (1997) through three propositions, namely *legitimizing identity*, *resistance identity* and *projecting identity* which generally has become an integral part of their efforts in strengthening its identity as urban Muslimah groups. Through these three propositions, HCB is like creating new narratives about the hijab that is more trendy and fashionable, contrasting from the previous stigma as stodgy, stuffy and traditional.

HCB is also not only show new construction in the dress which was based on religious values but also indicates the emergence of a new middle class that consists of a young female group with religious identity inherently. The birth of this middle class Muslim in urban areas is based on their

characteristics in a way to make something different (Faiz, 2014: 7) because in general, the HCB members have certain features in wearing hijab. Through this new identity, the image of hijab then not only be viewed in a functionally-normative way as a type of clothing that fit the religious norms, but the image of hijab has been transformed into a fashion that figures the “taste” and marks the class and social-economy identities. So, hijab is not only express religious orders but also as part of the modern lifestyle which is stylish and fashionable. Therefore, this article is important not only due to the uniqueness of HCB itself which has built a number of networks in several big cities in Indonesia but also to provide an overview of Islamic expression of an urban community through the fashion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Some previous research regarding Hijabers Community was relatively much done with different perspectives. At least four previous studies can be seen as a point of comparison. *First*, research conducted by Fakhruroji (2015) about the transformation of Muslimah self-concept among Hijabers Community. This study reveals about the transformation of self-concept of Hijabers Community members in Bandung that are becoming more positive as shown by the increased confidence and insight. In this context, Fakhruroji (2015) saw HCB has been a significant reference group that was so influential in the formation and transformation of the self-concept among members of HCB.

Second, research conducted by Faiz (2014) about commodification, elitism and religious identity of urban Muslimah among Hijabers Community Yogyakarta by using Pierre Bourdieu conception. Faiz concluded that the level of literacy among Hijabers Community Hijabers have implied to the practice of distinction and create a market through the commodification of Islamic symbols such as the hijab in the ranges of; spiritualization, modification, and commoditization, by building relations between religious cohesiveness and market through hijab *fandom* system. They practice a distinction according to class, image, and the desire to appear modern and religious with their capital they have shown through; performative elitism, group elitism, and elitism of a new social class.

Third, research conducted by Endah (2013) on the communication strategy of Hijabers Community in Yogyakarta in increasing interest in wearing hijab “a la Hijabers.” This research resulted in some general conclusions that although Hijabers Community has not fully used communication strategy but has changed and improved the public interest in wearing hijab as hijabers do.

Fourth, research conducted by Utami (2012) dealing with the meaning of the hijab as a symbol of Muslimah Hijabers Community in Bengkulu. Using symbolic interaction perspective, this study reveals about the shift of meaning and value in wearing hijab among this community. This study has also shown that the practice of meaning of the hijab in this community not only as a symbol of a Muslimah but also described the phenomenon of their efforts in adapting fashion trends.

The fundamental difference of this study comparing several previous studies lies in its focus that strengthens the argument that HCB is not only displayed the image of more fashionable Muslimah but also has spawned a social category urban Muslimah. They establish their identity as urban Muslimah through the hijab style they wearing as social symbols. Nevertheless, being urban Muslimah is not only sufficient by wearing hijab but also to improve the quality of religious knowledge.

This study uses three key concepts related to each other, namely the concept of identity construction, fashion as communication concept, and mode of existence. The first concept is the identity construction. Especially for modern society, identity is a complex and confusing (Weeks in Weedon, 2004: 1). Among other things, this is due to the views that identity can be multiplied, personal, arbitrary, and can be made as desired (Kellner, 2010: 316). A person can choose, create and reinvent his/her identity so the possibilities of one’s life to expand or shrink. As concluded by

Pawanteh (2015: 528) that identities are constantly shaped in communicative act in daily life and interactions, so it is not surprisingly when Hall (2003) asserts that identity is not something given, but always produced. Thus for modern society, identity is a social construct that culturally never been stable and always the subject of change and innovation.

Therefore, Castells (1997) argues that in the context of modernity, identity will construct if only internalize by subjects since identity is based on the practice of meaning and experience of the subject about something. Therefore, the process of construction of meaning based on a cultural attribute or a set of cultural attributes are prioritized over other sources of meaning. In Castells notion, the concept of identity is more communal while at the same time as confirmed every individual has a feeling of *sense of belonging* and *sense of difference* that is capable constructed itself, it means the beginning of the formation of identity at the level of the individual who may be different among one from another.

