

## Religiosity versus class existence: Indonesian Muslim middle class fashion consumption on Instagram

Sasiana Gilar Apriantika<sup>1,2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Sociology Education, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Jl. Karangmalang, Yogyakarta, Indonesia 55281

<sup>2</sup> Department of Sociology, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Jl. Socio-Justisia No.2 Bulaksumur, Yogyakarta, Indonesia 55281

\* Corresponding author

E-mail address: [sasiana\\_gilar@uny.ac.id](mailto:sasiana_gilar@uny.ac.id)

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>Muslim middle class fashion religiosity Instagram Indonesia</p>	<p>This study aimed to see how the consumption behavior of the Muslim middle class through the digital space is within a dualistic view, namely as a religious identity or as an affirmation of class identity. This study used the Norman Fairclough Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method by analyzing three aspects: text, discursive analysis, and social practice. The scope of this research analysis is the content (in the form of posts) tagged on the official Instagram accounts of three Muslim fashion brands that produce Islamic clothing, namely (Brand A), (Brand B), and (Brand C). The results suggest that middle class Muslim fashion is no longer just an aspect of religiosity and religious identity, but has become a class affirmation. Social media postings using Muslim fashion brands (both A, B, and C) and then tagging them on the brands' official Instagram accounts shows a strengthening of class identity. Identifying Muslim fashion by tagging the brands that appear can confirm that they are able to consume Hijabs and Muslim clothing are not only used to identify symbols of religion or religiosity, but more as symbols of social class. The use of Muslim fashion is not enough except to show class identity.</p>

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## Introduction

Based on DataBox of 2022, there are 53.6 million middle class in Indonesia, with indicators in the form of monthly expenditure reaching 1.2 million - 6 million per person (Kusnandar, 2022). The essential characteristic of the middle class is that it appears in the form of the bourgeoisie, with increasing consumption levels. The middle class in Indonesia has emerged since the 1900s and was influenced by economic stability from 2001–2020. Initially, the emergence of the middle class included professionals, reformers, lawyers, political figures, cultural figures, technocrats, NGO activists, and Muslim preachers (Hidayah, 2021). The growing middle class also coincides with rising consumption levels. Research conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) shows that there has been a shift in the consumption patterns of the Indonesian middle class from basic needs products to products that offer greater convenience. The middle class tends to buy goods at high prices for the quality of a product (Murphy, Sheifer, & Vishny, 1989 in (Wicaksono et al., 2020). Some categories of middle-class consumption include education, home renovation, and durable goods. In line with this, Bank Indonesia also released data on the propensity to consume in January 2021, which stated that in the middle class, the average share of household income used for consumption was 73.2% (Bank Indonesia, 2021). The high consumption rate of the middle class in terms of economic growth undoubtedly has a positive impact as a very influential variable in increasing GDP (Gross Domestic Product), which significantly leads to the country's economic growth. In line with the increasing consumption of the Indonesian middle class, according to a survey conducted by PWC (Price Warehouse Coopers), the shopping behavior pattern of the middle class can be categorized

into (1) household needs 12–15%, (2) food 27–28%, and (3) clothing 9–11% (processed by Tirto.id). Middle-class fashion/clothing consumption is significant, reaching 11% of total income.

Along with the development of a middle class with strong consumption characteristics, Muslim communities in urban areas have also developed, emerging as a new class in the social class structure in Indonesia. This had an impact on the emergence of the Muslim middle class after 1998, when Islam was used as an identity that could be negotiated with the state and still maintain its Muslim identity (Yusdani et al., 2020). The Muslim middle class in Indonesia began to be discussed in the late 1970s (Sarjadi in (Yusuf et al., 2022). The development of the Indonesian Muslim middle class cannot be separated from the discussion of the emergence of ICMI (Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association) or *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* in 1990, which strengthened the position of the Muslim middle class. ICMI was born as an organization initiated by the educated generation, emphasizing Islam as a cultural movement rather than a political movement (Saepudin, 2016). ICMI is expected to be able to understand and promote Islamic values as a scientific concept that rivals the concept of knowledge, which is freer, more independent, and contributes to Islamic aspirations. The birth of ICMI is a significant social and historical background in the development of the middle class, although its development can be seen in various other aspects. Several perspectives and approaches can be used to analyze the middle class, including the Marxian approach, the Weberian approach, and the cultural studies approach. In this study, the discussion of the middle class is viewed from the perspective of cultural studies, where the middle class is seen as a social group that emerged due to the development of

industrial media and ideological struggles. Therefore, the characteristics and identity of the middle class are born from various cultural devices, economic power and social behavior (Yusuf et al., 2022). In the same source, it is also stated that the middle class can be categorized into several aspects, namely issues of religious expression, issues of position or existence, political issues, and lifestyle issues. In order to focus on the discussion, this article will discuss more the lifestyle issues of the Muslim middle class, especially consumption patterns as an effort to assert their Islamic identity.

