

## THE IMAGE OF GLOBAL VEILED WOMEN: MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF BUTTONSCARVES ADVERTISEMENTS

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**ABSTRACT.** This study examines how multimodal discourse in Instagram advertisements constructs representations of global veiled women within Indonesia's contemporary modest fashion industry. Using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal discourse analysis framework, the research analyzes three Instagram video advertisements from the Buttonscarves x Indah Nada Puspita collaboration. The analysis focuses on three semiotic dimensions: linguistic features (song lyrics and written text), visual-verbal interplay (composition, color, setting, and body language), and the representational strategies of the global veiled women. Findings reveal that these advertisements construct Muslim womanhood at the intersection of religious piety, global consumerism, and local cultural identity, operating within what scholars term the "piety economy" where religious expression and commodity consumption are mutually reinforcing. The advertisements employ neo-colonial perspective by situating Indonesian Muslim women within Western cultural settings and musical frameworks, yet simultaneously demonstrate cultural hybridization whereby veiled women assert their right to participate in transnational flows of fashion, romance, and tourism without sacrificing religious authenticity. The study also finds that the three advertisements collectively challenge Western stereotypes while constructing normative standards of middle-class, urban, educated Muslim femininity. This research contributes to understanding how commercially social media participates in negotiating Muslim identity, gender representation, and globalization in contemporary Indonesia.

**Keywords:** *multimodal discourse; veiled women; social media advertisement*

## THE IMAGE OF GLOBAL VEILED WOMEN: MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF BUTTONSCARVES ADVERTISEMENTS

**ABSTRACT.** Studi ini mengkaji bagaimana wacana multimodal dalam iklan Instagram mengkonstruksi representasi perempuan berhijab dalam industri pakaian Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan analisis wacana multimoda Kress dan van Leeuwen (2006), penelitian ini menganalisis tiga iklan video Instagram dari kolaborasi brand Buttonscarves dengan Indah Nada Puspita. Analisis ini berfokus pada tiga dimensi semiotik: fitur linguistik (lirik lagu dan teks tertulis), interaksi visual-verbal (komposisi, warna, latar, dan bahasa tubuh), serta strategi representasi dari perempuan berhijab. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa iklan-iklan ini mengkonstruksi perempuan muslim di persimpangan antara kesalehan agama, konsumerisme global, dan identitas budaya lokal, yang beroperasi dalam apa yang disebut oleh para ahli sebagai "ekonomi kesalehan" di mana ekspresi keagamaan dan konsumsi komoditas saling menguatkan. Iklan-iklan tersebut menggunakan perspektif neo-kolonial dengan menempatkan perempuan Muslim Indonesia dalam konteks budaya dan musik Barat, namun sekaligus menunjukkan hibridisasi budaya di mana perempuan berhijab menegaskan posisi mereka untuk berpartisipasi dalam arus mode, romansa, dan pariwisata transnasional tanpa mengorbankan orisinalitas keislamannya. Studi ini juga menemukan bahwa ketiga iklan tersebut secara kolektif menantang stereotip Barat sekaligus membangun standar normatif feminitas Muslim kelas menengah yang urban, dan terpelajar. Penelitian ini berkontribusi untuk memahami bagaimana media sosial secara komersial berpartisipasi dalam negosiasi identitas Muslim, representasi gender, dan globalisasi.

**Keywords:** *multimodal discourse; veiled women; social media advertisement*

### INTRODUCTION

The development of social media within Indonesia's modest fashion economy has rapidly transformed the landscape of representation for veiled women, portraying them as active agents in religious and consumer spheres (Jones, 2010; Purwaningwulan et al., 2019, Herliana et al., 2017). Social media, particularly Instagram, are strategic spaces where brands negotiate the discourse about the representation of veiled women. This representation

is not merely about the visual display of the hijab, but occurs through complicated engagement between images, lyrics, language, cultural codes and interactive viewer engagement.

The images of veiled women in Indonesian advertising become an area in which identity, religion and femininity are negotiated and contested within commercial content (Annisa, 2011; Maulana, 2025). On one hand, campaigns present hijab as a vehicle for self-expression and pious aspiration; on the other, they are located in

the ‘piety economy’ in which religious expression is being commodified and standardized (Jones, 2010; Maulana, 2025). This dual function both amplifies women’s voices and represents their agency within beauty market and lifestyle ideals (Beta, 2021).

