

Fighting Stigma, Advocating for Peace: Ainun Jamilah's Effort in Changing Society's View of Veiled Women Through the Digital Peace Movement

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of Ainun Jamilah and the Cadar Garis Lucu community in combating the negative stigma against veiled women in Indonesia, as well as to analyze the impact of the peace movement promoted through social media. The research adopts a mixed-methods approach (quantitative-qualitative) through the collection of survey data, in-depth interviews, and online observation, particularly focusing on the Cadar Garis Lucu Instagram account (@cadargarislucu). The study found a contradiction in public perceptions; where although many still view veiled women with a negative stigma, they also support the peace efforts carried out by veiled women via digital platforms. Through the Cadar Garis Lucu movement, Ainun Jamilah plays a key role in redefining the image of veiled women by promoting the values of religious moderation and peace. Through various educational content and interfaith dialogues, she facilitates, Ainun has successfully introduced a new face of veiled women as open, inclusive, and tolerant despite still facing negative stigma related to their appearance. This research contributes to the understanding of how social media can be used to advocate for peace and reduce stigma against marginalized groups. The contribution of this study lies in the application of religious moderation theory in the digital context and the use of social media to promote inclusivity and intergroup dialogue.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran Ainun Jamilah dan komunitas Cadar Garis Lucu dalam melawan stigma negatif terhadap perempuan bercadar di Indonesia, serta untuk menganalisis dampak gerakan perdamaian yang dipromosikan melalui media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan mixed-methods (kuantitatif-kualitatif) melalui pengumpulan data survei, wawancara mendalam, dan observasi online, terutama pada akun Cadar Garis Lucu (@cadargarislucu) di Instagram.

Penelitian ini menemukan adanya kontradiksi dalam pandangan masyarakat, di mana meskipun banyak yang masih memandang perempuan bercadar dengan stigma negatif, mereka juga mendukung upaya perdamaian yang dilakukan oleh perempuan bercadar melalui platform digital. Terutama melalui gerakan Cadar Garis Lucu, Ainun Jamilah memainkan peran kunci dalam meredefinisi citra perempuan bercadar dengan mempromosikan nilai-nilai moderasi beragama dan perdamaian. Melalui berbagai konten edukasi dan dialog lintas agama yang ia fasilitasi, Ainun berhasil memperkenalkan wajah baru perempuan bercadar yang terbuka, inklusif, dan penuh toleransi, meskipun masih menghadapi stigma negatif terkait dengan penampilannya. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada pemahaman bagaimana media sosial dapat digunakan untuk memperjuangkan perdamaian dan mengurangi stigma terhadap kelompok yang terstigmatisasi. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada penerapan teori moderasi beragama dalam konteks digital dan penggunaan media sosial untuk mendorong inklusivitas dan dialog antar kelompok.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of social media has indeed had a significant impact on social dynamics in Indonesia, both positive and negative (Rahayu, Utari, & Wijaya, 2019; Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). While social media has become an open space for sharing information, it has also increasingly become a platform for the spread of hoaxes, hate speech, and other negative content. In the context of religious freedom, the rising cases of intolerance have become one of the most urgent issues to address. For example, Imparsial recorded 23 cases of violations of religious freedom in Indonesia in 2024, where people still view government policies as rhetoric without concrete actions against the intolerant practices occurring. A notable case is the ban on religious activities by the Ahmadiyya community in Kuningan Regency, which highlights how religious discrimination and tension still prevail in many regions (Putra, 2024).

Additionally, the phenomenon of radicalization is increasingly taking root in social media. According to a report by the National Counterterrorism Agency (*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme*), 2,264 social media accounts were detected spreading content related to terrorism and intolerance in 2024 (Nababan, 2024). This indicates that while physical attacks may not be occurring, the approach to terrorism is now subtler, targeting specific groups such as women, children, and teenagers. This shift in approach presents a significant challenge for society in protecting younger generations from the spread of extremist teachings that easily proliferate in cyberspace.