The consumption of the Muslim middle-class, especially in fashion as a symbol of religious identity, is inseparable from the development of Indonesian Muslim fashion trends, which are among the top 5 in the world. Based on data from The Global Islamic Economy Report for 2021, Indonesia ranks fifth in the consumption of Muslim clothing (reaching US\$16 billion) after Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan (Friana, 2022). This data shows that the Muslim population in Indonesia, which reached 86.7%, especially the middle class, which reached 20.5%, was also one of the factors causing the high consumption of Muslim fashion in the last two quarters. The consumption behavior of the Muslim middle class is influenced by the factor of religion or religiosity possessed. In line with this, research conducted by Kusuma et al. stated that religiosity plays a vital role in transforming religious values and shaping individual identity, including consumption habits (Kusumawati et al., 2020).

The consumption phenomenon of the Muslim middle class can also be seen in social media activities, one of which is Instagram. Through Instagram, the Muslim middle class displays fashion consumption by tagging posts on Instagram for Muslim fashion brands that they wear. Consumption of Muslim fashion is an aspect of asserting

religious identity through the hijab and clothing used as a means of following Sharia or religious rules. According to research conducted by Miranda, Instagram has a significant impact on the habits and consumption levels of online shopping for fashion in society (Miranda et al., 2017). Muslim fashion consumption habits are evident in the representations in Instagram posts using specific Muslim fashions. According to Goodstar data, as of April 2022, Indonesia is one of the countries with the highest number of Instagram users, with 99.9 million users, of which 52.3% are female and 47.7% are male. The large number of Instagram users in Indonesia in 2022 is an illustration of how Instagram users engage in consumption activities, while also affirming their religious identity through the Instagram portal.

Therefore, this study aims to see how the consumption behavior of the Muslim middle class through the digital space is in a dualistic view, namely as a religious identity or as an affirmation of class identity.

## Method

This study uses a literature review that employs Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The CDA conducted includes three levels: (1) textual analysis, namely the use of vocabulary related to specific meanings, the use of metaphors and terms that refer to specific meanings and actions; (2) discursive analysis, which looks at the coherence of texts that have entered the realm of interpretation: how text writers take existing discourse and gender by paying attention to power relations; and (3) social practice analysis, which describes the social activity part of practice embedded in broad social-cultural goals, networks, and practices (Haryatmoko, 2019). The main goal of critical discourse analysis is to explore the relationship between language use and

social praxis (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2017). The basic assumption of critical discourse analysis is that the cultural dimension is primary in creating and maintaining power relations, including the ideology used. This ideology is closely related to discourse, understood as a social practice, and places people as social subjects (Titscher et al., 2009). Critical discourse analysis focuses on power, domination, hegemony, inequality, and the discursive processes of creation, concealment, legitimation, and reproduction. There are two essential dimensions of discourse, namely (1) communicative events, for example, the use of language such as newspaper articles, films, video interviews, or political speeches; and (2) discourse order, namely the configuration of all types of discourse used in social institutions or fields (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2017).

In this study, the focus of the analysis was on content (in the form of posts) tagged on the official Instagram accounts of three Muslim fashion brands that produce Islamic clothing, namely Sisesa (Brand A), Ria Miranda (Brand B), and L by LCB (Brand C). The content analyzed was posts from customers of the three fashion brands, where they posted photos on their respective Instagrams with the Muslim fashion brand's products, so that they automatically entered the brand's official Instagram. The content in the third tagging feature of the official Instagrams of the Muslim fashion brands was then analyzed using the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method proposed by Normain Fairclough through three levels. (1) First, there are two essential grammatical elements, namely transitivity and modality. Transitivity refers to how events and processes are associated/disconnected with subjects and objects. Specifically, this

research focuses on the text embodied in the image through Instagram post photos tagged on the official Instagram accounts of three Muslim fashion brands. Through textual analysis of the images, it is possible to find out how the middle class uses certain Muslim fashion brands, posted on their personal Instagrams and tagged to the official brand accounts, as a form of communication about how they are able to consume the brand at a price that is not cheap. (2) Next is the discursive practice, which can be seen in two aspects: how the text is produced and how the text is consumed. Instagram posts using Muslim fashion brands are produced as part of people's habit of emphasizing their religious identity through the attributes they wear, one of which is Muslim clothing.

In addition, photos that use Muslim clothing with Muslim fashion brands as a form of text are consumed by tagging them to the Instagram accounts of Muslim fashion brands, so that the public and the audience know what fashion products are being consumed, undoubtedly at prices that are not cheap. (3) The last one is the social practice. The method in this stage is the description of the language of the text, the interpretation of the relationship between the discourse process and the text, as well as an explanation of the relationship between the discourse process and social processes. Social practice describes something in representation, including the social actors involved in the production of discourse representations (Haryatmoko, 2019). In this study, social practice reveals how the consumption of Muslim fashion brands is not only a matter of asserting religious identity with the attributes used, but also a means of affirming middle class identity by showing the Muslim fashion brands used.