Sociologically, as noted by Castells, all identities are constructed by using materials derived from historical, geographical position, biology, productive and reproductive institutions, collective memory and personal fantasies. In addition, it is also shaped by the apparatuses power and religious aspects. Nevertheless, the individual, social group, and even society proceed in all forms of the material, and re-purposing of individuals based on the social, cultural projects that are rooted in social structures, frameworks and space and time of the community. Furthermore, Castells considers that this identity construction can be done through one of the three propositions, depending on the context of identity construction, which are, legitimizing identity, resistance identity and projecting identity.

First, legitimizing identity illustrated by the phenomenon that identity is something that was introduced by the dominant institutions in a society. The institution then rationalizing of the identity they want to internalize the community members through the main actors. In this context, identity is introduced through a series of ethical and physical characteristics that are easily recognizable by others.

Second, resistance identity occurs when actors feel that identity is impaired in the society so that the action of opposition on the process is necessary. At this level, the construction of identity is more of an update or actions to give new meaning for identity. The emergence of this new kind of identity gave birth to the politics of identity in the social order. *Third*, projecting identity describes the phenomenon when social actors are trying to build a new identity that re-define their role and position in the community and trying to transform the existing social structure.

The second concept used in this study is the concept of the mode of existence. In a modern society that is often identified as a capitalist society, Erich Fromm revealed two modes of human existence through one of his works entitled *To Have or To Be*. Fromm (1976) describes these two things as *having*, that were judged as something that is more negative as in this mode of existence, people can only acquire by purchase, own, and obsessed with something. *Having* seemed to be the only marker of their existence so they willing to do anything to possess things.

The second mode is called as being. In contrary with of having, being is more positive, healthy, and actualizes human authenticity. In this mode, a person feels exist trough work, process, and realize himself. In other words, to be understood as a process of "being". Issues are reviewed by Fromm is very close to the modern society where identity and existence are directly proportional to the lifestyle of modern society tend to be consumptive. In other words, the mode of being is more explained that one's existence is not something given or can be obtained in a way that instant, but always in the process. It is this process that makes it more meaningful.

Two modes are actually emerging as Fromm assumed that human nature is not a specific set of potential who simply accept what is gained from his/her cultural environment, but there is a factor that encourages inner existential consisting of productive and non-productive encouragement. Productive impulse is identical with loving life, while the non-productive synonymous with destructive-necrophilic attitude reflected through a receptive, exploitative attitude, and accumulate resources.

Both types of existential impulse are equally at the root of human life orientation. Fromm considered that the proliferation of consumer lifestyle created by capitalism culture has made social character among most of the of modern society who becomes passive and non-productive as well as more "having" oriented. Modernity has been giving patterns and lifestyle by practicing consumption. These symptoms at the same time have shown the decreasing space for an effort to foster "being" orientation. However, the modes of "being" will always exist because it is also a basic orientation that is inherent in human beings so expectation to maintain this orientation is maintained. Those with this orientation aware that happiness could achieved not only by economic and profit alone.

Both of these modes of existence at particular point relating to the interaction in a broader scope. That's why Fromm assumes that each mode of existence which will positively bring up an intimate relationship with compassion rooted in bonds of brotherhood and solidarity. And vice versa, negative mode of existence simply creates relationships and artificial familiarity and full of falsehoods. According to Fromm, an individual can fully achieve the humanitarian nature of the society which gives space for such individuals to reach an understanding about them by seeing him/herself as the subject of him/her potential rather than to act in conformity (cited in Subono, 2010: 20).

Human being is an independent person but they also cannot accept solitude. Every human being will always try to overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation by joining groups or communities for various purposes. In these communities, they express themselves and play mode of existence so that its presence to get appreciated. Despite the mode of existence is operated individually, but basically, a community can also affect individuals by the values implemented in the community.

Finally, this paper also uses the concept of fashion as a communication presented by Malcolm Barnard (2011). Functionally, term fashion is different with clothes, clothing, and so forth. Fashion is more define the style, identities, and social status. Thus, in this context, fashion is not just clothes, vests, blouses, pants, shoes, hats etc., but also houses, cars, glasses, jewelry, food, drinks and so on. In other words, the meaning contained by the word "fashion" is so extensive which is not only a matter of clothing and accessories, but other functional objects combined with design elements of a sophisticated and unique which can be a tool to show and boost the appearance of the subject. In this context, fashion serves to convey a message to the other party.