The importance of analysing veiled women representation is amplified by the ongoing ‘hijab image meaning’, in which social media communities, influencers, and brand strategies converge together to shape meanings around the images of veiled women. Moreover, the digitalization of Muslim lifestyles has expanded the role of veiled women as consumers and cultural producers that are relevant to be interrogated in terms of its visual and discursive construction in online spaces.

Buttonsscarves’ partnership with Indah Nada Puspita provides a very relevant object of study due to its innovative integration of fashion symbols, western pop music and islamic visualisation. The presence of Indah Nada Puspita as an influencer and a main character at the videos which enlarges the advertisement engagement with the audiences surely magnifies the importance of this study.

Previous works about the veiled women have focused primarily on the ideological or marketing facets of hijab, with less attention to how meaning is shaped by the textual analysis and viewers’ gaze (Purwaningwulan et al., 2019; Herliana et al., 2017). While many research about Buttonsscarves are mostly about brand image and credibility (Wardhani et al., 2024), brand marketing strategy (Leasfita et al., 2023; Oktaviani et al., 2025; Arifin et al., 2025) and consumer behaviour (Fuadah et al., 2025).

However, the research on the representation of veiled women in Buttonsscarves advertisements has not been conducted before. So, this current research fills the gap by addressing how multimodal discourse in Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita’s instagram advertisements construct the image of global veiled women in the context of Indonesian contemporary fashion branding. By focusing on three advertisement videos; The Nada Series 1, The Nada Series 2, and The Nada Series 3, this study analyses the intersections of islamic values, advertisements storytelling, and global images to find the ongoing renegotiation of muslim womanhood in Indonesia.

This research mainly asks one question: how do multimodal discourse analysis in the Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita Instagram advertisements construct the image of global veiled women in contemporary Indonesian commercial fashion?

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research design, addressing multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) theory to investigate the representation of the veiled woman in three Instagram video advertisements by the Buttonsscarves brand. The advertisements are: 1. Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita: The Nada Series 1- “Top of the World”, 2. Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita: The Nada Series 2 - “Just the Two of Us”, 3. Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita: The Nada Series 3 - “Close to You”. These videos were selected for their relevance to understand the representation of Muslim women in the current Indonesian advertisement.

The analysis uses Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) multimodal discourse analysis framework, which provides tools for examining how multiple semiotic modes—visual, linguistic, and social—work together to construct meaning. This approach enables an exploration of how images, text, and sound collectively produce specific representations and ideologies.

Three videos are selected as they exemplify Buttonsscarves’ marketing strategies that combine Islamic modest fashion with global aesthetics. Each video is analysed across three semiotic dimensions: firstly, linguistic elements (textual displays, dialogue, voiceovers, and song lyrics), secondly, visual elements (colour palettes, framing, costume, lighting, camera angle, and body language), and thirdly, social codes (cultural and religious symbolism, gestures, and settings that convey social meanings).

The data analysis involves detailed observation and description, coding of multimodal features, and interpretation of how these contribute to shaping the image of the veiled woman. By the use of Multimodal Discourse Analysis, the study aims to uncover the ideological underpinnings of Buttonsscarves’ brand imagery, showing how representations of veiled women in contemporary advertising articulate complex negotiations of religion, gender, and globalization.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita is a series of three distinct videos of social media advertisement for the Islamic fashion industry. Those advertisements are released between 2021 and 2025. As shown in Table 1, these advertisements recorded high digital popularity on Instagram with the Nada Series 3 having the highest number of viewers. The growth in audience over the videos of the series

indicates the growing popularity of the Buttonsscarves brand itself and to the growing cultural relevance of Indonesian modest fashion conversation on social media.

**Table 1. The data from Buttonsscarves and Indah Nada Puspita Instagram**

Video	Viewers	Likes	Comments	Date
The Nada Series 1	327K	20.1K	660	27 November 2021
The Nada Series 2	734K	29.1K	1.306	04 june 2023
The Nada Series 3	2,5M	10.1K	181	15 june 2025

The engagement metrics provided in Table 1 demonstrate the significant reach of The Nada Series. However, the number never tells us much about why these advertisements emerge discourses around Muslim womanhood. Thus, in order to understand the cultural representation of these advertisements, the following explanations provide multimodal discourse analysis on how these advertisements construct the images of global veiled women in contemporary Indonesian social media advertisements.