## Results and Discussion

### *Development of Indonesian Muslim middle class fashion consumption and restrictions on religiosity*

Muslim fashion trends are evolving from conservative styles to more contemporary and youthful styles. One of the supporting factors for the development of Muslim fashion is the increasing purchasing interest of consumers. Consumers, in the context of the Muslim middle class, make religion a fundamental component of various aspects of life and consumer behavior, such as dressing habits, behavior with certain goods, and attitudes toward social and political issues. In the aspect of consumption of fashion products, Islam is the basis for someone to recommend or prohibit certain choices and is a determinant of lifestyle as a manifestation of the level of individual religiosity in religion (Riptiono, 2019). The growth of the Muslim fashion industry began to develop in the late 1990s. Prior to that, during the New Order era in the mid-1980s, Muslim fashion (especially the hijab) had a political value and was novel as an expression of rebellion against the government. Furthermore, in the 1990s, the hijab became a fashion trend in the Muslim community (Heryanto, 2018). The dynamics of Muslim fashion that occurred cannot be separated from the success of the Iranian revolution in the 1980s, where religion became the basis of the social movement. One of its characteristics is the use of a head covering called the hijab. Initially, the hijab became an ideological symbol against the new order, but now it has developed into a trend (Santoso, 2015).

The development of Muslim fashion continues to increase every year, which is supported by the growth of the Indonesian middle class, which reaches 7-8% per year. The development of the Muslim middle

class is a marker of the development of post-Islamism, which emphasizes the adaptation of Islam to secularism, liberalization, and democracy. This view offers the existence of Islamic religiosity in the public sphere so that it is easily accepted by society. The development of post-Islamism is part of the form of revival of Muslims imprisoned by authoritarian and theocratic regimes. This gives rise to a Muslim middle class that grows from the intellectual and bourgeois classes (Jati, 2016). The development of popular Islam, which has emerged among the Muslim middle class as a form of affirmation of their Islamic identity and meaning, is embodied in symbols that can be observed and demonstrated in public spaces, including through the fashion they wear. As purchasing power increases, the Muslim fashion industry is growing. It was revealed that in 2012, 20 million Indonesians wore Muslim clothing in their daily activities (Anafarhanah, 2019). The development of Muslim fashion in Indonesia is very fast, as can be seen from the participants of the 2022 Muslim Fashion Festival (Muffest) exhibition, which involves 300 local brands, with the annual consumption of Muslim fashion reaching IDR 286.9 trillion.

Davis explained that the clothing worn by an individual makes a statement. Clothing, or more broadly, fashion, gives a specific meaning, including the meaning of addressing one's religious identity. Fashion is one of the systems of meaning (significance) that is the site of the formation and communication of social order (Muridan, 2018). The fashion worn by individuals is a form of habit and identity that is built into their responses to society. One of the things that determine or influence individual identity, decision-making, knowledge, and habits, including dress habits, is the aspect of religiosity. Religiosity plays a crucial role in the transformation of religious values

and the formation of individual identities (Kusumawati et al., 2020). The use of fashion as a religious identity, especially for female Muslims, has become a global phenomenon, which is no longer defined as ethnicity, but is a phenomenon that spans space and time and relates to personal aspects and social life, especially for Muslim, where there are rules embodied in the Qur'an and Hadith that the principle of Muslimah fashion is that products must be simple and far from glamorous, and emphasize status and prestige with some limits regulated in it (Farrag & Hassan, 2015).

Fashion does not only serve as a body wrap that physically functions to protect the body from heat and cold. More than that, Eco (Muridan, 2018) states that fashion is a person's reproductive machine to communicate themselves to the outside world. Through fashion, individuals show and present their religious identity to others. Adherents of the Islamic religion do not only make the hijab a physical appearance, but to show the level of religiosity possessed by the affirmation of clothing; it is assumed that the more Sharia the fashion, the higher the level of religiosity. One of the clearest forms of fashion in showing religious identity is the use of the hijab/veil, although this varies according to the context of space and time. The hijab is a piece of clothing that covers almost all of a woman's body except for the face and hands, while veils refer to transparent scarves that protect women's hair. This shows that Islamic clothing is not only a symbol of God's rules, but also represents the existence of a communal identity. The use of the hijab in each region or country also varies and even changes from time to time. However, in this article we will not focus on the debate over the definition of the hijab and the history of the appearance of the hijab. So, in simple terms, if what is meant by the hijab is clothing, then the hijab refers to clothing that covers the hands and

feet. If it is a veil, then the command to stretch it means to cover the face and neck. Furthermore, if it refers to clothes that cover the body, then the order to stretch it means to make it loose so that it covers the whole body and clothes (Yulikhah, 2016).

The hijab as a religious identity does not exist in a single space, but evolves according to social, political, and temporal contexts. According to (Maddox, 2020), Muslims' access to fashion is also determined by their privileged social position and access to education, professional opportunities, and middle-class consumer spaces. In the post-independence period, the hijab was referred to as a veil, a cloth used to cover the head. This elongated cloth was used to cover the head, was transparent, and still showed the neck and hair. Even though it did not cover the entire neck and hair, the hijab, as a Muslim fashion in that era, also symbolized religious identity; with looser rules. Then, in the early 1980s, the term hijab became known as a cloth that covered the head, neck, and all hair (Yulikhah, 2016). After the 1980s and the entry of various international Islamic organizations from the Middle East, the rules and definitions of hijab began to develop and become more binding. Hijab must be a cloth that covers the head, neck, and hair, even extending to the meaning of clothing by covering the whole body with a loose fit. Muslimah fashion evolves to be more binding to show a particular religious identity. Today, a transparent head covering is not enough to express the religious identity of a Muslim woman and is considered less religious. Eventually, there was a restriction on the level of religiosity by the Muslim fashion worn from time to time. Today, religiosity is considered to have the same standards, namely to wear clothes that cover the whole body and are loose-fitting. The more they follow these standards, the more they are considered religious, regardless of other aspects of

religiosity. There is an unspoken agreement that female Muslims who do not display these standards have reduced their level of religiosity. This suggests that the increasing restrictions on Muslim women's fashion are a form of religiosity. Religiosity is seen as a single aspect, what is worn, what appears as a religious symbol, not social behavior.

