

HIJAB STYLES DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA

A cultural strategy of hijab communities
who make hijab fashion into Indonesian culture.

by:

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Abstract

Hijab fashion styles are growing rapidly especially in Indonesia. Hijab fashion in Indonesia was once considered to be old-fashioned or fashion for elder people. Hijab culture is obviously not genuinely an Indonesia's traditional culture. Its existence came to our country was not easy at first they came in. Nowadays, hijab has become a worldwide style and one of the biggest fashion industries that creates specific fashion trend. Indonesia known as one hijab fashion capital worldwide. Indonesia continuously making various design innovations of hijab styles, through their Muslim designers, street styler, and Muslim communities. This essay will discuss reasons how and why Indonesia can maintain their worldwide-known-creativity in making hijab designs, and how hijab style has become a social change in Indonesian lifestyles and society. While the developing hijab style reaches its top, this hijab development also has its drawbacks at the same time when they have received so many accomplishments. The critics emerged and ask hijab designer to design hijab fashion in a more humanist way rather than fulfilling woman's desire in this consumption era. How woman's desire has been driven, so it also changes the way women prays are the real social drift that needs to be taken care of. This essay will show a holistic point of view of Indonesian hijab style development. Hijab culture become one good example of particular culture that is still own its identity, even when its driven by politic of desires, within small communities has their own ways to revive its natural culture in fashion and styles.

Intoduction

I strongly believe that humanism is focused on human dignity, nobility, and human triumph on goodness progress on their society. I strongly believe that humanism could be also interpreted in hijab fashion style development. Humanism in hijab fashion is how we followed fashion with faith and modesty. Hijab fashion appointed women dignity, preserving women nobility and rescued them from harm. Furthermore, hijab constriction considered exemptly individual, according to culture they live in. In conclusion to that hijab style development with wide range of creativity is a representation of humanism itself. Hereinafter, let me illustrate my article on how Indonesian muslima turned hijab fashion into Indonesian culture.

This article also explain how Indonesian muslima strategies on conserving hijab, and their effort making Indonesia as a world hijab fashion capital.

Hijab culture in Indonesia is obviously not genuinely an Indonesia's traditional culture. Its existence came to our country was not easy at first they came in. Hijab-wear has been through a lot of dispute before it can be accepted and transformed into our country's iconic symbol of Muslim fashion even among Muslim people worldwide. Hijab-wear has its own "normality" standard of styles in every decades of its existence. At the same time, despite the fact of uniformity that what trend fashion's always have, hijab-wear has been trying to reach an Indonesian acceptance as a solid mix-culture between Indonesian traditional and Middle East culture. Nowadays hijab-wear has accepted very well among Indonesian citizens, and has wored broadly in cities all over of Indonesia. In the end, hijab wear turns into our own culture, an Indonesian culture.

Upon Islam, there are rules to be followed as in Al-A'raf :26 :

"Hai anak Adam, sesungguhnya Kami telah menurunkan kepadamu pakaian untuk menutupi auratmu dan pakaian indah untuk perhiasan. Dan pakaian taqwa itulah yang paling baik. Yang demikian itu adalah sebagian dari tanda-tanda kekuasaan Allah, mudah-mudahan mereka selalu ingat".

We can take a conclusion based on that verse that Allah asked every Muslim (include men or women) to wear god-fearing clothes as our observance to Allah. Boundaries and functions upon Islam are:

- a. To covers women genitals/*aurat*, this is a main function of wearing hijab-clothes since almost all parts of the body considered as beauty (especially for women), and avoiding men/women from fitna. (QS. Al A'raaf : 26)
- b. To decorate, as a beautifier of our appearances in front of Allah and other people. (QS. An Nahl : 81)
- c. As signifier to be recognized as a good women and avoiding bad people disturbance. (QS. Al Ahzab : 59)
- d. As a requisite of comforts, securities, healths and avoiding self from dangerous attack or incursion.

