

Conference Paper

Selfie Objectification: Representation Of Hijabed Women In Instagram

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Abstract

Selfie (self portrait) is both a discourse and a global phenomenon (Day, 2014; Veum and Undrum, 2017). as a phenomenon, selfie action has attracted the attention of researchers (Zhao and Zappavigna, 2017) to examine the selfie from the various perspective. Objectification against women has also become the focus in research from various disciplines. However, so far there have not many researches on the objectification of hijabed women's selfie. Hijabed women face the tension between religious norms and the desire for self-actualization in the virtual realm. A piece of cloth called "Hijab" brings the consequences of conduct for the wearers. This article discusses about the selfie objectification as representation of hijabed women in Instagram. Do they contribute to reproduce and sustain a representation of piety or are they constructed an alternative representation? This article analyzes selfie photos of hijabed women and captions using objectification theory and selfie objectification. This study uses social semiotics approach from Theo van Leeuwen which discusses representational meaning, interactional meaning, and compositional meaning. Selfie photos are selected based on celebrity on Instagram account or selebgram (Ind). They are @laudyacynthiabella, @zaskiasungkar15 and @dianpelangi. They are celebrity in offline and celebrity on Instagram. The account are chosen because they have over 4 million followers. Hijabed women posted selfie as a representation and self-actualization in Instagram to get recognition. Instagram is considered as a spaces that can sustain a discourse of piety. When they construct a piety self, they also objectify themselves. Selfie objectification is done to attract the attention of followers. Selfie objectification is done to facilitating their business.

Keywords: selfie, objectification, Instagram, hijabed women, representation

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Selfie photo action is a trend in line with the popularity of visual-based social media such as Instagram. Taking pictures then uploading selfies in Instagram is a necessity for some individuals. We can find accounts in Instagram which contain selfie photos of women who have many followers. This women uploads her photos after selecting and

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sorting out the perceived best photos. This best assessment has different standards for each person.

Hijabed women carry a number of religious values and norms that want to be obeyed which sometimes contradict women's desire for self-actualization or to present themselves in a public space. These women have dualism at the same time that is the desire to be admired by those who viewed and want to remain on the religious norm. When talking about hijabed women in Indonesian territory, our association leads directly to Muslim women. This is because the construction is adopted by the Indonesian people that the wearer of long clothes with a hijab embraces Islam. As if the clothes and attributes are "religious". Whereas in practice hijabed women are not merely those who embrace Islam. This hijabed tradition is also practiced in Judaism and Christianity. Although both are hijabed but there are differences in the procedure for their use. The woman who wears this hijab in this research, henceforth I call the hijabed woman assuming they are Muslim. Some people in Indonesia constructed hijabed women as godly, flawless women. Referring to Kavakci and Kraeplin's (2016) study of the term *hijabista* (*hijabi* and *fashionista*) refers to a Muslim woman is dressed in style that is still in Islamic dress code.

Various ways of using the hijab do not always reflect the level of religiosity of the wearer, but it does lead to polarization and truth claims regarding the modesty and faith of the wearer. The emergence of the term *hijab shar'i* a few years ago was considered as a protest against the hijab which was considered to be less *shar'i* or a small hijab which was only wrapped around the wearer's neck and did not cover the chest. Women who wear the *hijab shar'i* are considered as being more polite and have a higher level of faith comparing to users of smaller or shorter cloth-sized hijabs.

Using the hijab is not only to cover the *aurat*, but also as a reflection of the identity, lifestyle, resistance, fashion and negotiation of a woman as part of a representation of cosmopolitan culture. Along with the rise of industrialization, the hijab no longer plays a role only as a symbol or practice of religiosity, but has been shifted to pop commodities. Hijab can also be used as a selfie property, especially when religious moments are taking place. Even though worn the hijab, women, still want to look beauty when are viewed by others both by the opposite sex and fellow women.

Women are no longer just objects of male gaze but also of women's gazes. Women sometimes do gaze each other consciously or unconsciously. Competition in various things happens among women themselves, especially in terms of appearance, even in real spaces and in virtual space. Woman's desire to present herself in a real space or virtual space cannot just appear at will. Some women are limited by the rules of religion

that they believe in and the social norms that require to be obedience. There are rules in the Qur'an that teach women to dress modestly. The clothes worn must be loosely covered.