Hijab is a religious symbol that does not exist in a single identity, but it is dynamic according to the social and cultural conditions itself. El Gundi (in (Junaidin et al., 2022) states that hijab has been seen as a social phenomenon that is rich in meaning

and full of nuances. In the socio-religious field, hijab functions as a language that conveys social and cultural messages. Today, the hijab is worn by Muslim women as a symbol of modesty and privacy. In line with this statement, clothes (including hijab) play the role of beneficiaries (utilities) as a symbol of "luxury" and "beauty". The development of Muslim clothing is no longer seen as a traditional utility, but also as a fashion and lifestyle (Nuroniya, 2019). The trend of hijab in Indonesia can be seen in the pictures below:



Figure 1(a). Trend Hijabs in 1980s



Figure 1(b). Trend Hijabs in 2000s



Figure 1(c). Trend Sharia Hijabs in 2010s

Sources Figure 1(a): [https://statics.indozone.id/do\\_692x516/content/2021/02/21/qEsjLmY/viral-foto-4-wanita-ngajitahun-1996-netizen-malah-salfok-gaya-jilbab-cewek-paling-kanan91\\_700.jpg](https://statics.indozone.id/do_692x516/content/2021/02/21/qEsjLmY/viral-foto-4-wanita-ngajitahun-1996-netizen-malah-salfok-gaya-jilbab-cewek-paling-kanan91_700.jpg)

Sources Figure 1 (b): [https://s.kaskus.id/images/2021/05/30/10865730\\_202105300656290250.jpg](https://s.kaskus.id/images/2021/05/30/10865730_202105300656290250.jpg)

Sources Figure 1 (c): <https://th.bing.com/th/id/OIP.mNnNmWGXCemBU1TbZhcB9wHaFL?w=280&h=195&c=7&r=0&o=5&dpr=1.5&pid=1.7>

As a form of religious, social, and economic identity, the hijab has become a fashion trend that has developed very rapidly. It began in the 1980s, when the hijab became known as a head covering (Figure 1a). Then in the early 2000s, after the reformation and the entry of various international Islamic organizations from the Middle East, the hijab began to develop and become more binding. The hijab must be a cloth that covers the head, neck, and hair (Figure 1b). And in 2010, it was even expanded to mean clothing that covers the entire body in a loose fit, giving rise to many syari hijab trends (Figure 1c).

### ***Social media and digital space: The shift of religious identity to a religious identity as well as a class***

Muslim fashion is growing rapidly, influenced by developments in the digital world, such as Instagram. Instagram has become a means of promoting Muslim fashion, especially with the advent of the Instagram Shop, which makes it easier for sellers to display their fashion products and for buyers to easily access them. The use of digital spaces such as Instagram in the development of Muslim fashion is unique in itself. Ellison and Boyd (in (Suryani &

Suwarti, 2014) stated that social media allows users to articulate their network and make it visible to others. Social media is a website that allows profile creation and visibility of relationships between users. Social media has several functions related to the development of Muslim fashion, including identity and reputation. Identity is a form of self-representation that users wish to display in cyberspace. On the other hand, reputation allows users to build trust between users and certain communities (Wolf et al., 2018). Thus, social media becomes one of the means for individuals to confirm the identity they want to display to the public or to other people.

The development of the hijab and clothing as a religious identity has also influenced the growing fashion trends, where fashion consumption develops as a form of fulfilling the need for affirmation of identity shown to others. The need for fashion consumption continues to grow with the emergence of the middle class in Indonesia. Research conducted by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in 2013 shows that there has been a change in the consumption patterns of the middle class in Indonesia, as indicated by a wave of new upper-middle class consumers or Middle and Affluent Consumers (MAC), which will grow in both number and purchasing power. According to the research, this has been followed by a shift in consumption trends from basic needs products to products that offer greater convenience. The categories of purchases made by this social class include education, home renovation, and durable goods (Wicaksono et al., 2020). The Muslim middle class appears as an entity that is inseparable from consumption behavior. The consumption of the Muslim middle class is manifested in lifestyle changes that increasingly show religious identity. Several examples are evident in the emergence of Muslim housing as a form of

gated communities, the rise of integrated Islamic schools, the rise of Muslim clothing, musical expressions such as qasida, sharia tourism, sharia hotels, and other aspects of consumption that use religious symbols (Yusdani et al., 2020) (Weng, 2017).

Female Muslim middle-class fashion is no longer just an aspect of religiosity and religious identity, but has become a class affirmation. According to (Weng, 2017) on the Muslim middle class, there is competition for resources and influence, as well as a juxtaposition of lifestyles and new consumption patterns. The Muslim middle class sees Islam as an identity marker or symbolic capital to compete with colleagues or friends of the same group. In this article, we can see identity markers for competition among Muslims in the habits of consuming female Muslim fashion in digital spaces such as Instagram social media.