### **Linguistic Features**

Language feature, in The Nada Series 1 advertisement, is closely related to modified lyrics from “Top of the World” by The Carpenters. The vocabulary of the song conveys euphoria and optimism which highlight self-actualization and a sense of unlimited possibility: *“I’m on the top of the world lookin’ down on creation, and the only explanation I can find...”*. The words that Indah Nada Puspita sings are not only emotionally powerful but also strategically matched with the images to portray the veiled woman as having power, hope and creativity. Her voice delivery with an optimistic tone, supports the celebratory tone of the message. In the view of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the linguistic mode here maintains the ideational meaning, supporting a discourse of optimism and success.

The language element of video 2 lies in the emotional words of the song “Just the Two of Us” by Bill Withers and Grover Washington Jr., which emphasize ideas of intimate closeness, care for each other, and dreaming together. The song’s lyrical message, *“we can make it if we try. Building castles in the sky. You and I”*, promotes partnership, hope and collaborative achievement. These words create an ideational meaning that locates romantic love in the domain of empowerment and possibility. The language choice is particularly significant because it moves from personal empowerment (as seen in video 1) to examine relational dynamics within

modest fashion. The soft singing voice and love theme of the song work to normalize and legitimate the veiled woman participation in equal romantic discourse on one hand, and challenge stereotypes that position modesty as to romantic expression or emotional intimacy.

The linguistic dimension of The Nada Series 3 advertisement operates within a two-textual system: the musical background of The Carpenters “Close to You” and the written letter from daughter to mother. The song lyrics, *“why do birds suddenly appear every time you are near? Just like me, they long to be close to you”*, construct an ideational meaning on the theme of love, admiration and attraction. The romantic language is, however, reconfigured in the mode of familial love and gratitude. The written text provides explicit emotional content:

*“No words will ever be enough to thank you for everything you have done for me...I know I don’t say it enough...If I had the chance to be born again, I’d still choose you with all my heart.”*

These words together create what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to as interpersonal meaning that puts the viewer in the role of witnessing close family conversation while at the same time celebrating intergenerational relationships in islamic modest fashion contexts.

### **Visual-Verbal Interplay**

The video of Nada Series 1 is characterized by its advanced visual-verbal interplay. The mise-en-scène shows natural environments like parks with fall leaves and lake beaches, and tranquil urban landscapes where Indah stands out against colorful urban landscapes. The pastel color palette, highlighted by lavender and white colors, not only highlights the Buttonsscarves hijab but also evokes softness and friendliness. The shots are often close-up or mid that encourages the viewers to develop a close and participatory relationship with the subject in keeping with interpersonal meaning. The use of close-up highlights the scarf materiality and detail that align the product’s tactile and aesthetic qualities with modern aspirations.

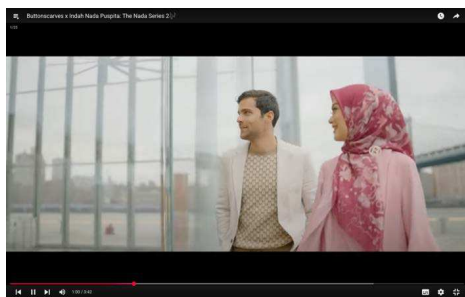


(Source: Buttonsscarves and Indah Nada Puspita’s Instagram Account)

**Figure 1. The Nada Series 1**

Occasional Indah's direct gaze with her easy body language at The Nada Series 1 provides a sense of a dialogic openness and plays up her confidence. Her confident postures and loving interaction with natural settings (e.g. following tree leaves with her hand or gazing up) represent an idealized vision of veiled femininity which can be described as a modern woman but still connected with nature. The video's final cityscape shot, with Indah standing tall and her hijab flowing on the wind, sums up the image of empowered and globalized muslim womanhood. The Nada Series video 1 places the veiled women as an active, focal subject, mixing global aesthetics (urban settings and western popular music) with local islamic values (fashionable hijab and modest clothing).

