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Ethno beauty: practices of beautification among urban muslim middle-class women in Surabaya

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Abstract. This research examines practices of beautification by urban middle-class Muslim women using an ethnomethodology approach. Several theories are employed in this research including the theory of consumption (leisure class), sociology of body, middle-class theory and the concept of modern Islam. Results indicate that the beautiful concept according to Muslim middle-class urban women is white skin without stains, face without wrinkles, nose sharp, eyelashes and thick eyebrows and red lips. To be said to be beautiful, they took various efforts through beauty treatment, diet, fashion and dress up. In this study also revealed that their goal to self-care is pride and recognition in front of other fellow female friends and to happy partner (husband). This shows that the consumption through the body (fashions, diets, make up) and consumption around the body (beauty treatments) represent symbolic and material ways of positioning themselves within contemporary society – thus becoming ‘visible’. The implications of this research are this study is expected to contribute information and enrich the repertoire of social science especially sociology also for the development of research on body and beauty.

1. Introduction

Gordon explains that feminist theories have long contributed to approaches to beauty within the social sciences. However, beauty’s meaning in women’s lives continues to be a problem. On the one hand, feminists have argued that beauty ideals and practices reflect patriarchal domination. These analyses stress slightly different arguments but seem to coalesce on the point that beauty practices act as a means of social control over the female body. On the other hand, beauty is also seen as a potentially pleasurable instrument of female agency [1].

Beauty and a preoccupation with physical appearance have long been associated with mass culture, femininity, frivolity and imposed consumption in academic debates. Consumption through the body (fashions, diets) and consumption around the body (beauty treatments, surgery) represent symbolic and material ways of positioning themselves within contemporary society – thus becoming ‘visible’.

Holliday & Taylor describe that theories of beauty have a very long history. What makes something or someone beautiful, whether beauty is a property of the object/person or rather rests in the eye of the beholder, and whether or not a consensus exists on what exactly is beautiful, are questions that have occupied thinkers since the ancient Greeks. Feminists, however, have tended to skip such fundamental questions, drawing rather on the view that beauty is part of the currency of power. Feminists have asked not what beauty is, but who is in charge of the standards and definitions of beauty and what their motives are for maintaining them. They have also drawn on existential philosophy (offered via de Beauvoir) in order to identify the consequences of being defined as a beautiful woman, and on Foucauldian theory to demonstrate the technologies at work in becoming beautiful [2].

Humm reveal that the feminine cannot be beautiful but is either a ‘masquerade’ or a ‘performance’, and beauty is in most cases certainly suspect because ‘beautiful women’ are socially constructed emblems of patriarchal society. While new technologies of the body, whether surgical, medicinal, or physiological, may create, as Butler hopes, ‘new forms of gender’, this decoupling of beauty and

women's bodies focuses too much attention on the body at the expense of attempts to define beauty's affect and provenance [3].

Joy, et.al. states that the beauty business is a large sector of the economy and drives the sales of beauty aids, fashions, body care items and cosmetics among American women and increasingly among men. A lot of time, energy and money is spent to make ourselves beautiful. Beauty, which is often an ideal that is culture-specific, such as 'classic beauty' (perfect features), sex kitten (overt sexualized looks) and 'girl next door' (natural look). Even in Central European countries moving from socialism to a market orientation, women have begun to pay a lot of attention to their appearance and feel the pressure to look good. Recently, the Dove Beauty Report posited that this beautification begins at a very young age. It affects self-image and enforces compliance to the beauty ideal. Some feminists have criticized both the imposition of fashion and beauty treatment as guiding principles in social interaction and the fashion and beauty industry that creates and caters to these desires [4].

2. Methodology

Ethnomethodology is the study of how individuals create and understand everyday life, the method of achieving everyday life. Ethnomethodology is based on the idea that daily activities and social interactions that are routine, and general, may be done through various forms of expertise. According to Bogdan and Biklen, the notion of ethnomethodology refers not to a model or technique of collecting data when a person is conducting a study, but rather gives direction on what problem will be studied [5].

Garfinkel himself defines ethnomethodology as an investigation of indexical expressions and other practical actions as a unified completion of the day-to-day organized practices. Garfinkel describes the goal of ethnomethodology as the objective reality of social facts, the fundamental phenomenon of sociology because it is every product of the local society that is created and organized in an eclectic, continuous, practical, always, only, surely and holistically, endless and avoiding, exceed or delay. Garfinkel gave rise to ethnomethodology as a form of his dissonance to conventional sociological approaches always equipped with assumptions, theories, propositions, and categories that made the researcher not free in understanding social reality according to the circumstances in which the social reality took place. Garfinkel himself defines ethnomethodology as an investigation of the indexical expressions and other practical actions as the ongoing unity of completion of the organized daily practices of life [6].