The consumption of Muslim fashion by the middle class has become an integral part since it began to develop in the 1960s. At that time, however, the consumption of fashion products by the Muslim middle class as an affirmation of religious identity took place in real interactional spaces. The affirmation of religious identity was done by showing only visible/observable religious symbols, such as the width of the headscarf used and the looseness of the clothes worn. Religious symbols appearing in the fashion used were not followed by an affirmation of class symbols. Simply put, Muslim women used certain fashion models without others needing to know the brand and price of the fashion. In its development, since Instagram was first released in 2010 and widely used in 2012, reality has become a mediated reality. Religious identity appears not only in real life, but also in social media life. With its main feature of sharing photos and videos, the Instagram application allows people to display their image and self-image through



the photos/videos they post, including emphasizing symbols of religious identity and also class.

There is a contestation of the Muslim middle class in Instagram usage behavior, especially in the display of religious and class identity. A simple content analysis was conducted by observing three major Muslim fashion brands in Indonesia, namely Sisesa Clothing (Brand A) (<https://www.instagram.com/sisesaclothing/>) with a total of 420 thousand followers on Instagram; Riamiranda (Brand B) (<https://www.instagram.com/inforiamiranda/?hl=id>) with 293 thousand followers; and L by LCB (Brand C) (<https://www.instagram.com/lbylcb/>) with a total of 674 thousand Instagram followers, where

brand A and brand C represent fashion with Sharia branding. The content analysis was done by taking the posts of the consumers of the three brands, tagging their respective official Instagrams.

### a. Brand A

Brand A (Figure 2) is one of the Indonesian Muslim fashion brands with the slogan “Indonesia Leading Syari”, which was established in 2011. From the official website, it is known that the price of a set of clothes and hijabs from Brand A is around IDR 3.5-4.5 million. Undoubtedly, with these costly prices, not all Muslim women can afford to buy Sharia clothing from this brand. Some consumers of this Muslim

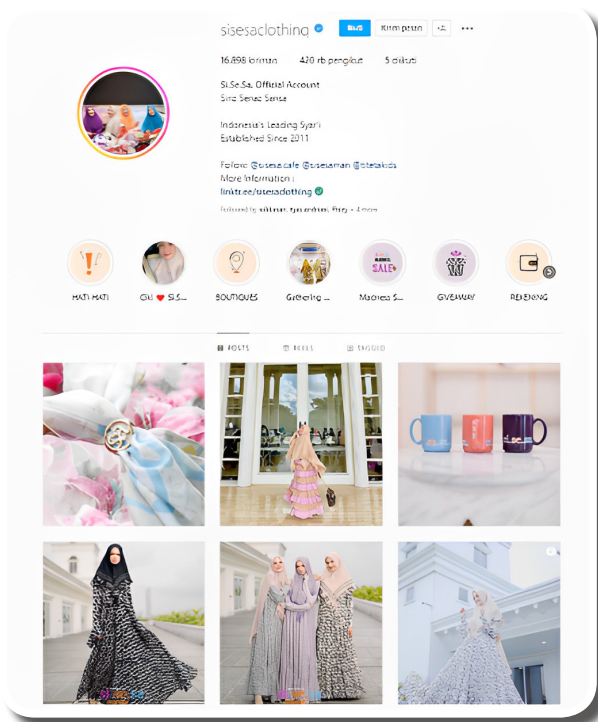


Figure 2: Official Instagram of Brand A

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/sisesaclothing/>)

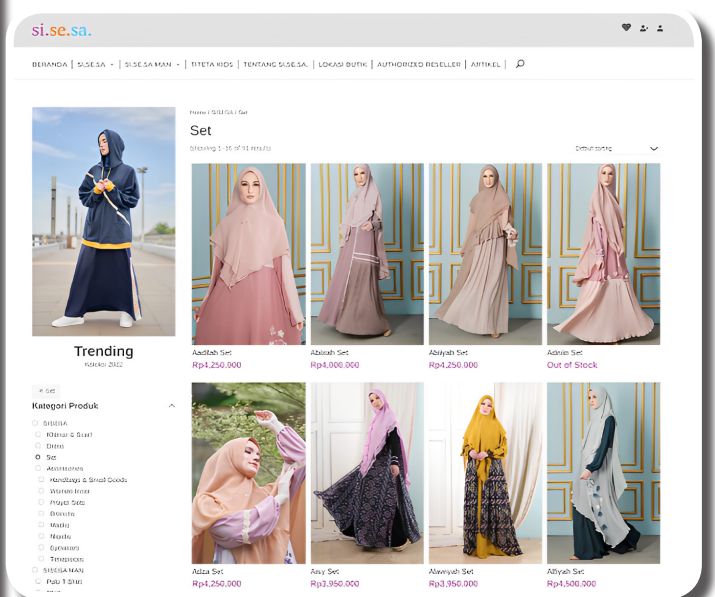


Figure 3: Official Website of Brand A

(Sources: <https://sisesa.co.id/>)

fashion brand show affirmation of class and religious identity through photos posted on their personal Instagrams.