The principle of piety and modesty is always attached to a woman who wear a hijab in the sense that when a woman wears a hijab, she must wear simple clothes from head to toe, not excessive, not flashy. Though a woman wants a perfect appearance for her body, dressing her body in a different style from other women. Hijabed women also have their own tastes and style of dress. But when they will show themselves there are many rules that confine them. Women have the desire to present themselves before people so that others see their existence. There are various contestations in this case, so that a woman wearing a hijab must be able to negotiate with various conditions in fulfilling her desire. The concept of modesty according to Waltorp is "The concept of modesty is closely linked to those of honor, piety, and propriety as well as to gender relations, the safe guarding of a young women's virginity, and sexuality" (2015: 59). Regarding modesty, Muslim women who are oriented towards Western society negotiates the norms clearly regulate behavior in public spaces and private spaces for hijabed women, but in the digital era, social media offers opportunities to negotiate these norms (Kavakci and Kraeplin, 2016: 854). They can negotiate on social media as they desire.

The desire of hijabed women to remain able to present themselves before the public collides with religious norms and values. These norms, in addition to dress codes, are also rules of association, especially with the opposite sex, for example a woman wearing a hijab must lower her eyes when meeting or talking to the opposite sex. This desire to represent themselves is now facilitated by social media, especially Instagram. Instagram is like a virtual photo album for individuals who have passion for uploading photos of various activities in their lives. Instagram is like a room where women wearing hijab can fulfill their desire to present themselves in connection with the desire to be seen or seen by others. Selfie photo activity is basically personal, but when selfie photos have been uploaded to social media, especially Instagram, the photos have become public property, no longer in the private domain. Lacan in psychoanalytic theory suggests the relationship between desire with pleasure as follows:

"The pleasure principle is the uncontrollable human drive to satisfy desire or an appetite for something that promises enjoyment, satisfaction, and pleasure in its attainment. Commonly recognized desires include yearning for sex, power, or food. If you stop to consider your own life, you'll realize that pleasure comes from many things we might not otherwise associate with it. For example, we often gain pleasure from purposefully breaking rules and

laws or putting ourselves in situations that feel life threatening. We can even gain pleasure from observing appalling or gruesome spectacles” (Ott&Mack, 2010:151).

The principle of pleasure is the uncontrolled human urge to satisfy the desire for something that promises pleasure, satisfaction, and pleasure in achieving it. If the desire is not satisfied, there will be lackness in a person as a consequence that occurs when the subject enters the Symbolic. Castration also marks loss in relation to the Symbolic (remember lackness is always related to tensions between the Real and the Symbolic) (Handayani, et al, 2013: 63). There is a well of baseless desires that are permanent and constitutive basis. Without "lack" the subject will never be a creature. Phallus in Lacanian psychoanalysis is a sign of desire and lackness (Handayani, et al, 2013: 61). Men and women are defined differently because of this symbolic order (the Symbolic) specifically in the function phallus (phallus as a signifier / symbol of desire) (Handayani, et al, 2013: 59). This view is in line with the writings of Brian L. Ott & Robert L. Mack: "This year for absent pleasures even a sense of lack, and psychology analysts claim that the lack of domination is the way we understand life and the decisions we make" (Ott & Mack, 2010: 156) History proves that in any part of the world, a woman's body is always an object (Handayani, et al, 2013: 32). Likewise, in the virtual world, women's bodies become objects of gaze. The gaze which is manifested in the form of writing, in the form of comments on social media is good. Written comments represent the desire, pleasure, and lack of the author. The woman who uploaded photos on Instagram consciously reproduce the male gaze.

The discourse that has been constructed in the community about a hijabed women can only express in the domestic space with a set of rules reproduced in the accounts of @ukhtiakhiantiselfi and @shalihtanpaselfie. These accounts and other similar accounts perpetuate discourse in line with religious moral demands. Wherever and whenever a woman wears her hijab, she must be able to control her actions and emotions to present herself as a religious woman, including when taking selfies. In real life there is no or less space for women wearing hijab to meet the needs of self disclosure.

However, Instagram offers unlimited opportunities to construct and deconstruct themselves. Instagram offers individuals to act both as subjects and objects. Digital technology offers meaning making processes that provoke selfie hijaber to present themselves. Even though women wearing hijab have a desire to represent themselves but without protocols on Instagram that support it, this will not be realized. Some women who wear hijab do not want to be backward in the vortex of modernity in the digital era, even though they wear hijab they still want to be respected.

