

Visual Commodification and Islamic Identity in Selected Indonesian Cosmetic Ads: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Religious identity has become a marketable visual language in Indonesian beauty advertising, where piety, purity, and modern femininity are packaged as lifestyle cues. Yet scholarship on halal cosmetics has largely emphasized consumer attitudes and purchase intention, giving less attention to how Islamic identity is produced, normalized, and commodified through multimodal advertising design. Addressing this gap, the study examines selected Indonesian cosmetic advertisements, with a purposive focus on *Wardah*'s halal beauty campaign, including the Perfect Bright Moisturizer advertisement featuring Ayana Jihye Moon. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), supported by a semiotic reading of salient visual signs, the analysis links textual choices, production and circulation practices, and wider socio-cultural conditions shaping meaning. Findings show that Islamic identity is commodified through a recurrent configuration of hijab centered imagery, prominent halal certification, and purity and safety framings that position the product as both religiously compliant and scientifically credible. Brightness and cleanliness motifs, staged gaze and posture, and positive evaluative wording further construct an aspirational Muslim femininity that is confident, modest, and future oriented. Ideologically, the discourse functions integratively by aligning Islamic ethics with contemporary self-care narratives, presenting halal as an empowering marker of responsible consumption, and framing modest beauty as compatible with professionalism, mobility, and modern lifestyles. The study specifies the discursive and semiotic mechanisms that recontextualize Islam into commercial value, with implications for multimodal CDA, critical media literacy, and ethical advertising in Muslim majority markets.

1. Introduction

Religious imagery is no longer confined to sacred spaces. In contemporary consumer culture, it circulates through everyday commodities and media texts, shaping how audiences read identity, morality, and lifestyle. In Muslim majority societies such as Indonesia, Islamic symbols embedded in consumer products have increasingly shifted from primarily spiritual markers to strategic branding resources intended to secure trust and emotional alignment in culturally sensitive markets. In beauty advertising, this shift becomes especially visible through recurring representations of hijab wearing women, halal assurances, and Islamic values that are framed as signals of authenticity and ethical consumption, encouraging consumers to associate cosmetics with safety, purity, and religious compliance (Hussin et al., 2013).

This trajectory is inseparable from Indonesia's demographic and cultural landscape, where producers deliberately target the vast Muslim market by embedding Islamic values into product narratives and brand positioning. The rapid growth of the Indonesian Muslim middle class in the post New Order era has intensified the appeal of halal certified lifestyle goods, including cosmetics, as rising purchasing power intersects with heightened religious consciousness (Afendi et al., 2014). In response, brands increasingly foreground Islamic figures, hijab-wearing models, and halal labels to appeal to consumers with diverse levels of religiosity. This trend illustrates how Islamic identity is mobilized as a persuasive marketing language and a set of recognizable symbols that signal trust, belonging, and moral legitimacy, rather than functioning solely as a straightforward religious marker (Bakar & Rungie, 2013).

A growing body of scholarship helps explain why this marketing logic gains traction. Studies of halal cosmetics and related consumer behaviour have shown that religious cues can shape purchase intention and strengthen perceived product legitimacy, making Islamic symbolism an effective resource within competitive advertising environments (Hussin et al., 2013; Afendi et al., 2014; Bakar & Rungie, 2013). At the same time, critical accounts of commodification emphasize that this is not simply an economic process but a cultural force in which capitalist systems and popular culture become mutually reinforcing, allowing religious principles to be reformulated as lifestyle commodities tailored to market demand (Syah, 2013). This broader political economy perspective also foregrounds the role of media and advertising as vehicles for capitalist expansion, where commodification becomes central to sustaining growth and normalizing consumerist values (Ibrahim & Akhmad, 2014; Murdock, 2006; Fuchs, 2011).

Research on contemporary Indonesian Islam further clarifies how consumption becomes a site for identity work. Scholars have documented how middle class Muslim consumption practices evolved after the Islamization wave following the New Order, producing modern Muslim consumers who express religiosity through goods and services, shaped not only by functional needs but also by aspirational desires and lifestyle imaginaries (Heryanto, 2015; Kurasawa & Horton, 2015). In this context, the halal concept extends far beyond food to domains such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, clothing, toys, and tourism, encouraging consumption patterns that aim to achieve Islamically correct behaviour (Kaur & Mutty, 2016). Regulatory frameworks further consolidate these practices, including Law No. 33 of 2014, which mandates halal certification across a wide range of consumable products and strengthens halal governance as a public norm rather than a niche preference (Putri, 2021). Yet, despite these insights, scholarship still rarely examines how Islamic identity is visually constructed and ideologically shaped in cosmetic advertising through rigorous Critical Discourse Analysis, and there remains limited work that interrogates *Wardah's* hijab centred strategies and socio-cultural narratives through an integrated CDA and semiotic lens (Bungin, 2019; Lee & Childs, 2020).