Figure 4 shows how Muslim fashion consumers describe the identity of the clothes they wear through Instagram posts

by tagging the official account of Brand A. Tagging is used to show that Muslim women are not only obedient to follow the rules of Sharia clothing, but also to show that what they wear is a branded item with a high price tag.



Figure 4a.



Figure 4b.



Figure 4c.

Figure 4a. Example of Fashion Brand A Tagging Used in a photo post on personal Instagram

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/ClpZrC9vWVj/>)

Figure 4b. Example of Fashion Brand A Tagging Used in a photo post on personal Instagram

(Sources: [https://www.instagram.com/p/Cl3fWb\\_v8r0/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cl3fWb_v8r0/))

Figure 4c. Example of Fashion Brand A Tagging Used in a photo post on personal Instagram

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CltPeD6PgU4/>)

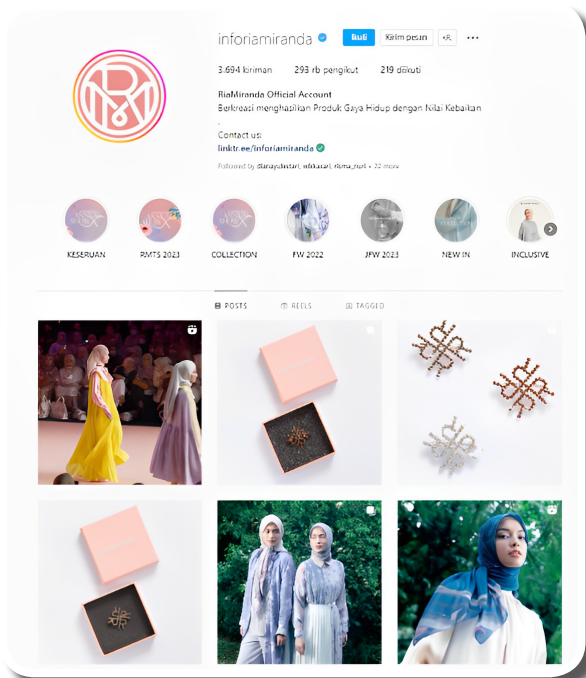


Figure 5: Official Instagram of Brand B

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/inforiamiranda/>)

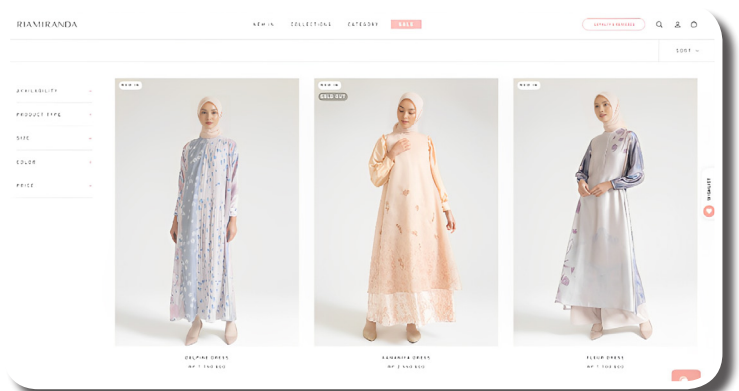


Figure 6: Official Website of Brand B

(Sources: <https://riamiranda.com/>)

### b. Brand B

Brand B is one of the Indonesian Muslim fashion brands that focuses on modest fashion. It is evident from the official website that the price of this brand's clothes is around 700 thousand - 3 million. Undoubtedly, with

these high prices, not all Muslim women can afford to buy Sharia clothing from this brand. Some consumers of this Muslim fashion brand show affirmation of class and religious identity through photos posted on their personal Instagrams.



Figure 7a



Figure 7b



Figure 7c

Figure 7a. Example of Fashion Brand B Tagging Used in a Photo Post on Personal Instagram

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cl98sAMyqFT/>)

Figure 7b. Example of Fashion Brand B Tagging Used in a Photo Post on Personal Instagram

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CltiYuChgE-I/>)

Figure 7c. Example of Fashion Brand B Tagging Used in a Photo Post on Personal Instagram

(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CIVBjSAvc7E/>)

### c. Brand C

Brand C is one of the Indonesian Muslim fashion brands that focuses on modest fashion. It is evident from the official website that the price of this brand's clothes ranges from IDR 1 million to IDR 3 million. No doubt, with these high prices, not all Muslim women can afford to buy Sharia clothing from this brand. Some consumers of this Muslim fashion brand show affirmation of class and religious identity through photos posted on their personal Instagrams.