This is not surprisingly if Thomas Carlyle said that fashion is "emblems of the soul". Fashion is a sign that could indicate the identity of the subject. At least, this is implied in the phrase famous of Umberto Eco quoted by Barnard (2011) who said, "I speak through my clothes." Clothing that we wear makes a statement about who we are, even if we do not really care about fashion, people who interact with us would interpret that our appearance conveys a message. This statement brings us to the communication functions of the clothes we wear in our everyday life, both in the formal and informal atmosphere (Barnard, 2011: 6).

Every fashion contains values that would communicate through what is shown. In many ways, fashion is a form of individualistic expression that individuals use to distinguish themselves from others while stating some uniqueness. Individual expression aim to differentiate them may extend into the social and cultural sphere at a certain point the potential to establish an identity.

Therefore, in a broader context, fashion can be seen as a communicative dimension and cultural phenomenon that is used by certain groups to construct and communicate its identity. This is caused by the characteristics of fashion itself, which has a non-verbal way to produce and exchange meanings and values. At this point, fashion is no longer merely fulfilling a practical function to protect the body and artistic functions as a work of art but also has communicative aspects that can be used as a symbol and reflection of culture.

As a form of communication, fashion could convey an artifactual message that is non-verbal. It can protect us from bad weather or from possible injury in particular sports. It also helped us to hide certain parts of our body and therefore has the modesty function. According to Desmond Morris cited by Ibrahim (2007: 243) clothing also performed the role as a cultural display since it communicates our cultural affiliation. Through specific fashion, we could identify the country or regional origin of a person from the clothes they wear.

Although we know very well the proverb that says “do not judge a book by its cover,” but in fact, the appearance which involved fashion that inherent in our body has the potential to make people make conclusions about who we are. Through fashion, we can also distinguish a person's social class, whether a person is a professional in his work or not, whether a person is serious or casual, how a person's political affiliation, including how a person's religious identity.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research that focuses more on process. As noted by Creswell, qualitative research is a research process to investigate the social problem or human problem, where the researchers built a complex picture and holistic by analyzing the words, reported the detail views of informants and conduct in a natural situation (Budiastuti, 2012: 39).

To obtain the data, this study conducted several techniques, among others; (1) Participant observation was done by direct observation in the field to get a valid picture. Objects observed in this research including actor, activity, act, and feeling among HCB board and members; (2) In-depth interviews were addressed toward twenty HCB boards and members which were selected by purposive approach. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information about experiences, feelings, and actions as a member of the HCB; and (3) to collect documents that include; drawings, writings, or monumental works associated with the object of research on HCB in constructing, shaping and introducing their identity as urban Muslimah.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since the beginning of its appearance, HCB is a community that embodies the urban Muslimah of Bandung to share the Islamic knowledge. This is relating to the context of the beginning of HCB which were different from other Hijabers Community in Indonesia where HCB is a metamorphosis of Forum Annisa Bandung (FAB) commonly held religious activities

among Muslimah in Bandung. Therefore, it is not surprising when FAB turned into HCB, they retain these activities.

The inauguration of FAB became HCB has implications on their characteristics and activities. They not only done study group but also by introducing Islamic dress which is more fashionable. Members of this community believe that what they do can indicate that hijab could look fashionable and trendy. This hijab style of this community itself seems to be their characteristic of all members. As Hijaber Communities in other cities, one of the main missions of HCB is changing the hijab image as a modern lifestyle. They create new narratives of hijab so it can be accepted by urban people not only as a religious order but also as part of a modern lifestyle.

HCB as Identity of Urban Muslimah

In using Castell's view of the construction of identities, HCB phenomenon shows three propositions simultaneously with different portions. They legitimize identity by creating a new narrative about the hijab. In this context, HCB plays as a dominant institution for all members to provide an understanding and rationalization are then internalized in the whole community. As detailed as follows,

"HCB has hope to make people no longer see the person who wearing hijab was old-fashioned, tacky, which makes people afraid to wear hijab, because of some people thoughts so, HCB is also has a certain value so that people wearing hijab because we could still look fashionable without leaving the Islamic boundaries. In addition, it is improper to see women with hijab as ancient, since basically Islam can also be displayed in a more beautiful way. Community members can also share knowledge about Islam, as well as various things about the daily life in accordance with the Islamic rules" (Informant 3, March 2016).