This study enters that gap by focusing on the *Wardah* Perfect Bright Moisturizer advertisement featuring Ayana Jihye Moon and by treating the advertisement as a multimodal discourse where images, words, and cultural assumptions cooperate to commodify Islam. Its contribution lies in moving beyond broad discussions of religious symbolism and instead explaining how visual elements, narrative sequencing, and semiotic cues function together to frame Islamic identity as an attractive commodity within Indonesia's beauty industry.

Substantively, this inquiry matters because the commodification of religion in advertising has implications that extend across scholarship, industry practice, and public discourse. This study aims to analyze how *Wardah* constructs Islamic identity through visual, textual, and socio-cultural discourses, identify the ideological forces shaping these constructions, and evaluate how such representations may influence broader consumption patterns among Muslim audiences. By doing so, it seeks to advance discourse analytic discussions of ideology and representation while also informing advertisers, policymakers, and global cosmetic industries that operate in Muslim majority markets.

To address these aims, the article examines one highly circulated *Wardah* advertisement that aired on television and remains accessible via the *Wardah* Beauty YouTube channel, selected purposively based on explicit Islamic visual markers, halal certification display, and the use of a hijab wearing public figure. The article then develops the analytical approach and proceeds through a staged discourse analysis that foregrounds how meaning is produced and circulated across micro, meso, and macro dimensions, before presenting the main findings on visual, ideological, and contextual elements of commodification.

The study ultimately argues that advertisements such as *Wardah's* do more than sell cosmetics. They participate in negotiating what counts as modern Muslim femininity by packaging beauty, purity, confidence, and piety into a coherent media identity, thereby making religious sensibilities available for consumption within contemporary popular culture (Syah, 2013). Within CDA, this has clear implications for understanding how power and ideology operate through multimodal texts, how halal discourse becomes normalized as a lifestyle aspiration, and how religious identity can be recontextualized into commercial meanings that shape everyday subjectivity and social desire in consumer culture.

2. Method

This study adopts a qualitative, case based design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how religious meanings are commodified within *Wardah's* halal cosmetic advertising. CDA is appropriate because advertisements are not neutral reflections of reality. They actively construct discourse that is shaped by ideology, power relations, and commercial interests, allowing the researcher to interrogate how Islamic values are recontextualized as persuasive marketing resources (Ida, 2014; Haryatmoko, 2017).

2.2 Data Source and Corpus Selection

The corpus consists of one *Wardah* television advertisement featuring Ayana Jihye Moon, which is also accessible via the official *Wardah* Beauty YouTube channel. The advertisement was selected

purposively to ensure that the data directly represents Islamic identity work in visual marketing. Three inclusion criteria guided selection: the explicit presence of Islamic visual markers such as hijab and modest clothing, the visible display of halal certification on the product, and strong relevance to *Wardah's* positioning as Indonesia's pioneer in halal cosmetics.

Although the analysis focuses on a single advertisement, its wide circulation, strong cultural visibility, and rich symbolic density make it a suitable case for an in depth CDA, allowing the study to capture nuanced meanings and broader ideological implications that might be less apparent in more routine or less prominent texts.

2.3 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection combined observation and documentation. The advertisement was viewed repeatedly to capture its narrative sequence and persuasive structure, followed by transcription of all spoken language and on-screen captions. Key visual frames were systematically captured to document salient semiotic resources, including clothing, gestures, color schemes, facial expressions, and the halal logo. Throughout this process, analytic memos were written to record preliminary interpretations and emerging ideological patterns. This procedure follows the premise that discourse operates multimodally through language as well as images, gesture, sound, and other symbolic forms (Haryatmoko, 2017).

2.4 Analytical Framework

The analysis followed Fairclough's four stages of CDA, namely identifying social irregularities, recognizing interpretive obstacles, evaluating their function within the social order, and proposing critical responses (Ida, 2014). These stages were then integrated into Fairclough's three-dimensional model, enabling a systematic analysis across three interrelated layers:

- 1) **Micro level:** textual, auditory, and visual features, including the use of icons, indexes, and symbols using Peirce's semiotic categories (Ngaviatun, 2022).
- 2) **Meso level:** discursive practices such as the advertisement's production, distribution, and reception.
- 3) **Macro level:** sociocultural contexts including Islamization, halal consumerism, and middle-class identity formation.