Furthermore, the 2024 elections have exacerbated this situation with a rise in hate speech targeting minority groups. A study conducted by Monash University and the Indonesian Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) found a significant increase in hate speech directed at minority groups during the 2024 election campaign. The most frequent hate speech was found on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, focusing on issues related to identity, religious hatred, race, and certain sexual orientations (AJI Indonesia, 2024).

Another issue that deserves attention is the blocking of 180,954 radicalism-related content by BNPT and the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia throughout 2024 (Sinambela, 2024). Most of these contents originated from terrorist groups affiliated with *Islamic State Iraq and Syria*, *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia*, and *Jemaah Ansharud Daulah*, which actively spread violent ideologies through digital platforms. This shows that despite prevention efforts, the digital space remains fertile ground for the spread of radicalization (BNPT RI, 2024).

In addition to cases of intolerance, the development of social media has also created a stigma against certain groups. One group that often faces negative stigma is veiled women, who are frequently associated with religious radicalization and extremist ideologies. This phenomenon became more pronounced after a series of terrorist acts involving veiled women, such as the attack on the National Police Headquarters in 2021 and the suicide bombing at the Makassar Cathedral in the same year. These incidents further solidified the negative views toward veiled women in society (Hardiyanto, 2018). As a result of these incidents, veiled women have increasingly been viewed with suspicion and have even become targets of persecution by some groups. For instance, according to Indadari Mindrayanti, the founder of Niqab Squad Indonesia, veiled women in her community have become more anxious and fearful due to the escalating stigmatization. Many of them feel disrespected, and some have even experienced physical violence, as was the case of one member who was hit in the street simply for wearing a niqab (Herli, 2021).

Furthermore, the *Berani Hijrah Baik* community also voiced similar concerns through a social experiment conducted in locations such as ITC Fatmawati and the car-free day area. In this experiment, veiled women and men with beards attempted to change public perceptions by holding posters that read “Hug Me If You Feel Safe.” While some places showed acceptance, the experiment also revealed fear and distance from some members of the public toward veiled women, who are often associated with radicalization (Amelia, 2018).

On the other hand, research by Rahman and Syafiq (2017) revealed that veiled women, who were the subjects of their study, experienced various forms of negative stigma, including being labeled as fanatics, members of terrorist groups and being avoided by people around them. The study also showed that, despite the strong attachment to this stigma, veiled women attempted to cope with it through various strategies, such as ignoring negative views or providing clarifications to the public. Similar findings were found in research by Gunawan et al. (2021), who discovered that veiled women in educational settings experienced identity negotiation when facing stigma during the learning process. They communicated their identity and tried to establish good relationships with classmates and lecturers despite the negative perceptions they encountered.

All these data and research findings indicate that veiled women in Indonesia are often seen negatively and associated with radical or extremist views, leading to discomfort and discrimination against them in various aspects of society, both in the virtual and real worlds. This highlights the social stigma phenomenon that needs to be addressed in order to achieve a more just and inclusive understanding of diverse religious identity choices.

In this regard, the phenomenon of Ainun Jamilah, a veiled woman who is active on social media, becomes interesting to examine. By creating the “Cadar Garis Lucu” account on Instagram and Twitter, Ainun is striving to combat the negative stigma against veiled women and advocate for peace and religious moderation. This research is crucial because it will reveal how an individual’s struggle in facing significant challenges, such as social stigma and extremism in the digital world can have an impact on society.

Several previous studies have extensively examined issues related to the impact of social media on Muslim life, religious moderation, peace in the digital world, and stigma against the use of the niqab within the Muslim community. In the context of social media’s impact, Islam (2019) studied the effect of social media on Muslim communities, with an Islamic perspective showing how social media shapes the thinking and behavior of Muslims in practicing their religion. The study emphasized that social media is a tool that allows changes in how Muslims understand religion and their social interactions. Additionally, Zaid (2022) identified how social media influencers have altered religious authority and practices among millennials, revealing the important role of social media in shaping a more flexible religiosity among Muslim youth, which can either strengthen or weaken religious values depending on the influence received.