The visual composition of video 2 demonstrates coordination of musical elements and imagery to construct meaning about veiled women in romantic contexts. The advertisement starts with urban morningscapes with Indah walking confidently on empty streets, making her an independent agent before introducing the romantic context. The color palette swings between emerald green, light pink, and white colors to achieve visual harmony with an emphasis on elegance. *Mise-en-scène* has intimate settings such as a meeting at a café and walking at the park. Those scenes position the veiled women as a natural actor at equal romantic partnership.



(Source: Buttonscarves and Indah Nada Puspita's Instagram Account)

**Figure 2. The Nada Series 2**

Compositionally, the video 2 advertisement employs medium shots and close-ups that generate interpersonal closeness between individuals and viewers, while the warm lighting and coloration generate an affective atmosphere of warmth and closeness. The visual treatment of the hijab is remarkable in itself. It is not being highlighted as a distinctive marker but it's effectively integrated into the romantic aesthetic through harmonized color and sophisticated draping. The sequences portray a powerful metaphor for a free-wheeling romance and places the veiled woman as an equal partner in joy and leisure activities. The visual-verbal interplay constructs a narrative in which romance and modesty

are not opposing but complementary aspects of contemporary muslim womanhood.

The visual composition of The Nada Series 3 advertisement demonstrates coordination between musicality, written text and imagery to create meaning about veiled womanhood across generations. The video shows Roman architectural backgrounds such as ancient bridges, cobblestone streets and older piazzas. Those landscapes create compositional beauty to locate the love of daughter and mother as cosmopolitan tourists. The color scheme invites harmonized blues and beiges that visually join the two subjects without sacrificing distinctiveness through subtle hijab pattern variations.



(Source: Buttonscarves and Indah Nada Puspita's Instagram Account)

**Picture 3. The Nada Series 3**

In composition, the Nada Series 3 advertisement frequently uses medium and wide shots framing both figures in a manner that constructs visual equality and co-importance relationship. The tourist activities such gelato consumption, site visiting and laughter are part of the *mise-en-scène* that situates both veiled women as actors in world tourism culture.

### *The images of global veiled women*

The representations found in The Nada Series 1 are in line with the arguments of Jones (2010) and Annisa (2011), who both emphasize that Islamic fashion in Indonesia is a prime location for the negotiation of conflicts between religious piety and modernity. In modern advertising, hijab consumption is increasingly interpreted as not just a reaction to religious imperatives but also as a way of expressing individual autonomy and gaining social capital.

To support this interpretation, The Nada Series 1's visual and auditory composition encapsulates Indah's confidence in the semiotic codes employed to present a confident identity. This presentation is in line with Smith-Hefner's (2007) research, which describes hijab in Indonesia as symbolizing a new type of Islamic femininity—one that encompasses agency and cultural sophistication but one that is squarely predicated on a religious one.

The strategic deployment of cityscapes and cosmopolitan backgrounds in the advertorial aesthetic further lends credence to Fealy and White's (2008) argument. According to them, veiling, beyond religious significance, is a gateway through which Indonesian women are able to access political and social discourse otherwise dominated by other actors.

Conversely, the adept blending of the global and the local within The Nada Series 1 is in line with Annisa's (2011) critique for ongoing hybridization in global Muslim fashion advertisements. This is achieved through the incorporation of Western beauty ideals within an Indonesian setting, thus establishing a duplicitous narrative that skillfully balances cosmopolitan glamour and tradition.

To this extent, the advert exceeds its commercial mandate to enact a complex task of cultural placement: the advert not only commodifies a product, but also represents the veiled woman as one who is at once globally capable and culturally grounded.

Conceptually, the figure of the veiled woman represented here is neither marginal nor peripheral; rather, she comes across as a confident protagonist who navigates both local value systems and universal aspirations. This representation is in line with recent scholarship that foregrounds the "piety economy"—a context where religious consumption, such as hijab or modest fashion, is reconfigured as part of consumer-oriented identity formation.

The dissemination of these ideals through video and media channels resonates and builds Indonesia's Muslim fashion social norms, reaffirming global media visibility for the industry.