DISCUSSION

Reasons of Muslima Style Diversities and Their Strategies

Few verses on Al-Qur'an ought to uniform Muslima way of dressing in covering their aurat. But the limitation on how far aurat has to be covered interpreted differently at each Islamic countries and cultures worldwide. This is because there is no details laws/drawings/details in colors or cutting etc. that written on Al-Qur'an what kind of clothes supposed to be wear. In result of such freely interpreting that restriction we can't avoid such diverse hijab styles developments on each Islamic countries all over the world. Allah knows we going to live in diverse cultures, so there are no pictures or drawings for further detail restrictions on hijab. Let's take a look at Quraish Shihab's quote on this problems:

Adat mempunyai peranan yang sangat besar dalam ketetapan hukum. Karena itu dinyatakan bahwa "adat dapat berfungsi sebagai syarat, dan apa yang ditetapkan oleh adat kebiasaan, dapat dinilai telah ditetapkan oleh agama." Perbedaan adat kebiasaan, sebagaimana perbedaan tempat dan waktu, dapat melahirkan perbedaan fatwa/ketetapan hukum. Ini telah berlaku sejak zaman Rasul saw. dan sahabat-sahabat beliau. (Shihab, 2012:195)

Based on the quotes above, culture has a very important role in religious provisions. What has appointed as cultural rules can be transferred as religious provisions. Religious scholars stated that some of Islamic provisions have universal disposition and perpetual, while another provisions considered to be local, and contemporary, based on exact human's period of time.

Nonetheless even on hijab-wear, fashion is still existed. The styles develop in a wide range of choices. There are only few countries considered as hijab world fashion capital. One of them is Indonesia. Hijab fashion styles are growing rapidly especially in Indonesia. Hijab fashion in Indonesia was once considered to be old-fashioned or fashion for elder people. Nowadays, hijab has become a worldwide style and one of the biggest fashion industry that creates specific fashion trend. The worldwide trend itself is centralized in Indonesia as Indonesia continuously making various innovations of hijab styles through their Muslim designers, street styles, and Muslim communities. They gathered annually to support creative innovation of hijab fashion. This essay will discuss reasons why Indonesia can maintain their worldwide-known-creativity in making hijab designs, and how hijab style has become a social change in Indonesian lifestyles and society.

First, one biggest reason why Indonesia continuously creates innovative hijab styles designs is because Indonesia already has strong fundamental Muslim designers associations. For instance, IPBMI is one community of Muslim designers that holds

fashion event annually and requires their members to always create new style. This kind of designer community takes control to set a trend in the future where high economy class becomes their target market. Another examples, there are so many fahion events held and keep showing hijab fashion as one part of their shows, such as Indonesia Fashion Week, Jakarta Fashion Week, Hijab Fashion Week, etc. Moreover, these fashion events and communities also have their own loyal customers from upper class whose people trust them as the style leader among Indonesian society. The upper class society regularly attends many events so the presses often take photographs of the outfit they wear. As a result, every clothes they wear will eventually being copied by their followers in the middle or lower class – soon known as a trend. Horns says:

“both rigid class distinction and it opposite, the classless society, function in ways that limit the degree and speed of fashion change. Democracy, on the other hand, provides the ideal climate for fashion racing. The constant push of the middle classes up the social ladder creates the driving force for an ever-changing shift in the design of clothes worn by the upper classes.” (Horn, 1981:111)

In contrast, somehow the style by designers are looked so glamorous, yet high-price so it's hard to adapt to our regular lifestyle since we rarely attends luxurious events like upper class attended. These facts shows how much fashion-racing conducted in our country between lower class-middle class and upper class society.