On the other hand, the issue of religious moderation is also an important area of focus in broader studies. Subchi (2022) examined religious moderation among Muslims in Indonesia, highlighting the importance of religious education that emphasizes tolerance and interfaith harmony. In this context, Mulyana (2023) investigated how religious moderation is translated into Islamic education textbooks in Indonesia and how its implementation in the education environment is conducted. This study is crucial in identifying how educational policies can help shape moderate attitudes toward religious differences and reduce the potential for radicalization among youth.

In the field of digital peace, Katz (2020) explored how interactive digital platforms can play a role in building peace through more inclusive and dialogue-based approaches between groups. Richmond (2020) continued this discussion by addressing how peace can be achieved both in the analog and digital realms and how digital technology plays a crucial role in international relations and conflict resolution. Research by Setia (2024) and Setia and Haq (2023) introduced religious moderation campaigns on social media as efforts to counter radicalization, focusing on strategies to address extremism that develops in cyberspace. This opens up space for more inclusive peacebuilding efforts, particularly in the digital realm, which often becomes a breeding ground for intolerance and radicalization.

Meanwhile, some studies have focused more specifically on the stigma against veiled women. Chapman (2016) studied how the niqab serves as a symbol of stigma for Muslim women, highlighting the role of representation in managing a threatened social identity. This research illustrated how veiled women are often confronted with negative stereotypes that place them in marginalized social positions. On an international level, Strabac et al. (2016) and Göle (2003) also examined how the hijab and niqab affect social attitudes toward Muslim women, especially in the context of employment and social life in Western countries. These studies show that veiled women are often viewed as isolated and radical groups, even though they are simply practicing their spiritual choice without any connection to extremist ideologies.

These various studies provide a broad picture of the challenges faced by veiled women, particularly in dealing with ongoing stigma and discrimination. However, this research has limitations in exploring how individuals like Ainun Jamilah can play a role in combating such stigma through social media. This research will fill that gap by exploring Ainun Jamilah's role in promoting religious moderation and peace in cyberspace, highlighting her personal experiences and the influence she has in combating stereotypes against veiled women. This research will also offer a new perspective on how social media can be used to advocate for peace and diversity in a pluralistic society.

Therefore, this research aims to uncover the role of Ainun Jamilah and the Cadar Garis Lucu community in combating the negative stigma against veiled women through social media. By utilizing digital platforms such as Instagram and Twitter, Ainun seeks to change public perceptions of veiled women, connect them with peace values, and promote religious moderation. This research will analyze how an individual's struggle in facing social stigma can have a positive impact on society and introduce a new face of veiled women that is more inclusive and open. Furthermore, this research will explore how social media can be utilized as a tool to advocate for diversity, reduce radicalization, and support interfaith dialogue.

This research argues that although social stigma against veiled women remains strong, the efforts made by Ainun Jamilah through the Cadar Garis Lucu community can help change society's views by promoting messages of peace and religious moderation. Survey and interview findings show contradictions in public perceptions, where people still view veiled women negatively, yet they also support the peace efforts made by veiled women. This indicates that the existing stigma is more influenced by evolving social-cultural constructions and not due to deep-seated hatred. Through initiatives like Cadar Garis Lucu, there is potential to change mistaken views about veiled women and reduce the potential for radicalization in the digital world.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research focuses on the peace struggle carried out by Ainun Jamilah through her social media account, Cadar Garis Lucu, as well as the public's response to the stigma attached to women who wear the niqab. The case highlighted is related to the stigma against niqab-wearing women, who are often associated with religious radicalization. The study is conducted in Bandung, West Java, where the author resides and involves Muslim communities from various backgrounds, including parents, women, and teenagers. The study also includes observation of Ainun Jamilah's online activities, particularly on the Instagram platform and the podcasts/videos she creates.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach (quantitative-qualitative) (Craswell, 2009; Punziano, De Falco, & Trezza, 2023). The data used consists of both primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through a survey distributed to Muslim communities in Bandung, West Java, containing questions related to stigma against niqab-wearing women, as well as in-depth interviews with two niqab-

wearing Muslim women. Secondary data is gathered through online observation of the content shared by Ainun Jamilah on social media, as well as analysis of videos and podcasts featuring Ainun. Several accounts that are the focus of the online observation include the Cadar Garis Lucu Instagram account (@cadargarislucu) and the Cauldron Content YouTube channel.