Moving to The Nada Series 2, veiled female symbolism is more subtle in Switzerland nature, directly appealing to tensions put forward by Annisa (2011) in regards to the complex relations between global and local signifiers in Muslim fashion adverts. By incorporating Western romantic music, foreign cityscapes, and tourist tropes as Western cultural signifiers, alongside the retention of Islamic dress codes and modesty as markers of local tradition, the advertisement marks what Annisa (2011) identifies as a "neo-colonial" dynamic—inserting Western notions of romance into an Islamic modesty paradigm. This duality allows the advertisement to celebrate Muslim women's romantic agency as it commodifies religious identity for local market consumption.

The Buttonsscarves x Indah Nada Puspita collection, set to the song "Just the Two of Us," operates to create a layered portrait of the veiled woman as a romantic agent and as a figure who

is staunchly committed to her religious identity. Through a subtle interplay of visual and auditory cues, the advertisement demonstrates that religious practice need not be antithetical to active participation in social life, or stifle the emotional expressiveness or beauty of the Muslim woman.

This complex representation also lends empirical credibility to Beta's (2019) argument about the re-articulation of Muslim women's political subjectivity, as these advertisements demonstrate the ways in which Muslim women's right to romantic satisfaction and emotional expression is claimed within the parameters of Islamic morality in contemporary ads. Overall, The Nada Series 2 portrays the veiled woman as a sophisticated character, who can pursue worship, romance, and fashion consciousness all at once.

In the final series, The Nada Series 3 showcases settings in Italy, thereby intensifying the neo-colonial tensions introduced by Annisa (2011). Utilizing European cultural capitals as a means to promote Islamic fashion gives Indonesian brands a sense of universal prestige and legitimacy but also calls for critical examination of the possible subordination of indigenous religious identities to Western locations' symbolic capital. However, this neo-colonial dynamic is not simply an instance of Western dominance. It is a nuanced instance of cultural hybridization whereby Indonesian Muslim women claim the right to participate in transnational flows of fashion, tourism, and romantic desire without sacrificing their religious identity. The advertisements thus balance on a knife's edge that asserts Indonesian veiled women as authentically Muslim and global citizens.

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis of linguistic features, visual-verbal communication and the representation of global veiled women in The Nada Series advertisements, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the construction of contemporary Muslim womanhood in Indonesian fashion social media.

First, The Nada Series advertisements show that Islamic modest fashion in Indonesia is at the intersection of multiple contesting forces: religious piety, global consumerism and local cultural identity. As both Jones (2010) and Smith-Hefner (2007) have argued, the image of the veiled woman in these advertisements transcends the boundaries of religious significance to emerge as a space of negotiation between modernity and tradition. The use of Western popular music, cosmopolitan settings and aspirational lifestyles situates the veil not in

a rhetoric of traditionalism or victimhood, but as a vehicle to access religious virtue along with social capital. This is consistent with Fealy and White's (2008) observation that Islam in Indonesia today has become more consumerist, where religiosity and consumption of goods are no longer contradictory but complementary. The advertisements produce what can be termed a "piety economy" that the purchase and wearing of modest fashion is not just acceptable practice of Islamic piety but also a signifier of cosmopolitan and middle-class status.

Second, the visual and linguistic devices at the three advertisements represent what Annisa (2011) identifies as neo-colonial relations in Muslim fashion advertising. By locating Indonesian veiled muslim women in European cityscapes who sing Western English songs, the advertisements construct an opinion that Western locations and cultural spaces as markers of prestige and legitimacy. However, this is not simply Western cultural dominance. It is a complex blend of cultures where Indonesian muslim women assert their ability to engage with global trends while still maintaining their religious beliefs. The advertisements carefully balance two messages that veiled Indonesian women are authentically Muslim and equal participants in the global society.

Third, the narrative across the three advertisements, from romantic love to intergenerational relationships to personal empowerment, constructs a full narrative of veiled muslim womanhood that erases stereotypical images and reinforces other normative expectations. The Nada Series advertisements can be seen to play with the representation of veiled women who are confident, emotionally expressive, romantically fulfilled and family oriented. Those qualities actively resist Western stereotypes of Muslim as repressed. Those qualities of a veiled woman are presented from specific class terms which can be categorized as a very middle-class, urban and educated muslim woman that may not be relevant to every Indonesian woman.

Finally, The Nada Series advertisements represent both the creative possibilities and the ideological tensions inherent in contemporary Islamic fashion advertising and reveal how commercial media participates in the ongoing construction and contestation of muslim womanhood in globalized Indonesia.

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