Taken together, this integrated analytical design deepens the interpretation by bringing multiple forms of evidence into dialogue, and it makes explicit how meaning is produced, negotiated, and circulated across interconnected layers of discourse.

2.5 Trustworthiness and Analytical Rigor

Credibility was strengthened through multiple viewing cycles and repeated interpretive checking across the micro, meso, and macro analyses. An audit trail was maintained through coding notes and analytic memos to document how interpretations were developed and refined. Transferability is supported through thick description of the advertisement's semiotic features and discursive context. Reflexivity was also applied by explicitly acknowledging the researcher's positionality when interpreting religious representations and evaluating commodification claims.

3. Results

This study examines how religion is commodified in a *Wardah* cosmetic advertisement by tracing meaning across three interrelated levels of analysis: micro (text, audio, and visuals), meso (discursive practice), and macro (sociocultural context). Across these levels, the advertisement consistently frames Islamic identity as both a moral assurance and a marketable lifestyle resource, enabling the brand to position beauty consumption as compatible with piety, modernity, and public confidence.

3.1 Micro level Analysis

In this micro analysis, eight recurring semiotic cues were identified as the main discourses through which Islamic identity is commodified in *Wardah* cosmetic product advertising. Following the study's micro analytic focus, the discussion concentrates on how meaning is produced inside the advertisement through visual composition, embodied action, and audio wording.

These cues work through iconic, indexical, and symbolic sign relations that do not merely decorate the text with Islamic markers. Instead, they organize a persuasive narrative in which halal legitimacy, purity, and modern Muslim femininity are framed as mutually reinforcing. The key micro finding is the tight integration of identity, affect, and product proof, where the viewer is invited to read *Wardah* not only as a cosmetic brand but also as a morally reassuring lifestyle choice.

Across these eight cues below, the advertisement constructs a coherent micro ideology in which Islamic identity becomes a persuasive resource that enhances emotional resonance, moral legitimacy, and social desirability. Icons establish an aspirational identity model, indexes translate morality into effect and embodied conduct, and symbols condense institutional legitimacy into instantly readable proof.

The result is a tightly managed meaning system where the consumer is invited to believe that modern confidence and religious propriety can be achieved together, and that *Wardah* is the practical pathway through which that integrated identity becomes attainable.

3.1.1 Ayana Jihye Moon's Visual (Icon)



Figure 1. Visual Ayana Jihye Moon during a photo shoot (Icon)

The image shows one of the brand ambassadors of *Wardah* products, Ayana Jihye Moon, a female celebrity from Korea who is active in the public world. The advertisement depicts the daily routine of a woman who works in the public domain and interacts with many people. At the micro level, Ayana's visual centrality functions iconically as the main anchor that stabilizes interpretation. Her calm self-presentation, confident posture, and public mobility construct an identity template of successful Muslim femininity that appears modern, composed, and socially legitimate.

The persuasive logic is subtle but strong. Ayana's social credibility is staged as transferable, implying that the confidence she performs is connected to the product she uses. This is a key mechanism of commodification because Islamic identity is not presented as separate from modern public life. It is packaged as the aesthetic and moral foundation of that public success, with *Wardah* positioned as the enabling tool that helps the consumer inhabit the same aspirational identity.

3.1.2 Packaging Visual (Icon)



Figure 2. Visual packaging of *Wardah* perfect bright moisturizer (Icon)

The image reveals the existence of *Wardah* cosmetic products as halal cosmetic products. This product visual indicates that Ayana, a Muslim woman, uses *Wardah* products that have received halal certification from the MUI. At the micro level, the close up product shot works iconically as material proof. Its repeated visibility reduces ambiguity and trains the viewer's attention toward a stable conclusion: the commodity itself embodies religious

reassurance. In advertising terms, the packaging becomes a portable guarantee. It compresses a complex legitimacy process into an instantly readable object, which strengthens trust without requiring explanation. This is a central discourse of commodification because the advertisement turns halal assurance into a visible attribute of the product's identity, not merely an external administrative status.

3.1.3 Smile (Index)



Figure 3. Ayana Moon's smile using *Wardah* (Index)

The image illustrates a persuasive invitation through smiles so that consumers want to try *Wardah* products like those used by Ayana Jihye Moon. Ayana's smile and the smiles of other figures in the advertisement signal recognition and welcome of *Wardah* products. A smile in Islam is alms, so it is permissible to spread smiles to others, both men and women (Saputra, 2022). At the micro level, the smile functions indexically as an affective bridge between ethics and consumption. It produces warmth, sincerity, and social ease, which makes persuasion feel relational

rather than purely commercial. This matters because religiously coded marketing depends on perceived authenticity. The smile helps the advertisement perform moral likability, positioning halal consumption as emotionally safe, socially harmonious, and culturally appropriate. The result is that a simple facial expression becomes part of an ethical atmosphere. It subtly frames purchasing as joining a positive community of proper beauty practice.