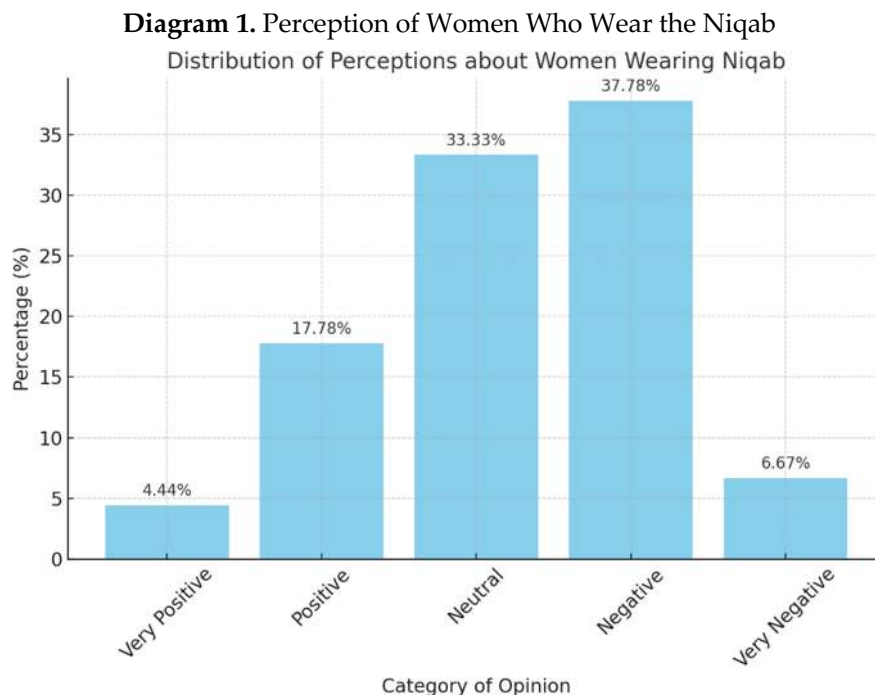
The research begins with the distribution of a survey, which is open from February 1 to February 14, 2025, to Muslim communities in Bandung, covering various age groups, including parents, women, youth, and teenagers. The purpose of the survey is to measure the public's views on the stigma against niqab-wearing women. The researcher can access the survey through the following link: <https://l1nq.com/RisetCadardanPerdamaian>. Next, the author conducts online observations by monitoring the content shared by Ainun Jamilah on the Cadar Garis Lucu Instagram account (@cadargarislucu), as well as watching videos and podcasts featuring Ainun as a speaker on the YouTube platform. Afterward, the author conducts in-depth interviews with two niqab-wearing Muslim women living in Bandung to explore their personal experiences regarding the stigma they face and how they cope with it.

The collected data will undergo several stages of analysis. The survey data will be analyzed descriptively by identifying patterns or trends in public views toward niqab-wearing women. The survey results will be analyzed using data reduction techniques, where the author will group responses based on main categories such as perceptions of niqab-wearing women, public understanding of the niqab, and the impact of social stigma. The observational data regarding the content shared by Ainun Jamilah will be analyzed qualitatively (Miles & Huberman, 2013), by identifying key themes that emerge from the peace messages spread by Ainun. The in-depth interviews will be analyzed using a phenomenological approach to explore the meaning and subjective experiences faced by niqab-wearing women in maintaining their identity amid the stigma they encounter. All data will be combined to provide a comprehensive picture of the peace struggle carried out by Ainun Jamilah and how the public responds to it.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Stigma Against Niqab-Wearing Muslim Women