Informant 3 who is one of the HCB boards, described the process of legitimation identity as a Muslim HCB relatively literate urban fashion. According to her, one of the causes of Muslim youth in urban areas is reluctant to wear hijab because they could not look fashionable. HCB dismissed this notion by creating a new sort of legitimacy that the hijab could remain fashionable and trendy. Therefore, HCB is trying to change the construction of this kind of understanding by introducing a number of modes and the way he was kept in a more appealing. Furthermore, HCB provides views that hijab will make any Muslimah much more attractive and polite. Wearing hijab can also be combined with fashion to cover *aurat* and remain modern and enhance self-confidence.

The attempts of legitimizing identity are not only done by providing an understanding of how to apply the hijab which is fashionable and stylish but is also done by the implementation of several other supporting activities, especially socio-religious activities. Some routines are often organized by this community include hijab day out, gathering, mosque-to-mosque visiting, malls, and cafes. Implementation of teaching activities at the mall, for example, is a picture of the legitimacy their identity as a group of urban Muslimah since mall or cafe is basically is public places, even often identified with consumer lifestyle.

This phenomenon leads us to the second proposition in identity construction carried out HCB, which is resistance identity. Fashionable dress styles and organizing lectures in

“unusual” places this has given rise to controversy in the public perspective. Some people see that HCB is actually the socialite group who use religious symbols. This view has more or less affected the values that are believed by HCB members so they do oppositional actions aimed at restoring the community reputation.

In this case, members of HCB acknowledge the negative view of those who see their activities tend glamor. As detailed below,

It has been seen as a socialite who used to gather at the mall, using expensive and branded goods. This is caused by the founders of Hijabers Community itself mostly came from the fashion designer, so how else? As long as we do not violate the rules of Islam, our activities in malls and cafes are not special for me. Now, it's just how that HCB has an identity. Later, we hold charity events and more routine Islamic teaching activities. So it was not just a priority to the appearance, but also an inner beauty ... (Informant 2, March 2016).

The above description shows that HCB did grow up in urban communities amid globalization and modernization, and also initiated by the fashion designers so it is not surprising that their activities took place in malls, cafes or restaurants that have become part of the urban lifestyle. However, they dismissed actively the notion that they only do a gathering but followed up with some more useful activities such as teaching activities, charity and so on.

In addition, their efforts dismissed the negative assumption is also with popularizing the wear hijab in order to more widely known through “hijab and beauty class.” This activity is filled with information sharing about hijab style guides and demos of make-up that became the main attraction for the ladies. In addition to the hijab and beauty classes, this community also held teaching activities every month in order to strengthen religious knowledge in general and in particular about the hijab that presents several speakers who are competent.

Meanwhile, the third proposition of identity construction carried out by HCB is through projecting identity that is, a proposition that describes the phenomenon when social actors are trying to build a new identity that re-define their role and position in the midst of society and strive to transform the social structure there is. In practical terms, this proposition is shown by a number of measures aimed at strengthening the position and role in modern society.

Institutionally, HCB introduces and spreads their identity through a book or magazine that is widely accessible to assert the position of this community in the structure of society. In addition, Community Hijabers Bandung also took advantage of social media is not only used for communication but also as a network for sharing and consulting. Not only is social media, the community is also cooperating with the mass media to assert their role and identity. Among some of the mass media who have worked with this community, among others; Rajawali Television, Ardan 105.9 FM Bandung, Urban 106.3 FM, 107.5 FM PR, MQ 102.7 FM, Raka FM Bandung.

Some media whether print, electronic and social media, especially media specifically addressing women's community and is positioned as a network for these communities to build and affirm their identity as Muslim urban. In fact, these communities are trying to build a narrative about their identity by sponsoring a number of feature movies to expand its influence not only in Indonesia but also in the world. Through this medium, they communicate to the public about the identity, activity and their existence so that gradually

is expected to have a role and strategic position in a transformation effort toward urban Muslimah.

More than Style

Hijabers community grown in an urban community environment amid globalization and modernization. Not surprisingly, they have characteristics of modern culture such as fashion, fashionable, using malls as the main place to interact, enjoy the latest movies in theaters, renowned, eat lunch or even just hang out at a cafe or a restaurant as a whole has been a feature of their lifestyle. They assume that their lifestyles which tend to modern may be adopted by the community. In fact, this modern lifestyle seems to be a common identity among hijabers in Bandung, including in several other major cities.