Picture Famous designers Ria Miranda and Dian Pelangi who forces hijab fashion changes both in styles and lifestyles society. (Picture taken from hijabscarf_blogspot.com)

The second reason of Indonesian creativity in hijab style is the community support group. One famous community is Hijabers Community from Bandung, Jakarta and Yogyakarta. Hijabers community is a community with all-women members. This group gathers around to discuss important topics related to Islam religion that currently happens in Muslim society. Style and make-up topic are their favorite topics to discuss. They turn thoughts in their discussion, share knowledge, and share a lot of stylish tips to their members. Not only by discussions, they regularly hold events, photo contests, bazaar, and built their own fashion label as their way to spread their thoughts and creativities in fashion style and their way to disseminate Allah's verse and provisions. Few members even post their stylish photos of their hijab to social media on internet and uploading step by step on how to put on makeup and stylish veils on youtube.



Pictures Hijabers Community uploaded activities pictures. Picture taken from Hijabers Community)

Their activities on social media will be soon known globally and easily get teenagers attention faster. Moreover, their styles are easily recognizable in the society and quickly copied by others non-member. The style they are making somehow is different from the one that designers have been made, so the style is catchy enough to become one of the best alternative outfits among the youngsters. Unlike the heavy, glamorous look that designers make, Hijaber community make an easy wear stuff, light clothes with simple design and easy to be mixed and matched clothes to provide teenagers daily wears. The style they are creating is very trending worldwide, their labels often get invitations from around the globe to sell their fashion products and get good sells. For the middle class economy, this kind of style is also very trendy in our society.



Hanna Faridl and Fifi Alvianto the Community bloggers

Third reason will be the bloggers or fashion street stylers of hijab. Since most people especially the youngsters love to upload their stylish photos on their blog or other social media, Indonesia as the biggest Muslim country contributes a large number of hijab style up-loaders in social media. There are hundreds of normal people at their school-age or university student in society who love to upload their outfit photo with distinctive style from regular style usually shown in magazine or other mass media. These people usually take their photos on the street, in front of their house, their school, and often taken outdoors photos, so that is why they are called street style blogger. The bloggers offer unique yet quirky style that catches people's mind. They often mix fashion and accessories in a creative, distinctive way of style. Unlike the style in mainstream fashion, bloggers style mix unusual items to their style, like headpiece, big bow tie, neon colors, mixed patterns, and other unique combinations. Some of them even make the outfit by themselves so

the look will be totally different. As a result, fashion street-styler creates a new alternative style that is very easy to adopt since the creators are just normal people. What they put into style is everyday basics but with an enormous power of mix and match. So, people will easily find the same item shown in their blog, with no extra cash to be given out. Finally this cheap and easily absorb style is the most popular style grown at the society. Some of their styles are even copied by famous designers to boost their signature style of their designs.



Indah Nada Puspita Indonesian famous hijab street-styler. (Picture taken on her blog)

Hence, Indonesian Muslim outfit best known for their style varieties created. There are no typical fashion styles that Indonesia have as a country marks. We live in tropical weather that is not required a person to wear outfits based on the extreme climate. Tropical climate allows people to wear every clothes they want to in all year long, with every styles they want to have. Even more, we are living in a various cultural heritage country, so we tend to accept any kind of differences other people are wearing, and far more tolerant with style changes. As a result, Indonesian provide wide range of hijab styles as citizen expressions, such as: androgyny style, feminine classic style, hippies, sweet romantic style, edgy style, color-blocked of the 60's, dark and sporty or masculine style. To illustrate, for today's trend, the cut of the clothes are usually in asymmetrical cuts, with a lot of frills, shredded fabrics, or even shirring techniques to giving up some volume to the clothes and required loads garment to be use. Minimalist lovers create asymmetrical clean cuts without too many frills, less decorative details and minimum garment to be use. Sporty, masculine and androgyny style are the classic style in hijab fashion, since not every woman are willing to always wear a long skirt and be a feminine. Not only the clothes models are explored on this broad range of styles, accessories are also explored for examples: headpieces, brooches, pins, veil clips, necklaces, bracelets, shoes, bags. Each accessory adjusts to match each style. Specifically, how they put on their veils into their heads are also explored, they are using shawls, turbans, pashminas, square veils, laces, ribbons with various types of fabrics.