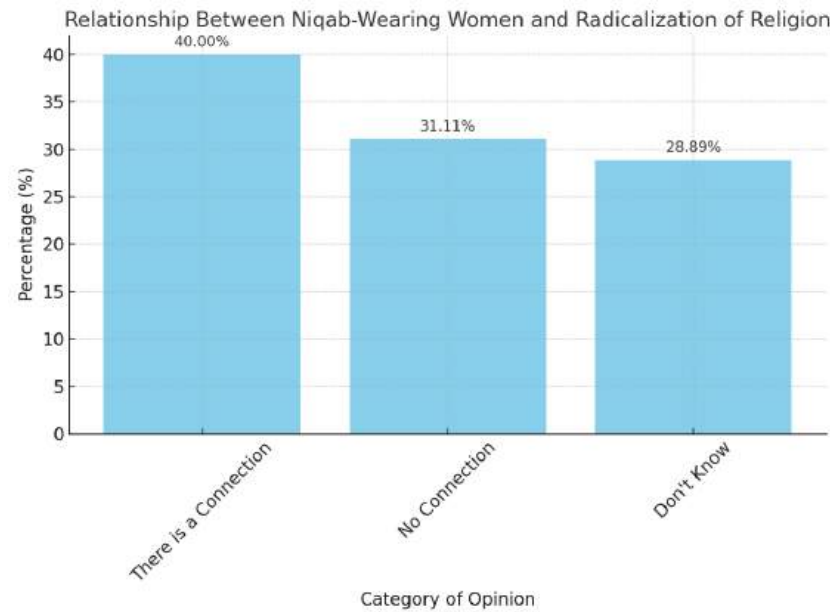
Forty-five respondents filled out the survey/questionnaire that was distributed. I present the data from the survey in the following display.



Source: Results Findings, 2025.

Diagram 1 above shows that the majority of respondents in this survey hold negative views toward niqab-wearing women, with a percentage of 37.78%. Neutral views follow at 33.33%, while 17.78% of respondents have a positive view toward niqab-wearing women. Only 6.67% of respondents have a very negative view, and 4.44% have a very positive view. This data indicates that, although some respondents express positive views, most people still view niqab-wearing women unfavorably.

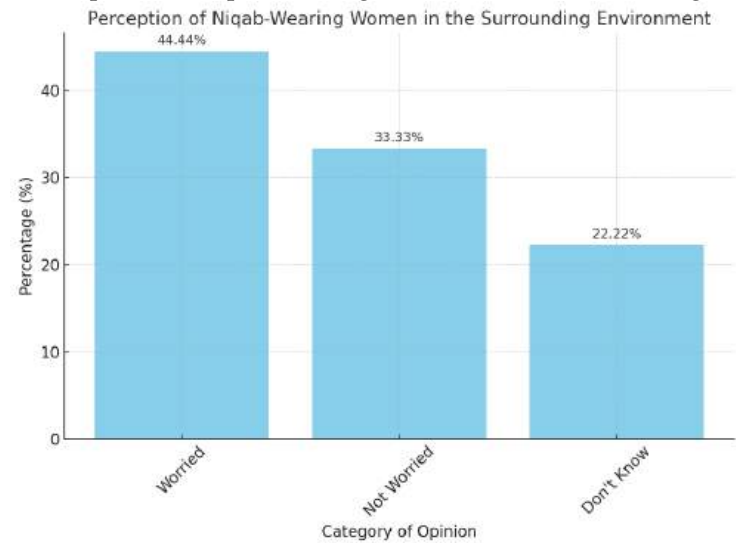
Diagram 2. The Relationship Between Niqab-Wearing Women and Religious Radicalization



Source: Results Findings, 2025.

Diagram 2 above shows that most respondents (40%) associate niqab-wearing women with religious radicalization. Meanwhile, 31.11% of respondents believe that there is no connection between niqab-wearing women and religious radicalization. 28.89% of respondents are unsure or have no opinion on the relationship between niqab-wearing women and religious radicalization. This shows a tendency to associate niqab-wearing women with religious radicalization, although there are still respondents who hold a different view or feel uncertain about the issue.