Some of the figures above show that today Instagram is a medium for self-representation, as well as for showing religious, social, and economic identity. Through an existing Instagram account, a space is opened to present oneself in the virtual world (Harefa, 2018). In line with this, Harefa stated that Instagram plays a role in promoting Muslim fashion as an object that contains ideology and is no longer neutral. This is demonstrated by the need for consumers to post + tag what

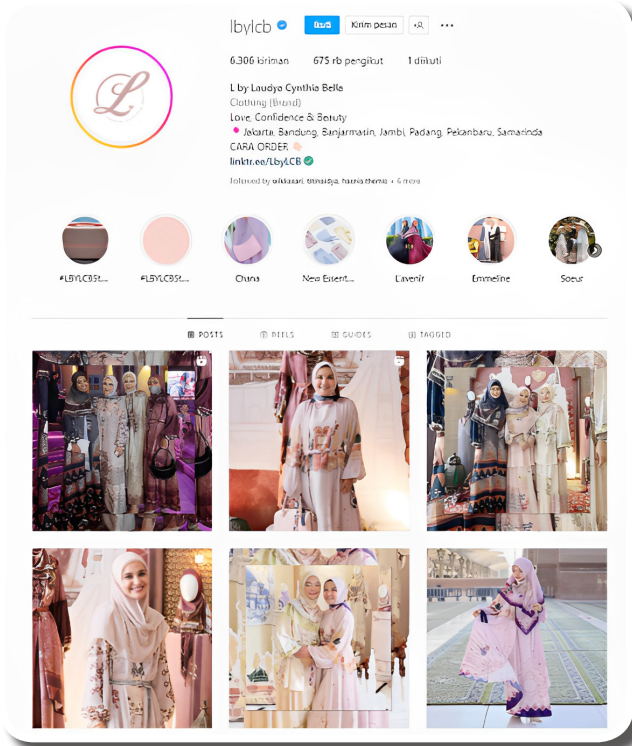


Figure 8: Official Instagram of Brand C  
(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/lbylcb/>)

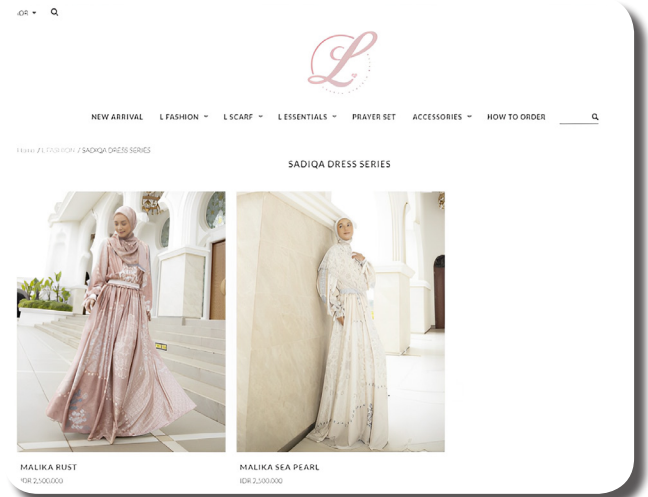


Figure 9: Official Website of Brand C  
(Sources: <https://www.lbylcb.com/>)



Figure 10a



Figure 10b



Figure 10c

Figure 10a. Example of Fashion Brand C Tagging Used in a photo post on personal Instagram  
(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/ClbPCd3yvI7/>)

Figure 10b. Example of Fashion Brand C Tagging Used in a photo post on personal Instagram  
(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CkZ6FqjB1ex/>)

Figure 10c. Example of Fashion Brand C Tagging Used in a photo post on personal Instagram  
(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CipT1qVJwyul/>)

they have used on the account of the official fashion brand. It is no longer enough for consumers to just buy and use Muslim fashion, but they have other needs, namely to show what they are wearing to the public through Instagram posts. The need to show what they are used for is reinforced by multiple appearances Selebgram (Celebrities on Instagram), where consumers are easily attracted to celebrities when they use certain brands, and make purchases of individual fashion brands after celebrities wear them in posts on their respective accounts (Angeliqa & Andriani, 2020). This happens because consumers feel that by wearing clothes from the same brand, they identify themselves as part of the program. Indonesian Muslimah fashion consumers massively showcase the brand they use by posting on Instagram, showing that there is a collective action by the community to demonstrate religious and social identity at the same time. According to Bennet and Segerberg (in (Khazraee & Novak, 2018)), the use of digital media creates an opportunity to personalize collective action, which they call “connective action”. This collective action ultimately leads to how people feel the “need” to assert the identity of the class to which they belong, and are explicitly willing to show how expensive the clothes they wear as an image of fashion Muslim.

***The paradox between religiosity and the existence of the Indonesian Muslim middle class through digital space***

The Indonesian Muslim middle class and fashion consumption are a unified unit of analysis that emphasizes that one of the characteristics of the middle class is to have a moderately high level of consumption of lifestyles, one of which is fashion, as expressed by Eco (in (Muridan, 2018) that fashion is a person’s reproductive machine to communicate themselves to the outside

world. Through fashion, individuals show and present religious identity as well as class identity to others. The manifestation of religious identity and class identity through Muslim fashion is further strengthened by the use of Instagram social media, where individuals can show what they are wearing by posting photos/videos on personal Instagram. The affirmation of religious identity is evident in the Muslim fashion worn, both with the long hijab style and dress (Figure 4), as well as Muslim fashion in a casual style (Figure 7). In line with the research conducted by Farrag and Hasan, it is found that religious beliefs still play a crucial role in shaping the perceptions of Muslims, especially towards fashion. Beliefs in Islamic teachings are reflected in appearance, but behavior becomes another thing in the realization of these beliefs (Farrag & Hassan, 2015). The findings of this study are consistent with the discussion in this study that one form of belief in the religion practiced by the Muslim middle class today is through appearance (fashion), especially through personal social media posts. By wearing the hijab, both the Sharia and the modern, individuals try to show religious identity, especially the distinctions at a certain level of religiosity. Through posts on their social media, the affirmation of religious identity and the level of religiosity can reach more of the public. This is because not only real-life relatives will witness this symbol of their religious identity, but also netizens (Internet citizens) who are in the virtual world, with access and reach that are not limited by space and time.