As a community that was originally born from the Muslimah young fashion designers in Indonesia, it seems fair if Hijabers Community does not require a relatively long time to be recognized. Even for Muslim teenagers, the style is shown by this community often becomes the main reference to look fashionable and Islamic at the same time. Hijabers community mission is not to recruit and increase the number of members but creating a hijab with style so that it can become a trend at the community level.

As outlined Fromm (1976) that in order to prove its existence, one can only obtain it instantly just by having something or join a particular community as having a mode. This mode is more prevalent in the consumerist society groups. However, identity is not something that can be achieved instantly but requires a process. Therefore, a phenomenon demonstrated by HCB in an effort to build an identity as urban Muslim women should be appreciated as being action through a number of activities that not only empowers its members, but also other communities.

In other words, this community is not merely “showing off” a new style of hijab, but also comes with a number of other social activities cannot be separated from the existence hijabers community itself so that it indicates that they made a number of strategic efforts to be recognized to exist. In Fromm's perspective, this community has demonstrated the existence mode of being that shows a longer process rather than having the only tangible mere consumer behavior. Similarly, members who believe that being part of HCB does not mean have reached the destination as a Muslim, but this community can help them in the process to become a Muslim because by joining them into this community, they get a lot of knowledge not only about fashion, but also about religious knowledge.

Nevertheless, a negative allegation against this community as consumptive is still remains. But they still showed their roles while proving that the identity of this community is not only characterized by their physical appearance is fashionable, but also religious and humanist. The HCB has the belief that wearing the hijab is not just a matter of closing the genitalia, but also maintain the behavior in order to actualize ourselves as human authenticity.

Among some of their efforts to construct identity is by organizing activities to highlight the image of the board and its members' diverse professional backgrounds. This work is done as reinforcement that this community is a community active in the construction of urban identity as a Muslim. One of the routine activities of this community is the hijab and beauty classes which generally aim to provide guidance hijab style creations and fashion shows. Through these classes were also given an overview berhijab fashionable and trendy. As implied by Sarah Hesty in the following statement,

With hijab and beauty class, we can get a lot of new ideas so that people become interested in the new models of the hijab. Ends, the hijab can still pretty ... Since this community exists, there are many Muslimah wants to wear hijab ... (Informant 1, March 2016).

One of the purposes of this activity is to share tips and knowledge about wearing fashionable hijab that can be applied in everyday life. In practical terms, the activities of hijab and beauty class introduce hijab guides and make-up demos to make the public more interested in HCB. In addition to the hijab and beauty class, Hijabers Community also organizes teaching activities to strengthen the understanding of religion in general by presenting the religious scholars as stated before. This teaching activity is a kind of medium to improve the Islamic values among the members so that they are more empowered in religious practices.

Meanwhile, other HCB activities include; hijab day out, gathering, mosque-to-mosque and mall visiting, and social philanthropy. All these activities prove that identity built by HCB is not only the physical identity but also mental and morals. Through these actions, they are not only confirm their existence in terms of appearance but also socially so it is impressed that to achieve urban Muslimah status is not only to change the appearance but also improving the activities of socio-religious that benefit society.

Hijab: Ideology, Community Affiliation and Social Attribute

In many cases, HCB efforts to accommodate towards globalization and modernity are a form of identity negotiation needs to be appreciated. Their identity is nothing another construction effort for urban Muslimah so they do not feel constrained by the obligation to cover *aurat* since this obligation is often assumed as away from the modern lifestyle. This process suggests that covering *aurat* as a religious practice can be negotiated with modernity values through the use of religious symbols such as hijab so, at the same time, it would be a moral legitimacy for their religious lifestyle in the public space.

In Barnard (2011) perspective that sees fashion as a communication, wearing hijab in the context of hijabs community is a meaningful action. In this context, hijab is not only to cover *aurat*, but also deliver a range of communications messages. As for some of these meanings can generally be identified on three things, namely; as a manifestation of religious ideology, as a symbol of community affiliation and as attributes that describe social status.

First, hijab as a fashion which was worn by a Muslimah not only serves to cover *aurat*, but can also be seen as a symbolic medium that communicates the Islamic ideology of its Muslimah as the subject. As already know that in Islam, covering *aurat* is a fundamental obligation, so when women wear hijab, she is indirectly conveying a message to people about the ideology of her religion, regardless of hijab style and fashion.