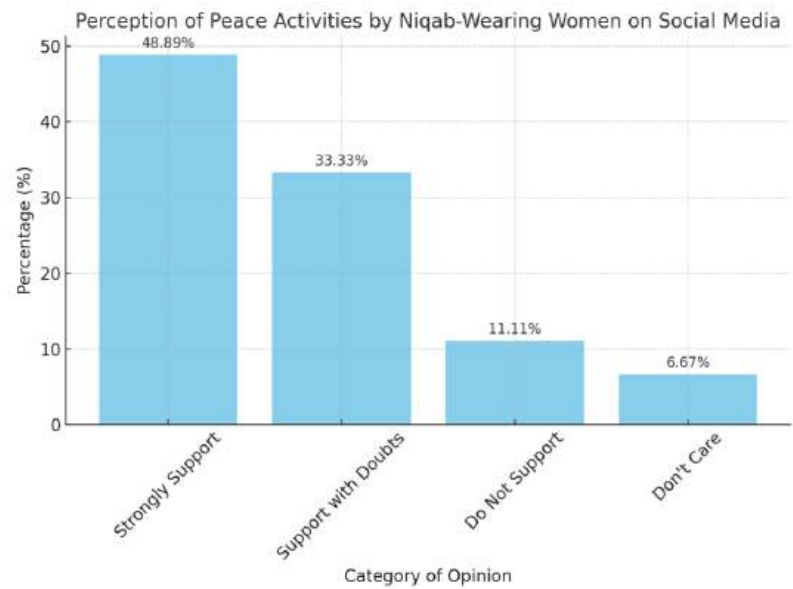
Diagram 3. Perception of Niqab-Wearing Women in the Surrounding Environment



Source: Results Findings, 2025.

Diagram 3 above shows that 44.44% of respondents feel worried or anxious when they see niqab-wearing women in their surroundings. Meanwhile, 33.33% of respondents do not feel worried about niqab-wearing women, and 22.22% have no opinion or are unsure about this matter. This data indicates that, although the majority of respondents feel worried, some do not feel concerned about the presence of niqab-wearing women around them.

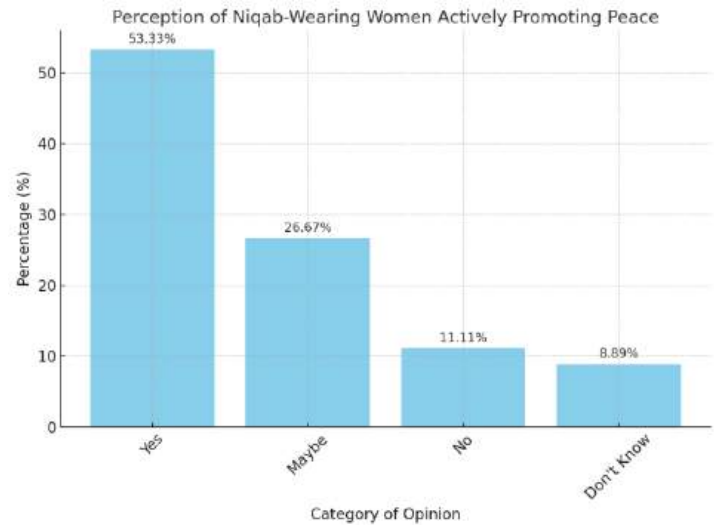
Diagram 4. Perception of the Peace Activities Conducted by Niqab-Wearing Women on Social Media



Source: Results Findings, 2025.

Diagram 4 above shows that 48.89% of respondents strongly support and view positively the peace activities conducted by niqab-wearing women on social media, such as promoting religious moderation or sharing peaceful content. Meanwhile, 33.33% of respondents support it but with some reservations, and 11.11% of respondents do not support these activities. Only 6.67% of respondents are indifferent or unaware of the peace activities conducted by niqab-wearing women. This data indicates that the majority of respondents hold a positive view of peace initiatives carried out by niqab-wearing women, though some remain doubtful or do not fully support it.