3.1.4 Clothing and Colors (Index)



Figure 4. Ayana Jihye Moon's Clothing (Index)

The image depicts Ayana Jihye Moon wearing Muslim clothing that signals her identity as a Muslim. *Wardah* intends to portray its product as protective, clean, and halal to use. At the micro level, clothing and color function indexically as an aesthetic of purity. The dominant light palette evokes cleanliness, calmness, and serenity, and these qualities are redirected toward the product's promise. Modest fashion is presented as stylish and contemporary, which helps the advertisement resolve a potential tension between

modesty and modernity. The discourse implied here is positive and aspirational. Modesty becomes a marker of taste, discipline, and professionalism rather than restriction. In this way, the advertisement commodifies Islamic identity by turning visible religiosity into an attractive design language that supports modern public confidence.

3.1.5 Using Products with the Right Hand (Index)



Figure 5. Using products with the right hand (Index)

The image depicts Ayana using *Wardah* cosmetic products with her right hand. This is framed as positive and aligned with sunnah in Islam. The picture also demonstrates product use, and the right-hand gesture gives the impression that *Wardah* products bring positive values. At the micro level, this gesture functions indexically as embodied religious etiquette. It does more than show how to apply moisturizer. It frames consumption as a practice that can be performed correctly and ethically. This extends halal from a label

into a routine, suggesting that everyday grooming can remain religiously appropriate when done with proper conduct and proper products. The commodification mechanism here is the moralization of routine. The advertisement turns an ordinary action into a small sign of piety, making the product appear compatible with religious discipline at the level of bodily practice.

3.1.6 Open Hands (Index)



Figure 6. Open hands when using the product (Index)

Open hands represent acceptance and openness to the presence of *Wardah* products by Ayana Jihye Moon. Acceptance from a Muslim celebrity and advertising figure can bring positive meanings for viewers. At the micro level, open palms operate as a bodily rhetoric of transparency, sincerity, and invitation. The gesture indexes willingness rather than doubt, and it reduces the possibility of skepticism by performing openness. In persuasive terms, it signals that the brand has

nothing to hide. In moral terms, it aligns the brand with honesty and ethical cleanliness. This supports the broader discourse that halal consumption is not only permissible but also emotionally reassuring. The consumer is positioned to accept the product as naturally fitting within a Muslim woman's routine and identity, not as an intrusive commercial influence.

3.1.7 Halal Label on Product Advertisements (Symbol)



Figure 7. Halal logo on *Wardah* products (Symbol)

The halal label conveys the idea that the product complies with Islamic law, which is intended to increase consumer interest, especially among Muslims. At the micro level, the halal logo functions symbolically as an institutional sign that activates shared cultural knowledge about legitimacy, safety, and acceptability. Its power lies in condensation. A complex set of religious and regulatory meanings is reduced into one visible marker that is easy to recognize and difficult to contest within mainstream consumer discourse. Symbolically, the label upgrades the commodity's status. It does not only say the product is allowed. It encourages the viewer to treat it as the preferable option because it carries moral reassurance. This is a key finding because the advertisement turns a sign of compliance into a sign of superiority, linking ethical legitimacy directly to market value.

3.1.8 Audio Ayana Jihye Moon (Symbol)

The following audio is delivered indirectly by Ayana Jihye Moon: "Among the busy activities, make sure you are always ready with *Wardah* Perfect Bright Moisturizer equipped with brightening powder; the face is immediately bright from the first swipe." The second audio is "With UV protection protects you from sunlight and halal," and the third is "Be bright, bright ready, bright on girls." (Symbol Sign)

At the micro level, the narration functions symbolically by anchoring interpretation and tightening the link between beauty outcomes and religious reassurance. The wording is direct, benefit driven, and repetitive, especially through the repeated use of "bright," which works as a rhetorical mechanism to intensify memorability and create a slogan like identity statement. The phrase "always ready" positions the consumer as a modern subject managing a busy public life, while "first swipe" constructs immediacy and efficiency as desirable values. The second audio explicitly connects protection, UV safety, and halal, producing a blended legitimacy claim that combines scientific credibility with religious legitimacy. The final line consolidates the message into a chant like form that positions the viewer as part of a collective identity, "girls," who are expected to be bright, prepared, and publicly confident. The key finding here is ideological alignment. The narration frames halal not as restriction but as empowerment, a reassuring foundation that authorizes modern self care and public visibility.