Ethnomethodology is intended to examine the rules of daily social interaction based on common sense. What is meant by the world of common sense is something that is usually taken for granted, underlying assumptions and shared meanings. The essence of ethnomethodology is to express the world of common sense from everyday life. The work of ethnomethodology, studies how the people as a supporter of the prevailing order use the properties of the order so that for the citizens there can be apparently organized organizational features.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Muslim middle-class women in a big city and cosmetics

In the modern social dynamics, where social infrastructure is increasingly complex, the identification of social classes can no longer be placed on two binary oppositions, but there is one social class that also occupies a strong position, the middle class. Development of class divisions increasingly necessary, along with the expansion of capital relations and power over the tools production which requires a large number of positions outside of labor and equipment owners production, such as professionals, lawyers, and so on. With the growing position of economic structure and accompanied by political control, a study of social structure developed new, then called the middle class.

Now, the study of the middle class has grown widely, mainly covering the political, economy, history, and culture. Politics, middle class often linked to the issue of social change agents. Economics, middle class used to mark the status of people's income and purchasing power. The field of culture, the

middle class is often associated with lifestyles and processes imitation. In relation to the above three aspects, the study of the middle class in Indonesia is also growing in line with increasing purchasing power and development of people's lifestyles.

Middle-class studies cannot be separated from the historical context and theoretical dynamics. Application of a conceptual framework more or less cannot be released from substantive analysis. There are some thoughts conceptual social sciences that are very influential in classroom analysis and social stratification. The two major theories that underlie the study of the middle class are Karl Marx class theory and the social stratification theory of Max Weber.

Definition of cosmetics varies, but in general term cosmetic means "any article intended to be used by means of rubbing, sprinkling or by a similar application to the human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, altering the appearance of the human body, and for maintaining health of skin and hair, provided that the action of the article on the human body is mild". In current usage, according to Ali, a cosmetic is "any preparation, which is applied to the skin, eyes, mouth, hair or nails for the purpose of cleansing, enhancing appearance, giving a pleasant smell or giving protection" [7]. The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) defines cosmetics by their intended use, as "articles intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled, or sprayed on, introduced into, or otherwise applied to the human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance".

Ali, et.al. explain that cosmetics going to gain more importance day by day and their usage increased in daily life. It's very difficult to state when first cosmetics are used. Archaeological excavations stated that cosmetics are used from the stone age. Earlier people used cosmetics for safety and protection from heat sunlight. In past people use oils moisturizing and paints to protect their bodies. Cosmetics also used for religious perspectives. Different types of woods and fragrances are used to make smoke that would defend against evil spirits. Further personal body paints also used to guard against evil. With the change of the era, these types of purposes of cosmetics are disappear. In modern societies cosmetics have varying usage from personal to environmental, to prevent aging, and in general to help people enjoy a more full and rewarding life [7].

Which included the category of cosmetics such as skincare and makeup. Facial products are used on the face. Mainly they are used for cleansing, skin balance, and protection. Skin cleansers, Moisturizers, Anti-ageing products, Sunscreen products, Liposome's, and Acne are falling in a skin care product category. 27% skin care products are used in total global cosmetics. Makeup mostly used on the face. Other makeup's cosmetic is nail enamel. Face make ups have come into the category of base makeup and point make ups. Foundation, Face powder, Lipsticks, Blushers, Eye Shadow, Eye Liners, and Nail Enamels are falling in makeup product category. In the global cosmetic segment, 20% makeup products are used.

3.2. Islam as the way of life and Islam as the life style

The religion of Islam is a totalistic system of beliefs and actions that governs the faith, individuals, and societies and transcends the material world. It is an all-encompassing philosophy of life and a practical code of conduct in the lives of its followers. 'Shariah' literally means "the way" in Arabic, and properly understood, it "aims at the liberation of man". Thus, it is more than a set of guidelines or legal rules to follow. To believing Muslims it takes root in the essence of Islam and is permeated with a higher purpose. Underneath the guiding principles are values to guide actions. Halal is a central concept to the Shariah and the Muslim faith, encompassing a wider philosophy than simply product branding or marketing; it is an ethos and a moral code of conduct with a strong ethical stance. Toyibban is another central concept to Shariah, with an even wider meaning related to wholesomeness, associating goodness, cleanliness, healthiness, and safety. Both these central concepts suggest a more balanced, sustainable, and humane approach to systems and practices. Therefore, these concepts broadly influence individual and economic wealth, production, and consumption practices; beyond food and labeling issues, they involve sustainable governance to create economic and social value through ethical, moral, and socially responsible business drivers and intentions [8].