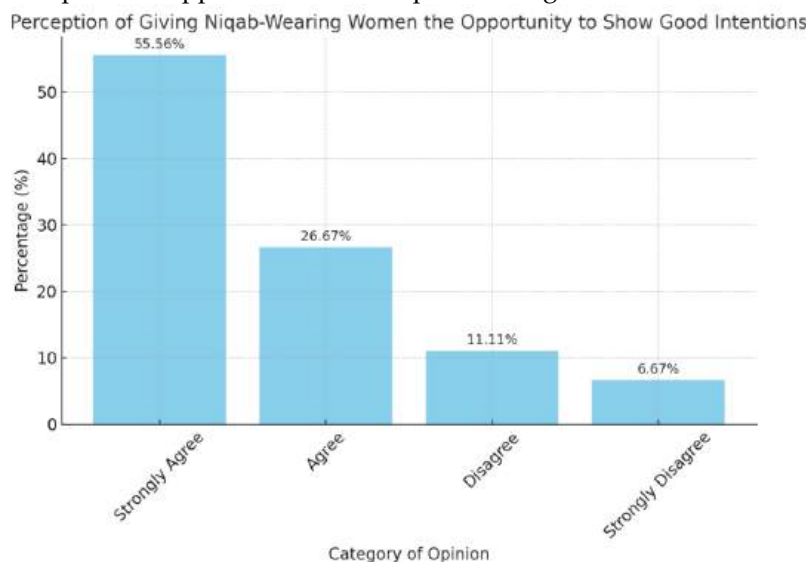
Diagram 5. Perception of Niqab-Wearing Women Who Are Active in Promoting Peace



Source: Results Findings, 2025.

Diagram 5 above shows that 53.33% of respondents believe that niqab-wearing women who are active in promoting peace can change the negative stigma attached to them. Meanwhile, 26.67% of respondents think this is possible but not easy. 11.11% of respondents do not believe that the negative stigma against niqab-wearing women can change, and 8.89% of respondents are unsure or have no opinion on the matter. This data indicates that the majority of respondents are optimistic about the ability of niqab-wearing women to change the negative stigma through peace promotion activities, although some respondents feel that this process will not be easy.

Diagram 6. Perception of Opportunities for Niqab-Wearing Women to Show Good Intentions



Source: Results Findings, 2025.

Diagram 6 above shows that 55.56% of respondents strongly agree that niqab-wearing women should be given the opportunity to demonstrate good intentions and contribute positively to society without being judged based on their appearance. Meanwhile, 26.67% of respondents agree with this but still have some doubts. 11.11% of respondents disagree that niqab-wearing women should be given such an opportunity, and 6.67% strongly disagree. This data shows that the majority of respondents support giving niqab-wearing women the chance to contribute without discrimination based on their appearance, although a small portion does not agree with this view.

The results from the survey completed by 45 respondents show that the stigma against niqab-wearing women is still very negative, as clearly demonstrated by the survey results presented. Although the majority of respondents view niqab-wearing women negatively, with 37.78% rating them negatively and 33.33% being neutral, they also express hope that niqab-wearing women should be given the opportunity to change the stigma, demonstrate good intentions, and be supported in their peace activities.

An interesting contradiction appears between the negative views of the public toward niqab-wearing women and their support for these women to engage in social activities, including promoting peace in the digital world. This is seen in Diagram 4, where 48.89% of respondents strongly support the peace activities conducted by niqab-wearing women on social media, such as promoting religious moderation or peaceful content, even though a small portion does not support or care about these activities. Furthermore, Diagram 5 shows that 53.33% of respondents believe that niqab-wearing women active in promoting peace can help change the negative stigma against them.

These data suggest a contradiction in public perception: people continue to view niqab-wearing women negatively, but they also support them in contributing positively through social activities. This indicates that the existing stigma seems to be more influenced by current socio-cultural constructs, where the negative view of niqab-wearing women is not driven by deep hatred but rather by external influences or simply by following the prevailing public opinion. This is further evident in the survey

results, which show that respondents generally agree that niqab-wearing women deserve positive attention and should have the opportunity to play an active role in society without discrimination based on their appearance.