3.2 Meso Level Analysis

This meso analysis examines how the *Wardah* advertisement is produced, circulated, and consumed, with attention to the goal, ideology, identity, and knowledge that underpin the discourse. The focus is

directed to how advertisers draw on existing genres and discourses while negotiating power relations and ideologies embedded in them. In practical terms, the analysis asks how *Wardah* constructs meaning not only through what is shown, but through how the message is designed to be recognizable, persuasive, and culturally acceptable.

Wardah is a beauty product produced by Indonesia's largest cosmetic manufacturing company, PT Paragon Technology and Innovation. It was launched in 1995 and received a halal certificate from LPPOM MUI four years later, which enables the brand to be framed as a pioneer of halal cosmetic products in Indonesia. *Wardah* advertisements follow the commercial advertising genre, positioning media as an advertiser that delivers product messages to the general public. The language style is informal and relaxed to increase clarity and accessibility, and repetition is used

to strengthen memorability and influence consumer behavior. The advertisement also reflects an explicit market strategy: because most Indonesians are Muslim, products with Islamic nuances and halal labels represent a large consumer base. *Wardah* therefore positions itself as a Muslim and halal beauty product, using positioning to create differentiation and a superior image in the minds of consumers.

To connect production and consumption with interpretive meaning, the analysis applies Peirce's triangle of meaning, namely sign, object, and interpretant, to explain how the advertisement stabilizes audience readings of *Wardah* as halal, trustworthy, and socially desirable.

3.2.1 Interpretation of meaning based on iconic signs

Table 1. Interpretation of meaning based on iconic signs

No	Object	Sign	Interpretant
1	Visual Ayana Jihye Moon during a photoshoot	Same as sign	Describes Ayana's success as a celebrity and advertising star, interpreted as inseparable from <i>Wardah</i> 's role.
2	Visual packaging of <i>Wardah</i> Perfect Bright Moisturizer	Same as sign	Signals <i>Wardah</i> as a pioneer of halal cosmetic products in Indonesia.

Two iconic signs anchor the discourse. Ayana's visual presence establishes an aspirational identity template: a Muslim woman who remains publicly active and professionally confident while wearing Muslim clothing. This allows *Wardah* to transfer credibility from celebrity identity to product trust. The packaging close up operates as visual certainty. It

makes halal legibility immediate and compresses religious assurance into a quickly consumable proof, reducing ambiguity and strengthening the product's authority.

3.2.2 Interpretation of meaning based on index signs

Table 2. Interpretation of meaning based on index signs

No	Sign	Object	Interpretant
1	Ayana Moon's smile uses <i>Wardah</i>	Welcome and greetings	Persuasive invitation to try <i>Wardah</i> , signaling recognition and welcome.
2	Ayana Jihye Moon's outfit	Muslim identity	Clothing that covers the body implies <i>Wardah</i> is protective, clean, and halal.
3	Use the product with the right hand	Positive things	Demonstrates use and builds the impression of positive results.
4	Open hands when using the product	Acceptance and openness	Signals acceptance of <i>Wardah</i> products by Ayana.

Indexical cues support reception. Smiles create relational warmth and reduce commercial pressure. Clothing and color index purity and calmness while also presenting modest fashion as modern and stylish. Using the right hand and open palms index proper conduct, positivity, and openness, positioning *Wardah*

as culturally comfortable and ethically aligned with everyday routines.

3.2.3 Interpretation of meaning based on symbolic signs

Table 3. Interpretation of meaning based on symbolic signs

No	Sign	Object	Interpretant
1	Halal logo on <i>Wardah</i> products	White halal label	Increases interest by signaling compliance and purity, especially for Muslim women.
2	Audio “In the midst of your busy schedule...”; “With UV protection...”; “be bright, bright ready...”	Audio delivered indirectly by Dian Pelangi	Links <i>Wardah</i> to Ayana’s routine, presenting it as halal, gentle, and desirable.

Symbolic signs consolidate ideology. The halal logo functions as an institutional marker that activates shared knowledge of legitimacy and safety, with white adding associations of cleanliness and formality. The audio anchors interpretation by linking busyness, readiness, brightness, UV protection, and halal into a single promise, strengthening recall through repetition and positioning halal as reassurance rather than restriction.

3.2.4 Clothing discourse and the typology of Muslim women’s head coverings

The advertisement strengthens its positioning through a recognizable clothing discourse, where

modest fashion is framed as identity and protection while remaining modern and stylish. To clarify the broader cultural repertoire that makes this representation legible, the following typology illustrates common forms of Muslim women’s head coverings that circulate in public discourse and everyday practice. Within this range, the advertisement’s styling corresponds to a hijab form that covers the head and neck while leaving the face visible, supporting the advertisement’s construction of modesty as compatible with public mobility and contemporary aesthetics.