Hijabed women produce selfie photos as part of self/selfie objectification. Women wearing hijab do it consciously, with indications of casual pose, no pressure, facial self-care in such a way as beautiful as possible, smiling, eyes staring straight at the camera. Self objectification occurs because of the influence of the media, relations with the opposite sex, social influences as contained in McKay, Tanjare (2013; 60-62) who states that there are three factors that contribute to the occurrence of self objectification: media influences, relationships, societal influences. Social media, in this case is Instagram, is a space for the practice of self objectification. Instagram users can filter what photo content they will post on their Instagram account, delete all the photos that are considered as not good enough so that their account only contains photos that show perfect beauty and life. The initial assumption in this study was that women wearing hijab who practiced selfies to upload on Instagram, considered themselves as being able to control the use of Instagram without realizing that they at the same time actually practiced self objectification.

Self objectification is the result of objectivity where the face and body are seen as pleasure, as visual enjoyment of other men and women. Ambivalence occurs here, on one side hijabed women feel they can fulfill their pleasure and desire by displaying themselves in selfie photos on Instagram but at the same time they practice self objectification. This research is conducted to uncover the practice of self-objectification of women wearing hijab through selfies on Instagram. I examine what kind of representation to be set up in their Instagram celebrity account by uploaded selfie objectification? What discourse is constructed by this hijabed women. Do they construct discourse in society about a hijab woman who appears modest and polite according to religious and social morals or rejects the discourse by presenting herself in opposition to a simple concept or construct alternative discourse in their own view. To answer this question, a study of hijab women selfies is carried out in Instagram through selfie photos and caption from accounts of @laudyacynthiabella, @zaskiasungkar15 and @dianpelangi by using social semiotics by Theo van Leeuwen.

Research on selfie has been conducted by Theresa M. Senft and Nancy K. Baym titled *What Does the Selfie Say, Investigating a Global Phenomenon* published in the *International Journal of Communication* 9 (2015). This research describes the journey of selfie as a global phenomenon (Senft and Baym, 2015, p. 1588). The other study is *#selfie: digital self-portraits as commodity form and consumption practice*, this article examines about selfie uses as commodity (Mehita Iqani and Jonathan E. Schroeder, 2015). Another study related to selfie entitled *The Self-and-The Transformation of The Public-Private Distinction* by Michael James Walsh & Stephanie Alice Baker is published

in the *Journal of Information, Communication & Society* (2017). This research describes the production and consumption of selfies by using the dramaturgical approach of Goffman, to explore how 'Self-presentation' takes place in the context of selfie (Walsh and Baker, 2017:1186). Concerning privacy is related to the role of selfie and its impact on the boundaries between public domain and private domain in contemporary social life.

While other articles are still related selfie entitled *Self-representation and the disaster event: self-imaging, morality and immortality* by Yasmin Ibrahim published in *Journal of Media Practice* (2016). This article discusses the moral politics of misery and disaster related to "disaster selfie and disaster porn", as well as online image ethics (Ibrahim, 2016, p. 211). Article *Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies: the Online Identity Construction of Hijabi Social Media Personalities*, discusses about constructed identity online three hijabista (Kavakci, E and Kraeplin, CR. 2017). This paper is different from the five articles above since the focus of this paper is on the selfie photo of the three Instagram celebrity hijabed women who do selfie objectification in their self representation.

Hijabed women's selfie uploaded in instagram as a means of showing self representation and self/selfie objectification in cyberspace. Representation is a process in which the makers of signs seek to make representation of some object or entity, whether physical or semiotic and in which their interest in the object, at the point of making the representation, is complex one, arising out of the cultural, social and psychological history of the sign maker and focused by spesific context in which the sign maker produces the sign (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:7). The term of selfie objectification is refers to Lexie and Lindsay Kite. There are two terms combined, 'selfie' and 'objectification'. Objectification comes from *objectification* theory by Fredrickson dan Robert (1997). *Snapping photos of ourselves to document what we look like in certain moments, looks, or angles is a new form of self-objectification that we call "selfie-objectification"* (Lexie and Lindsay Kite, 2014).