However, the affirmation of religious identity is now shifting to other aspects that are more in the affirmation of class identity. Women’s social media posts using Muslim fashion brands (A, B, and C) and then tagging them on the brand’s official Instagrams shows the strengthening of class identity. In Figures 4, 7, and 10, some Muslim women tag

the fashion brand accounts in their personal Instagram posts. This allows the public or netizens who see the posts to recognize the products used, whether from brand A, brand B, or brand C. The identification of the Muslim brands they wear from the tag indicates that they are able to consume Muslim fashion that is not cheap. A set of Muslim clothes can be worth 2-5 million. Viewers who see her photos wearing Muslim fashion will not only identify it as a symbol of religious identity, but will also know the price of Muslim fashion from the brand name listed. When netizens find out that the clothes they are wearing cost millions, it undoubtedly becomes a means of affirming class identity. Only the upper middle class can afford Muslim fashion at that price. The assertion of class identity is also reinforced by the formation of social groups based on preferences for certain Muslim fashion brands, then called loyal customers, who met

through Instagram. They found each other because they often tagged certain fashion brand accounts in their Instagram posts. This group usually buys every product released by a particular Muslim fashion brand, competing to get the rarest product. The formation of this loyal customer group increasingly becomes a means of asserting class identity through religious symbols or attributes, as individuals identify themselves as part of their group if they can buy certain fashion brand products. Meanwhile, those who cannot afford the brand are not identified as part of their social class. The hijabs and Muslim clothing used are not only symbols of religion or religiosity, but rather symbols of social class. The use of Muslim fashion is not enough; the public must know what brand they are wearing.

Capitalism, through the consumption of fashion brands, can now coexist with religion and support long-term collective activities (Heryanto, 2018). Muslim fashion brands with sufficiently high prices (around 1-5 million) of a garment continue to grow rapidly in line with the increasing demand, one of which is from the Muslim middle class. This group uses fashion brands with high prices and then displays them on personal Instagrams, tagging the fashion brands so that other people can easily see and identify the prices of the clothes they are wearing and the social class position they belong to. It becomes a paradox with the religious identity they are trying to show through Muslim fashion. Alserhan, 2014 (in (Ramjaun, 2018) states that obtaining and using expensive branded products is permissible in Islam as long as it is not for the purpose of showing off, attracting others, or wasteful spending. The same source states that efforts to impress others or show one's worldly superiority is arrogance, which is an excessive concern for one's achievements and physical appearance (Netemeyer et al. and Cherrier, 2009 in (Ramjaun, 2018). Islam



Figure 11. Loyal Customer of Brand B's Instagram post, all using brand B products  
(Sources: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Bf3C9LYhzqL/>)

emphasizes its followers to live their lives with modesty in every aspect of life (Razzaq et al., 2018). It is contrary to religiosity because a higher level of practice correlates with lower materialistic tendencies. Instead of showing religious symbols through the Muslim fashion worn, posting and tagging fashion brands worn on social media is contrary to the concept of religiosity itself because it shows arrogance and bragging. Furthermore, this tagging activity also emphasizes that the Muslim middle class is looking for a means to assert the existence of their social class through cyberspace. In the end, the Muslim middle class is only trying to maintain and affirm its class identity through religious symbols to make it easier to accept.

## Conclusion

Muslim fashion today is not only an affirmation of religious identity (only religiosity). It is worn by the Muslim middle class with different characters and characteristics, socially, culturally and economically. Hijab and Muslim fashion, which were initially religious attributes to show how religious a person is, have now shifted to one of class identity attributes. Wearing Muslim clothing is no longer enough to show devotion to religion, but is also used to emphasize middle class identity. Moreover, when they appear in a digital space in the form of Instagram posts that can reach netizens. Religious attributes (through hijabs and Muslim fashion) no longer serve the sole purpose of a form of obedience; they have become intertwined with efforts to affirm class, especially in digital spaces. By posting photos wearing Muslim fashion and tagging the official Instagram account of the brand in question, someone is trying to show where their social class lies in society. Consumption of Muslim fashion is commonplace, but in the age of social media

like today, the need for tagging to let netizens know what and at what price the clothes they are wearing are becoming more prevalent. Posting and tagging through Instagram shows the collective action, this collective action ultimately leads to how people feel the “need” to assert the identity of the class they belong to, and are explicitly willing to show how expensive the clothes they wear as an image of fashion Muslim. In the end, Instagram becomes a capitalist tool to use religion as a means of reproducing content through Muslim fashion. The Indonesian middle-class Muslim has an established platform to show his class identity and to be seen as a religious person.

## Declaration of Ownership

This article is my original work.

## Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

## Ethical Clearance

This study was approved by the institution.

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