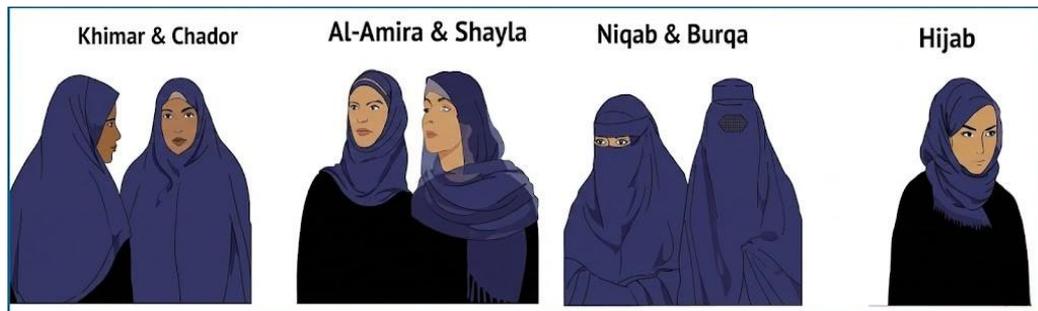


Figure 8. Types of Muslim women's head coverings

Based on the triangle of meaning, religious commodification appears through three dominant elements. First, the model is constructed as an inspiring Muslim celebrity whose public success makes halal beauty aspirational. Second, clothing that covers the body is framed as identity and protection, while also being styled in a modern and fashionable way, allowing modesty to function as lifestyle value rather than limitation. Third, the halal logo and audio claims present the product as religiously compliant and safe, using institutional legitimacy and repeated messaging to normalize halal cosmetics as a confident, modern choice within everyday consumer routines.

3.3 Macro Level Analysis

Macro or sociocultural analysis addresses the context outside the text and explains how wider social conditions shape the discourse that appears in media. In Fairclough’s framework, this level can be organized into three interrelated layers: situational, institutional, and social. The key macro finding in this study is that *Wardah*’s advertisement does not merely reflect an existing halal market. It actively participates in producing a cultural common sense in which halal beauty is framed as a modern lifestyle standard, religiously reassuring, socially admired, and economically desirable.

3.3.1 Situational

At the situational level, the advertisement emerges within a distinctive historical and cultural moment shaped by the post New Order Islamization wave. In this period, middle class Muslim consumers increasingly expressed religiosity through commodities and services, and lifestyle consumption became one visible route for demonstrating Islamic commitment in everyday life. *Wardah's* advertising functions as an action that responds to this situation by translating religiosity into a purchasable form of reassurance. Halal is presented as the solution to a specific situational need: consumers want beauty routines that feel safe, socially acceptable, and religiously secure at the same time.

This situational logic is strengthened by the timing and intensity of broadcasting, especially during Ramadan. Ramadan is not only a religious month but also a high visibility moral season where Islamic symbols, values, and self improvement narratives become more salient in public discourse. Intensifying advertising in this period allows *Wardah* to align product consumption with a culturally amplified atmosphere of piety, reflection, and ethical awareness. As a result, Islamic elements in the advertisement do not appear as optional decoration. They become situationally persuasive because they resonate with the heightened moral mood of the audience, positioning the product as compatible with religious self discipline and contemporary self care.

3.3.2 Institutional

At the institutional level, discourse production is shaped by the organization behind the brand and by religious institutions that provide legitimacy. Internally, PT Paragon Technology and Innovation influences the discourse through corporate identity, branding strategy, and campaign narratives such as #ParaWajahIndonesia. These institutional choices guide what counts as the ideal consumer and what values the brand claims to represent. The advertisement is therefore an institutional product that packages a particular national and moral imagination of beauty, namely that Indonesian faces can be modern, confident, and publicly active while remaining aligned with Islamic propriety.

Externally, collaboration with the MUI and ongoing halal certification processes function as institutional authorization. This institutional endorsement does not merely confirm compliance. It becomes a discursive resource that strengthens the brand's symbolic power in the public sphere. The advertisement draws on that institutional authority to convert legitimacy into market trust. In effect, institutions operate as credibility engines: they allow the brand to speak with moral weight, and they help the product appear not only permissible but socially responsible. This institutional arrangement also reshapes competition in the cosmetic market by

making halal legitimacy a key differentiator, thereby encouraging consumers to treat religious compliance as part of product quality.

