

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Instagram is currently one of the most popular social media platforms for social media users. Instagram is the center of visual presentation, and therefore it is important to think critically about how to use Instagram to have a positive impact on users. In 2020, 65% of the global Instagram audience is between the ages of 18 and 35, while 56.3% of Instagram users identify as female (Slutsky, 2020). Instagram can influence its users to define standard images of beauty, such as skin color. Thus, Influencers gain a large following through posting photos that show their glamorous lifestyle, even how they look, which can influence their followers' views and dreams (Utami et al, 2023).

Generally, the women with beauty standart like bright or white skin, smooth and glowing skin, the ideal body, the ideal body for women is described as having slim and tall body who are often be as models of a brand. Many brands that are marketed make women with these beauty standards as models, such as cosmetic, skincare, and even fashion brands. The reason why making women with these beauty standards as a model for a brand is because it can affect marketing strategies, by using models that are said to meet common beauty standards are considered to attract consumer attention with their visual appeal. Therefore, instead of having brown or tan skin, Indonesian women now prefer snow-white skin (Utami et al, 2023). Therefore, this research was conducted to find out whether there is a brand that claims models with a variety of Indonesian women's

beauty, such as the diversity of skin colors ranging from those with fair skin, brown skin, tanned and dark skin.

Skin color can determine the hijab color that is suitable for use and to find out how skin color can be a factor in determining the suitability and prominence of the hijab color. The hijab is a representation of Muslim identity that shows a person's commitment to Islam and sense of community (Dunkel et al., 2010). Clothing is a reflection of one's identity, and the hijab serves as a representation of social identity for its user (Pamungkas & Simorangkir, 2018). In recent years, the hijab has undergone significant change and developed into a potent instrument for Muslim women to express their identity (Sohail et al., 2023).

Of the various brands available, Lafiye is one of the brands of hijab products that are widely displayed on social media with attractive visuals and models from the brand that appear with a variety of beauty, with a diversity of skin colors of Indonesian women ranging from those with fair skin, brown skin, tanned and dark skin. What makes Lafiye seen by many audiences is that Lafiye hijab brand emphasizes diversity and inclusiveness by not limiting the definition of beauty to light skin. Lafiye builds its identity by highlighting the beauty of various skin colors, breaking stereotypes that tie beauty to one standard only. The Lafiye brand is dedicated to portraying beauty in all skin colors, showing that beauty can be found in every skin color and background. This Lafiye brand is known for promoting posts on Instagram using models with various skin colors so that many of the customers do not hesitate to buy and adjust to the skin color of each customer.

That is what makes the lafiye hijab brand the most sales and the most ratings in shopee. Brand Lafiye gets a rating of 4.9/5.0 with 111.9 thousand followers and more than 10 thousand product sales on shopee. Lafiye hijab brand is also viral on several social media such as Instagram and TikTok. Lafiye brand had offered a new model search event with the hashtag #FaceofLafiye. The purpose of the hashtag #FaceofLafiye is that the Lafiye brand is looking for new faces to be used as models of the Lafiye Hijab brand with various face shapes, skin colors and others.

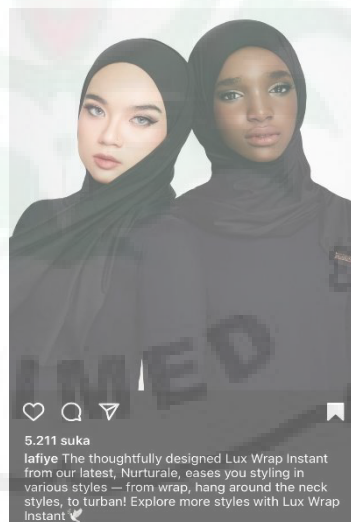


Figure 1.1 Indonesian Woman With Different Skin Color
(Source : @Lafiye instagram account)

In the picture above, it can be seen that the post on the Lafiye Instagram account shows two Indonesian women wearing the Lafiye brand hijab with different skin colors and visuals. In the book *Elements of Semiology* by Barthes in 1968, there are verbal and visual denotative and connotative meanings.