Contemporary designs in fashion by Itang Yunasz

While the developing hijab style reaches its top, this hijab development also has its drawbacks even when they have received so many accomplishments. The critics received from many people for hijabers based on their styles varieties. Firstly, many people thought hijaber woman loose the essentials meaning of covering aurat. Some people think that they are overdone by forgetting the core meaning of hijab covering. Number of styles has banned by few extremists. They criticized by the color they chose, style they're picked, how they put their veils on their heads and by how they represent Muslim women by their outfits. The essences of modesty, politeness, are slowly diminished by the attractive, luxurious, glamorous and eye-catching styles. Some styles even shows overrated visual attraction for example they choose festive fabrics, and combine it with luxurious accessories.

Secondly, they tend to follow their virtual idol they seen on social media, television, or magazines. Hijab itself becomes a new lifestyle of an urban people trend whose lost meanings and religious essence. As we can see they sometimes use hijab only for the trend and commodity than to upgrading their religion obedience. This is to say, hijab fashion product has just only become a commodity that sells big numbers. In other words, when it comes to fashions, not even one product can be commodity-free product. Every hijab fashion creates not only fulfilling their needs but also Muslim woman's desires. This goes back to the very core of woman desires: beauty. Every woman wants to look beautiful while Islam thought them to

live in modesty and hold their desires. This leads hijab fashions existence under a man-gazed politics where all woman have desires to be look beautiful in front of every man. One famous Islamic chaplain Felix stated on his book: “perlu kita sampaikan hijab bukanlah pernyataan ‘aku sudah baik’ atau ‘aku tidak dosa’. Hijab sederhana hanya pernyataan ‘aku ingin taat’.” (Siauw, 2013:132) this means that every women can delivered their devotion to Allah through hijab. The problem on how or ways they are delivering fidelity is very individual. I thought this is how humanism in hijab fashion is. We can’t assess other people devotion by their hijab, because its very individual and can be very different from us.

The critic’s emerged when they reached their top popularity. Muslim women considered can’t be as famous or attract attention as big as their today’s popularity. Nonetheless, we can see numbers who wear hijab are increasingly growing. Despite the facts they only wear because of a trend or so, we still have to admit that this is still a positive social growth. The positivity are shown on their efforts to search Islamic information to improve their religion knowledge, as a result, this kind of lifestyle also changes the way they live with others, improve modesty, maintaining curiosity in religious knowledge, lastly, supporting country’s economical conditions. In conclusion to these, social changes eventually give positive impact to a bigger society in this world. On the other hand, there are always pro and contra for every changes in our social life. That’s how social and cultures develop in a society. We can’t always seeing this as a negative changes. Horn give strong quotes over this condition: “the important point is taht fashion is never arbitrary and meaningless. This can be plainly seen by looking at the fashions of the past. Every styles seems completely appropriate for its age. So, too, will the fashions of today and of the future, whatever they may be.” (Horn, 1981: 128)

CONCLUSION

To sum up, fashion is a cycles. One creates, other copied and the users will find their own style. It is clear that a main cause of Indonesia become centre of hijab style is the activity of Indonesians. The designers, community and the users of fashion keep updating themselves with their own way to make style, and they has their own way to spread out the thought throughout other countries. To puy it another way, hijab fashion styles is basically a private issue that independently

chose by individuals based on their individual concept of their religion. Hijab is an individual decision to show to their religion they believe. Thus, we can't generalize visual shape, colors or textures to make sure it's the right thing to wear. So we can't eliminate the other people's thought that is different as a wrong path. The hijab can take in many forms based on each woman's cultures and societies, for what's good in one society doesn't mean it's also good to other society. All of which can be considered done right and beautiful in their own way. What Indonesian has done to promoting hijab fashion industries are still a beneficial.

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Writer's Resume

Zakiah Pawitan born in Bandung May the 5th, 1983. Have been working as a lecturer since 2005 at UPI. She got bachelor and magister degree from ITB majoring Kria Tekstil – FSRD ITB. Proficient/observer in Arts and Crafts, Traditional Textile Crafts and Fashion Design.