3.3.3 Social

At the social level, broader cultural and economic trends structure how the advertisement is interpreted and why it becomes persuasive. Contemporary Indonesian society shows strong movement toward consumerist lifestyles where new products are continuously positioned as desirable. Within this environment, Islamic nuance functions as a powerful cultural amplifier because it offers moral reassurance while also signaling identity and belonging. Consumption therefore becomes more than fulfilling practical needs. It becomes a way to perform values, lifestyle, and social position.

The *Wardah* advertisement contributes to this social process by constructing an Islamic lifestyle hegemony, where being modern is made compatible with being visibly Muslim, and where halal consumption is normalized as the preferred pathway to confident femininity. The choice of a public figure with an Islamic image strengthens imitation. Viewers are encouraged to follow the model's routine and interpret product use as part of an aspirational identity. In this way, the advertisement does not only sell a moisturizer. It sells a social script: a modern Muslim woman can be publicly mobile, professionally engaged, and aesthetically polished, and this identity becomes easier to claim through certified halal commodities. The macro implication is that religious identity is increasingly mediated through market logics, and advertising becomes a key site where piety, modernity, and consumption are aligned into a single culturally dominant narrative.

3. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that *Wardah's* Perfect Bright Moisturizer advertisement constructs a layered multimodal meaning system in which Islamic identity, halal assurance, and modern Muslim femininity are integrated to shape consumer perception. Across micro, meso, and macro levels, religiosity is framed simultaneously as moral reassurance and lifestyle value, positioning beauty consumption as compatible with piety, modernity, and public confidence. This integrative ideological pattern matters because it shows that religious identity is not simply represented, but actively organized as a persuasive resource through visual composition, embodied etiquette, and explicit claims that steer audiences toward preferred readings. In wider terms, religious identity can heighten the salience of beliefs and operate alongside ideological factors in shaping evaluations and behaviour within specific contexts (Federico, 2021; Baysu & Swyngedouw, 2020). The mediatization of religion further clarifies how visual elements and audience reception interact to frame religious discourse and

guide responses (Trihastutie, 2024; Morgan et al., 2025).

At the micro level, the key finding is the systematic orchestration of iconic, indexical, and symbolic resources that turn Islamic cues into a coherent narrative of pious beauty. Ayana Jihye Moon's presence functions iconically to anchor aspiration and credibility, while indexical cues such as smiling, right hand product use, and open handed gestures activate culturally familiar meanings of warmth, sincerity, and proper conduct. Symbolic resources, especially the halal logo and audio narration, compress complex legitimacy into immediate certainty, enabling viewers to read the product as safe, permissible, and socially appropriate. This is ideologically consequential because the advertisement encourages audiences to treat religious compliance as a desirable attribute of beauty routines rather than as an external constraint.

The micro level also shows that halal discourse is not only communicated through explicit certification signs, but also through affective and empowering self care framings. Halal certification operates as a symbol of trust that reinforces desirability and confidence in purchase decisions (Mahliza & Prasetya, 2023; Yusuf et al., 2019). At the same time, the advertisement aligns halal practices with contemporary self care narratives, presenting modest femininity as confident, socially mobile, and future oriented. This reflects a broader cultural articulation of religious adherence as consistent with progressive self expression rather than limitation (Nursita et al., 2024). As a result, Islamic identity is made attractive through a cohesive narrative in which moral reassurance supports empowerment, strengthening appeal among modern consumers (Amer, 2023).

The meso level analysis deepens this interpretation by showing that the advertisement's discourse is shaped by strategic discursive practice. *Wardah's* institutional positioning as a halal pioneer is reinforced through production choices that prioritize clarity, memorability, and emotional accessibility, including informal language and repetition. This aligns with arguments that advertising quality and repetition influence consumer behaviour (Al Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2021). In this context, halal moves beyond a label and becomes a brand identity that builds trust, then converts trust into affective comfort and loyalty. Empirical work supports this pathway, showing how brand trust relates to consumer loyalty in halal product contexts (Damayanti & Puspita, 2023), and how perceived halal value and halal trust positively influence purchase intentions (Miftahuddin et al., 2022). Meaningful presentations of halal values can also strengthen emotional connection and sustain loyalty (Gabriella & Sudiani, 2025), while providing consumers with confidence to manage public life without feeling that religiosity is compromised (Amani, 2024). The meso level finding therefore indicates a discursive shift

where routine product use is framed as a stable pathway to a religiously aligned lifestyle.