1.2. Methodology

Type of research is qualitative -1596591846-1596591846 using representation and social semiotics theory approach to reveal the textual aspects of the selfie hijabed woman in Instagram celebrity. Research subjects is account @laudyacynthiabella (22,9 million followers), @zaskiasungkar15 (14,1 million followers), @dianpelangi (4,8 million followers) (by the date of Okt 3, 2018) with text captions in the photos. Technique of data collection

is observation of selfie photo and caption posted by the three accounts of celebrity Instagram. Choosing their selfie photos that have the most likes.

2. Result and Discussion

Selfie participants can be more than one person usually known as *wefie*. However, in this paper I use the term *selfie*. Kavakci and Kraeplin said that selfie is the key to self-articulation and documentation as an online identity (2016:855). In cyberspace in which identity is melting, we can be anyone as we pleased, because the virtual world is like our second identity. Including in the self-image activities, we can be anyone by using costumes. The virtual world seems to be a stage in dramaturgy, where everyone can construct themselves including women with hijab. It is easy for us to form an identity through social media as-1596591844-1596591844 a new arena for hijabed women to be able to represent themselves as self in the virtual world as an attempt to construct identity.

| Function of meaning | Semiotic resources | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| | Visual resources | Linguistic resources |
| Representational meaning | Contextualized/decontextualized Degree of visual modality Narrative/conceptual | Lexis |
| Interactional meaning | Social distance •Personal (close up) •Social (medium shot) •Impersonal (long shot) Image act •Offer (absence of gaze at viewer) •Demand (direct gaze) Attitude •Low-angle shot •Eye-level shot •High-angle shot | Style Communicative act (speech act) |
| Compositional meaning | Relation between visual and linguistic resources | |

Figure 1: Multimodal text analysis of selfies and captions published on Instagram (Veum dan Undrum, 2017)

Selfie photo in account @laudyacynthiabella, @zaskiasungkar15 and @dianpelangi will be analyzed with Figure 1 to reveal representation meaning, interaction meaning, and compositional meaning. Visual dan linguistic resources as a text intertwines with the social context in which the text is produced and used, there are integration between text and context.

In representational meaning in the visual resources section there are three points that will be analyzed namely contextualized / decontextualized, degree of visual capital,

narrative / conceptual. The first point is the selfie photo is contextualized or decontextualized. I will do the analysis by looking at the background depicted in the photo that does not appear or does not fully appear in the image. As Machin said that “A reduction in background details can be achieved in several ways, for instance by shooting the image in a studio or by using digital tools such as cropping or blurring” (Machin, 2011: 55 in Veum and Undrum, 2017: 92).

Corpus data contains various of contextualized or decontextualized representations. In the @laudacynthiabella’s account you can find that only one photo is in decontextualized, the background is completely absent. This photo is Laudya’s selfie photo with her daughter (Fig.2). While the other two Laudya photos still clearly show the background. In the @zaskiasungkar15’s account there is also only one photo that does not show the background clearly because the photo focuses on the two social actors that is Zaskia together with Laudya (Fig. 3). While the other two photos show the background clearly. Likewise, in the @dianpelangi’s account, there is only 1 photo that only shows a small amount of background, that is at fig 4c.

The second point is the degree of visual modality, which is about the degrees of editing. The general principle is that the image of something resembles how we see it with our own eyes, the higher the degree of naturalistic equity (Veum and Undrum, 2017: 93). Some photos uploaded through the editing process, at least editing on lighting as seen in fig. 2a. Beautify features in the camera application are also activated to support the process of making photos as the representation desired by social actors.

On the third point is about the narrative or conceptual elements contained in the photo. The action of selfie photos on the @laudacynthiabella’s and @zaskiasungkar15’s accounts are included in the narrative category because the selfies they upload are narrating a particular activity with the people in the photo. Representations constructed are illustrated actively. Different from the selfie objectification on @dianpelangi’s account that performs a selfie action alone. The representation is static because representing oneself in Instagram. In representational meaning related to linguistic resources is analyzing the uploaded caption to give information or strengthen the story in the photo. The caption is written sometimes using a certain hashtag as contained in fig. 2c and fig. 4c. The caption sometimes mentions another account as the party that is considered to be concerned with the uploaded photo as contained in fig 4a.