Verbal :

Data 1 : "The thoughtfully designed Lux Wrap Instant from our latest"

Denotation : Lux Wrap Instant is the latest collection from Lafiye

Connotation : The connotative implies that this product is made with attention to detail and high quality, giving the impression that the product is of superior quality.

Data 2 : "Eases you styling in various styles, hang around the neck style to turban"

Denotation : The product makes it easy for users to style it in various styles, from wrapping around the neck to turban style.

Connotation : Connotatively, it implies comfort, convenience, flexibility, and the product's ability to adapt to various fashion preferences and user needs.

Data 3 : "Explore more styles with Lux Wrap Instant"

Denotation : Invites users to try various styles using Lux Wrap Instant products.

Connotation : Connotatively, it implies flexibility, creativity, and adventure in appearance.

Visual :

Data 1 : A picture of 2 women models with different skin colors wearing lafiye hijab which signifies the model of lafiye brand.

Denotation : Denotatively, it includes a direct description of two women models with differences in skin color, hijab style, and makeup look.

Connotation : Connotatively, this image of a woman implies additional messages about diversity, identity, and self-expression. This is reflected in the emphasis on differences in hijab style and makeup look between the two models.

As in previous research conducted by Rika, Suastini, and Partiwii with the research title "a semiotic study on verbal and visual signs found in evlon cosmetics advertisements" in their findings there are six verbal and six visual signs in the two Revlon cosmetic advertisements. The first advertisement consists of three verbal signs and three visual signs, the same as the second advertisement consisting of three verbal signs and three visual signs. Verbal signs in advertisements include slogans and short sentences, while visual signs are pictures of female models, pictures of products, and color combinations presented in advertisements. Furthermore, verbal and visual signs have denotative and connotative meanings. The total of denotative meaning is nine and connotative meaning is seven.

In Lafiye's Instagram account posts, there are many semiotics that can be studied as in the previous image, which of course focuses on analyzing verbal and visual signs related to denotation and connotation meanings. This research was conducted to understand the verbal and visual signs related to denotation and connotation meanings on Lafiye's Instagram account posts and provide insight

into how social media, especially Instagram, can influence perceptions of beauty and support more inclusive beauty standards, especially for Indonesian women.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems are formulated as the following :

1. What verbal and visual sign are elements are presented on Lafiye's instagram account?
2. How are the verbal and visual signs realized on Lafiye's instagram account?
3. Why are the verbal and visual signs or meanings in Lafiye's Instagram account realized with myths they are?

C. The Objectives of the Study

In line with the problems, the objective of the study are:

1. To categorize the verbal and visual signs on Lafiye's instagram account.
2. To describe how the meaning of verbal and visual signs are realized on Lafiye's instagram account.
3. To explore the myths contained in signs and meanings in the context of culture and social media on lafiye's Instagram account.

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is to analyze verbal and visual signs of skin color in Indonesian women's beauty on the Lafiye's Instagram account. This research analyzes data regarding verbal and visual signs, meanings and the reasons contained in the Lafiye's Instagram account. The scope of this research is to analyze verbal and visual signs of skin color in Indonesian women's beauty on the

Lafiye's Instagram account. This research analyzes data regarding verbal and visual signs, meanings and the reasons contained in the Lafiye's Instagram account. This data is taken from the Lafiye Instagram account posts with a time span of 2023 to 2024. The data is taken from the time span of 2023 to 2024 because the posts from the lafiye Instagram account related to skin color are many in that year. The theories used in this research are semiotic theory from Barthes (1968), Barthes (1957) and color theory by Cerrato (2012).

E. The Significance of the Study

Findings of this research are expected to be significant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study provides further information to readers and enriches studies and increases knowledge about semiotics, especially regarding verbal signs and visual signs used in Lafiye's Instagram posts and the meanings that can be conveyed from semiotic studies.

Practically, the findings of this study can contribute to content creators' understanding of the verbal and visual signs that appear in Lafiye's Instagram posts. Specifically, this research explores the meanings associated with the representation of skin color in Indonesian women, which is often a critical topic that must be understood in depth to avoid misinterpretation. As such, the analysis conducted in this study can provide deeper insights for future researchers who wish to further explore the use of verbal and visual signs in the context of social media such as Instagram.