In this context, wearing hijab is an ideological expression that is the most fundamental. For Western-secular people who see religion as something that is private, wearing hijab in public spaces could be assumed as the practice of communicating identity and ideology. Hijab, in this context, is a manifestation of Islamic ideology because Althusser (2006) revealed that the ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to the real conditions of their existence. In other words, what was demonstrated by this community is basically not only covering their *aurat* but can also be interpreted as symbolic communication behavior to express a material ideology such as hijab.

Second, as a fashion, wearing hijab in HCB style can be seen as an attempt to deliver a symbolic message about community affiliation about where come from. As a community, characteristics and culture developed by HCB are quite prominent, especially through a number of hijab models and styles as well as accessories they were worn. Thus, wearing hijab in HCB style is potential to define as part of a modern community that has implications in improving their self-confidence. This as described by Novera Meylinda below,

Basically, wearing fashionable hijab could boost self-confidence and prestige value, so when we meet up with other people, we will not feel ashamed and become more confident (Informant 4, March 2016).

The increasing of self-confidence as described above is basically referred to the fashionable style which is the identity of HCB so wearing hijab with HCB style meant to convey the message that they are part of the modern Muslimah community which is stylish and fashionable. Through fashion, this community seemed to do some sort of distinction among other groups.

Third, not all Muslimah wear hijab in hijab style so this gives the impression that HCB occupies a certain social status. This is shown through activities that they hold in places that tend to be a classy sort of cafes, hotels or malls. This effort is considered as a strategic place to introduce their identity and in an effort to increase the social dignity among Muslimah who for some parties are still seen as “stuck” in the domestic area.

Not only that, HCB believes that accommodating global culture is one of the strategies to strengthen their social existence, one of the strategies is to use some English terms. Even the word “hijabers” itself is a hybrid term of two languages namely Arabic (hijab) and the English (suffix -ers). Not only the name, in daily life they used terms English among members is common because they are made up of young professionals with well-educated people. So it is not surprising if the events that they hold using foreign-sounding terms, such as *Hijab Class, Fashion Hijab, Bazaar Hijab, Hijab and Beauty Class*.

The use of English terms does not only aim to attract young Muslimah who is known to be more sociable but has become the identity of this community. This is done as an effort to form a new narrative about the identity of a Muslimah and prove that they can be part of the global community by accommodating modern culture without regardless of the identity as a Muslim.

CONCLUSION

In constructing identity as urban Muslimah, HCB carried out three propositions, namely; *legitimizing identity* through the creation of new narratives about the hijab. At this level, HCB is an institution that provides understanding and rationalizing the entire members about the urban Muslimah concept who are more fashionable and trendy shown through a number of styles and in a more appealing. In addition, this level is also conducted through socio-religious activities. The modern lifestyle has resulted in negative sentiment then addressed through actions of *resistance identity*, namely through the implementation of activities that are more useful as teaching activities, charity and so on.

Meanwhile, *projecting identity* is done through books or magazines that are widely accessible to assert the position of this community in the society structure. They also take advantage of social media to share, consulting and delivering information. Not only social media, the community are also cooperating with the mass media to assert their role and identity. In fact, they expanded the narrative of their identity by sponsoring a number of

featured movies that would gradually play a role in the effort to transform the urban Muslimah.

Nevertheless, the existence of this community as urban Muslim does not construct instantly but grows in a long process. In other words, this community is not only made hijab as the identity on the surface but also as a manifestation of their existence as a Muslim. They did not merely “showing off” new style of the fashionable and stylish hijab, but also accompanied by other activities that cannot be separated from the existence of the community itself. In the perspective of Erich Fromm, this community has demonstrated the mode of existence “being” that involves a long process rather than having that usually only tangible mere consumer behavior which occurs instantaneously.

A number of activities were organized HCB prove identity constructed by HCB is not only physical but also mental and morals. Through these activities, they are not only the confirmation of their existence in terms of appearance but also socially thus giving the impression that being an urban Muslimah is not enough just to change the appearance, but also improving socio-religious activities that are more beneficial to society.

In addition, the identity of which was constructed by HCB through fashion can be seen as an act of symbolic communication that delivering a meaning, i.e., as a manifestation of religious ideology, as a symbol of community affiliation and as attributes that describe social status. Hijab is not merely clothing, but also a symbolic medium that connects the subject with ideology (religious) beliefs. In addition, hijab is also hijab also communicate the community affiliation of the subject. Lastly, in the case of HCB, wearing hijab is also communicating a certain social status so hijab is not only carried out religious order but also as an effort to increase the social standard of a Muslimah.

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