In interactional meaning in visual resources, there are three points of analysis, namely social distance (close up, medium shot, long shot), image act (offer, demand), attitude (low-angle shot, eye-level shot, high-angle shot) These three Instagram celebrity’s accounts build personal interaction, namely the position of taking a close-up photo.

There is only one photo that is in a social position (medium shot) that is a photo on fig. 3b. All photos were taken using the arm of the social actor, not a single selfie was taken using the help of selfie stick. All selfie photos in three account in the corpus of this research are in the position of demand (direct gaze) of the viewer. They build interactions to make it appear that they will be in close proximity and reached by the viewer. In attitude, there are variations in low-angle shot shooting techniques as contained in fig. 2b, eye-level shot at fig. 4a, while the high-angle shot at fig. 3c.

In the linguistic resources section there is a point style and communicative act, we can observe the use of language in the caption that accompanies the selfie. The @dianpelangi's account that uses captions is longer in character than the @zaskiasungkar15's and @laudyacynthiabella's accounts. @dianpelangi is seen promoting various types of products ranging from their own products such as hijab, other products where Dian becomes its brand ambassador, cosmetics and fashion as contained in Fig.4. While Laudya emphasizes more attention to her caption on families, not promoting any products as contained in fig.2b. The three of them use Indonesian in speech language interspersed with the use of slang and English as contained in fig.3a.

The compositional meaning section will analyze the relation between visual and linguistic resources. There is a relationship between visual and linguistic resources where both complement each other's narratives that are built as in fig. 2b there is Laudya's selfie with Mama on the plane. In the caption the narrative focuses on the Mama where Mama is candidly photographed. While in Dian's selfie objectification there is a link between the photo and the caption where the pose shown uses full make up as found in fig. 4a and 4b.

Technology allows individuals to display themselves freely even through a selfie. According to Agnes Rocamora the internet (in this case is Instagram) offers unlimited opportunities for person to construct their own identity. Rocamora borrowed the concept from Michael Foucault's 'technologies of the self' which converges online to facilitate this process. In this case, -1596591841-1596591841 included 'technologies' of photography and fashion and newer media digital technologies and specifically social media (Rocamora, 2011: 410). Blogs and social media platforms that fashion trends and special styles, in particular, encourage the creation of performance. This process of self-expression and construction is facilitated by 'continuous renewal' every day, even hourly, posting, for example - online technology allows this to happen (Rocamora, 2011: 411). Individuals can easily construct themselves to the audience on the Instagram platform.



Figure 2: Laudya's Selfie (a) with her daughter in casual; (b) with her mama; (c) with her daughter wearing mukena.