At the macro sociocultural level, the advertisement reflects and reinforces Indonesia's broader climate of Islamic consumerism, where religious identity circulates through commodities and lifestyle practices. Modest fashion becomes central because the hijab is positioned not only as religious propriety but also as a flexible repertoire of cultural expression. The advertisement's styling gains interpretive power because audiences recognize wider categories of Muslim women's head coverings circulating socially, including shayla, khimar, niqab, chador, and burqa (Zaman & Kusumasari, 2019). The hijab is also tied to modern fashion trajectories and class signalling, which helps explain why modest aesthetics can function as aspirational lifestyle capital rather than limitation (Arimbi, 2002). In this setting, *Wardah's* discourse normalizes the idea that a visibly Muslim identity can be enacted through branded consumption presented as ethically aligned and socially admired.

A central gap addressed by this study is the limited attention given to how Islamic identity is produced inside the advertisement as a multimodal discourse, rather than treated primarily as a background variable shaping consumer attitudes. While existing scholarship often examines purchase intention, religiosity, or representation at a general level, fewer studies trace how icons, indexes, and symbols work together within a single advertising text to generate ideological meaning. The novelty of this study lies in its integrated CDA reading across micro, meso, and macro levels, specifying how halal legitimacy is recontextualized into emotional reassurance and market value. This matters because advertising constructs cultural representations that encode values and ideologies, and minor embodied cues can generate ideological effects comparable to explicit religious labels (Mahmood et al., 2022; Jalaboi, 2025). The discussion also aligns with evidence that religiosity can shape moral obligations and ethical considerations in consumption, including luxury contexts (Geiger-Oneto & Minton, 2019; Sholihin et al., 2022), and that religious attributes in advertising can influence loyalty and responsiveness by framing ethical consumption as both social fit and moral choice (Han, 2024; Faisal et al., 2024).

The implications for CDA are threefold. First, the findings strengthen arguments that religious commodification is increasingly embedded in multimodal visual culture, where religious signs are reorganized to support market differentiation and consumer identity formation. Second, the study extends multimodal CDA by showing how semiotic categories interact with discursive practice, and how the power of halal discourse is produced through institutional authorization and everyday affective design. Third, the findings contribute to Muslim consumer identity research by illustrating how religiosity is mediated through market logics that shape

what counts as responsible, modern, and desirable consumption. This provides additional interpretive grounding for why religiosity can structure shopping orientation and product evaluation beyond functional concerns (Mokhlis, 2009), and why halal labels can be particularly salient for consumers with higher religiosity and awareness when selecting cosmetic products (Briliana & Mursito, 2017). Practically, the study highlights ethical stakes in deploying religious imagery in commercial media, since Islamic signs carry moral authority and identity consequences that can shape norms about femininity, piety, and legitimacy.

Future research should extend this analysis beyond a single case by examining how halal cosmetic discourse is reconfigured in platform specific environments such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and influencer based commerce, where algorithmic visibility, participatory culture, and user generated commentary may reshape discursive practice. Comparative studies across brands, product categories, and Muslim majority contexts would clarify how cultural and regulatory differences affect the semiotic packaging of halal legitimacy. Audience focused research using interviews, focus groups, or digital ethnography is also recommended to investigate how Muslim women negotiate beauty, piety, class signalling, and commercial persuasion in everyday interpretation, and how these negotiations reproduce or resist the ideological alignment constructed by halal beauty advertising.

4. Conclusions

Beauty advertising does not simply sell skincare, it sells identities that feel socially legitimate and morally secure. This study concludes that *Wardah's* Perfect Bright Moisturizer advertisement constructs a coherent multimodal discourse that integrates Islamic identity, halal assurance, and modern Muslim femininity to shape consumer meaning and preference. At the micro level, icons, indexes, and symbols turn religious cues into an affirmative narrative of pious beauty: credibility is anchored through the brand ambassador, ethical propriety is naturalized through embodied etiquette and affective warmth, and legitimacy is stabilized through the halal logo and audio claims. At the meso level, discursive practices frame halal not merely as certification but as brand identity, trust, and emotional comfort. At the macro level, the advertisement aligns with sociocultural shifts in Indonesia where religiosity circulates through consumer lifestyles and modest fashion functions as both identity marker and aspirational capital.

The study's novelty lies in its integrated critical discourse analysis linking semiotic detail, discursive practice, and sociocultural context to show how halal legitimacy is recontextualized into market value and empowerment narratives. It advances CDA by evidencing religious commodification through

multimodal design, institutional authorization, and affective persuasion, while also highlighting ethical stakes for halal branding given the moral authority of religious signs. Future research should examine platform and influencer driven halal beauty discourse, compare strategies across brands and Muslim majority contexts, and use qualitative audience research to explore how consumers negotiate beauty, piety, class signalling, and commercial persuasion.

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