Currently Islam is not only as the way of life, but has shifted Islam as a life style. This is shown for example with the concept of halal. The concept of halal is not only applied to food alone. Seeing the growing need to beautify themselves of urban Muslim women, then halal cosmetics here become important. Similarly, if we pay attention to the development of the way Muslim women dress urban. The influence of the media is so great that it is now a hijab as a fashion trend of interest to urban Muslim women. So the concept of hijab here undergoes a shift, which previously had hijab as a cover of aurat that had to be loose, not wandering and unattractive, but now the hijab appears with various models. Hijab is not only used to follow the teachings of Islam but hijab part of a fashion. That's why Islam today we can call it as a life style.

Table 1. Practices of beautification by urban middle-class Muslim women.

The Practices	Consist of
Facial treatments	Facial foam Facial cream: day cream night cream Vitamin E (supplement) Peeling White injection Laser Botox Filler Pull the thread on the face Cropping eyelashes Eyebrow embroidery Lips embroidery
Diet and exercise	Do not eat white rice Not having dinner Consume slimming supplement Gym Yoga
Fashion style	Clothes Hijab Bags Shoes Accessories
Make up	Lipstick Eyeliner

Table 2. Urban middle-class Muslim women goals in beautifying.

Value	Meaning
Pride	confidence recognition in front of other fellow female friends
Happy husband	the husband does not get bored for a faithful husband

4. Conclusion

In Islamic teachings, Muslim women must cover their private parts, with the intention of not showing the face and body shape excessively. But it does not necessarily make them not pay attention to appearance or not beautify themselves. From the results of the observations and interviews with five

informants, the researchers found out how the beautiful concept according to the research subjects, what efforts they did to beautify themselves, and what the motivations and goals of middle-class Muslim women in Surabaya beautify themselves.

The beautiful concept according to Muslim middle-class urban women is smooth and white skin without stains, gaunt face and without wrinkles, nose sharp, eyelashes and thick eyebrows, red lips and slim. So they begin to correct their face and body. Are there stains, be it acne, scars, or spots on the face. And they always find flaws on their face and body. Whether it's a face that looks dull, stubborn or a body that looks fat. So informants consider that they need to beautify themselves.

To be said to be beautiful, they took various efforts. There are four categories of efforts undertaken among the middle-class urban Muslim women to look beautiful. *First*, to have a beautiful face perfect they do facial treatment on a regular basis, either that they do themselves or go to the beauty clinic. At home they never forget to clean their face and use facial creams and take vitamin E. While in the beauty clinic they do treatments such as peeling, white injection, laser to remove spots, botox, filler (remove eye bags and nose shaping), pull the thread on the face (so that face looks thin), cropping eyelashes, eyebrow embroidery and lips. Which beauty clinic selection they will go to and what treatments they will take to beautify themselves, they usually get from their close friends who are already trying. Whether they get a story or they are actively asking for information to fellow Muslim female friends.

Second, to look beautiful then middle-class urban Muslim women feel to be slim, then they go on a diet and exercise. Diet they do, not include dinner, replace white rice with brown rice, or do not eat white rice at all and consume slimming drugs. While the exercise they choose include gym and yoga. *Third*, fashion style. According to the middle-class urban Muslim women should follow the fashion trend. Their appearance should be interesting. To find out about fashion trends they observe the artist's performances in the media, visit famous clothes shops, and pay attention to the appearance of their fellow female friends. Ranging from clothes (including *hijab*), bags, shoes to accessories.

Fourth, Make up. Make up is mandatory for the urban middle-class Muslim women. Beautiful face should not be pale then at least the lips look red and eyes are not slack. Although just using lipstick and eyeliner will make them confident look beautiful. So when out of the house at least they should polish their faces with makeup.

In this study also revealed that their goal to self-care is pride and recognition in front of other fellow female friends and to happy partner (husband). According to the urban middle-class Muslim women, they are beautiful not to be seen by men other than husbands, but they want to look beautiful just in front of their fellow friends, so they are recognized and confident. They further revealed, if they are considered beautiful in public then the husband will be proud, happier and will be faithful.

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"Re-thinking the relationship between self and other:
Levinas and narratives of beautifying the body",
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