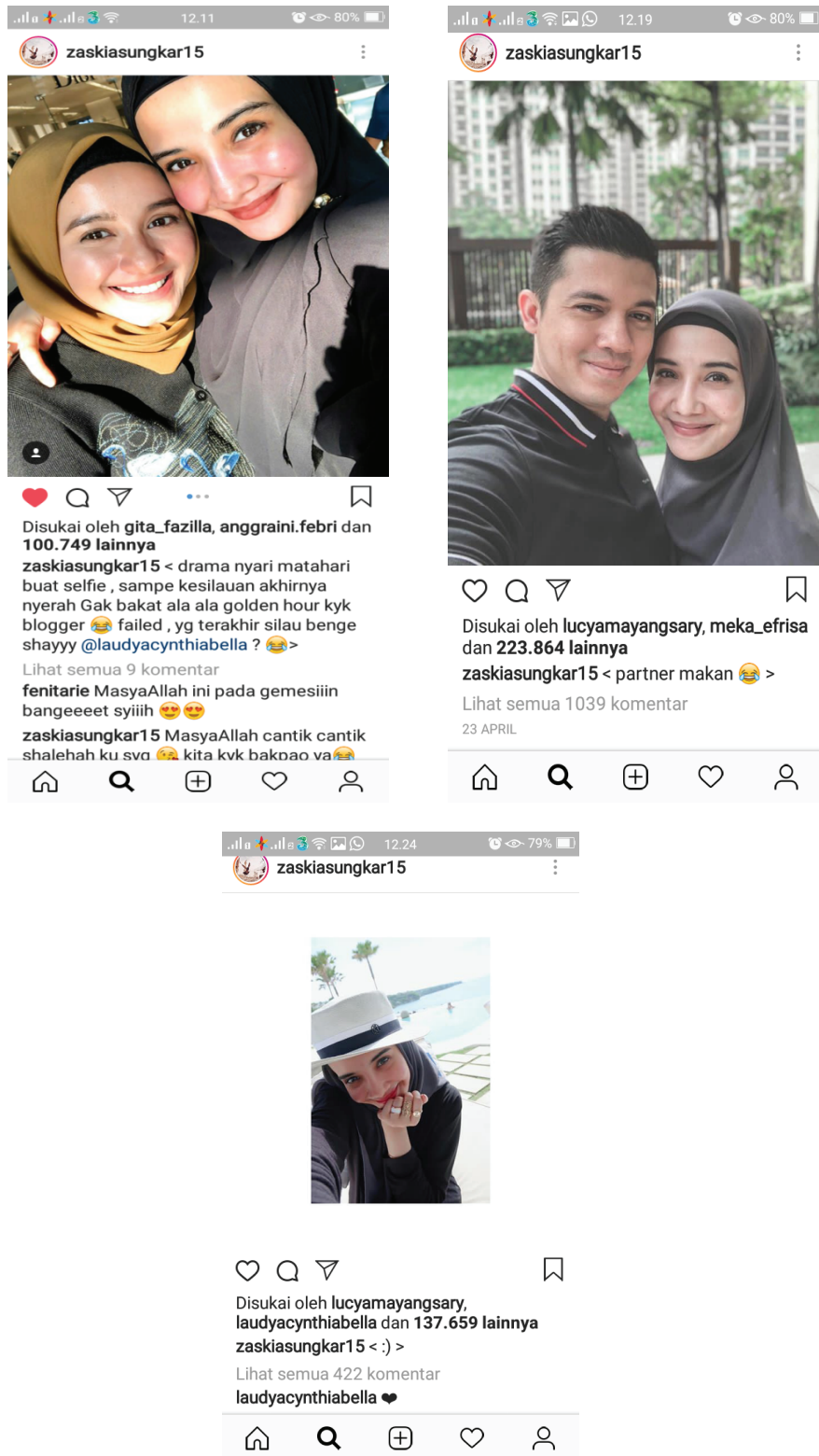


Figure 3: Zaskia's Selfie (a) with Laudya; (b) with her husband; (c) her self.



Figure 4: Dian's Selfie (a) in grey hijab; (b) in with pink hijab; (c) in blue hijab.

The technology in the form of accompanying features and applications that support the production process of a selfie photo. Various protocols on Instagram allow individuals to represent themselves as desired. Instagram provides space that allows women to wear hijab to present themselves, where space is not obtained in offline life. The space in the Instagram is as if we can control it, but without realizing it, we make ourselves as objects controlled by various protocols that Instagram brings. Facilities on Instagram offer various tools such as tools to beautify yourself. As mentioned by Veum & Undrum (2016):

”Instagram offers users a range of digital tools for editing images such as in terms of changing contrasts, sharpness and color saturation. Selfie makers may also use various filters and applications. Such visual resources may affect the judgement of what social semiotics refer to as visual modality or the ‘visual truth’ of the images”.

From the three points about representational meaning, interactional meaning, compositional meaning is a unity in the third self representation of Instagram celebrity. The three of them used visual sources and linguistic sources intelligently in contrasting themselves as a Muslimah who was happy, modern, independent, empowered, close to the family in the corridor of piety as well as religious guidance. By having a lot of followers, it will increase your influence and opportunities in business.

3. Conclusion

Instagram has a protocol that makes it easy for women to become ”self” that is different from ”self” in real space. Women Instagram users seemed to have the freedom to present themselves, as if they were controlling the technology. But they have made themselves as objects not the real subjects. As an example of technology control against us is when someone practices selfie photos, we are the ones who will be busy adjusting the position of our face and body to enter the camera frame, when it is appropriate and our faces are painted pretty then we press the snap button. The camera is in a selfie as a self-documenting mirror.

The representations shown by the three celebrity instagram which have many followers are those who are fashionable, piety, family women, confident, modern in fashion negotiations that adjust religious rules even though they cannot be categorized in Shari’. The three of them use Instagram to influence their followers, “this is me” not this is i

want to be. By doing a selfie objectification to promote their lifestyle, of course, can not be separated from business affairs.

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