The findings from each sub-topic then correlate with the next sub-topic, where Ainun Jamilah must struggle against the negative social stigma for being a Muslim woman who wears the niqab through her activities of actively promoting peace and practicing moderate religious beliefs.

Ainun Jamilah's Role in Spreading the Message of Peace Amidst Social Stigma

Ainun Jamilah, a niqab-wearing woman from Makassar, initiated the “Cadar Garis Lucu” (Funny Niqab Line) community in February 2021 to combat the negative stigma attached to niqab-wearing women. The niqab is often associated with religious radicalization and intolerance, a view that has strengthened following several terrorism cases involving niqab-wearing women. However, Ainun and her friends strive to show that wearing the niqab is not always related to violence or radical ideologies (Cauldron Content, 2023; Wardani, 2021). This community not only promotes interfaith dialogue but also educates the public on the importance of seeing niqab-wearing women as more than just their appearance. Ainun emphasized,

“I wear the niqab because I choose to, not because I have evil intentions towards others.” Through this community, they try to eliminate this stigma and introduce the “friendlier face of the niqab” (In Wardani, 2021).

Ainun, who has worn the niqab since 2015, faces stigma in her surroundings, including at the university where she studies, where many professors doubt her intentions and integrity. “At the university, some professors were worried, suspicious, and prejudiced against me,” Ainun stated (Wardani, 2021). Despite this, Ainun continues to fight to prove that her appearance does not reflect malicious intent, and she remains committed to promoting peace. Ainun shared that, despite the discrimination she experiences, she strives to introduce a more friendly and inclusive niqab-wearing image, as evidenced by her solidarity action following the Makassar bombing tragedy in April 2021, where she led the singing of “Indonesia Raya” in front of people of various faiths. This was a real manifestation of her struggle to combat the stigma that associates niqab-wearing women with violence (Wardani, 2021).

In addition to Ainun, her colleague Ulfa Wulandari is also a part of Cadar Garis Lucu and shared that a terrorist stigma often accompanies discrimination against niqab-wearing women. “I was once pulled by my niqab in public,” Ulfa recalled, describing how she was often mocked as a “terrorist” simply for wearing the niqab (Wardani, 2021). Despite this, Ulfa and Ainun agree not to succumb to societal views. They believe that radicalism is not a matter of clothing but of misinterpreting ideologies. The Cadar Garis Lucu community aims to dismantle this stereotype by showing that the niqab and tolerance can coexist. As Ainun stated, “I realize that I cannot blame the stigma. What I can do is gradually fade it away” (Wardani, 2021). With this attitude, they hope to open space for more inclusive dialogue.

Figure 1. Logo of Cadar Garis Lucu



Source: X @cadargarislucu, 2025.

Their bravery to continue wearing the niqab and be active in social activities, including interfaith events and deradicalization efforts, opens up spaces for dialogue and greater understanding in a pluralistic society. Meanwhile, the responses to Ainun and Ulfa's efforts are quite diverse. Many support them in wearing the niqab as part of their identity, even encouraging them to continue fighting against radicalization through their presence. As Sepson Sambara, a Christian student active in interfaith communities, expressed, he supports Ainun and her friends in continuing to wear the niqab because they show that the niqab is not synonymous with radicalization but with openness and tolerance. "Never take off your niqab; keep fighting that line," he said (Wardani, 2021). With their courage and determination, Ainun and her community play an essential role in fighting stigma and radicalization while strengthening a culture of tolerance and peace in Indonesia.

Figure 2. Focus of Cadar Garis Lucu Movement



Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2024.

Cadar Garis Lucu strives to break the stigma that niqab-wearing women are closed-off and exclusive by asserting that many niqab-wearing women have open-minded thinking and reject the conservative version of Islam that is currently trending, such as the hijrah phenomenon, which focuses solely on changing appearance. Ainun emphasizes that "a hijrah of the mind that manifests in action" is far more important than just a change in clothing (Melynda, 2021).

In their efforts, Cadar Garis Lucu employs several strategies, including boldly raising their voices, engaging in discussions with equal communities, expanding their social circles, and taking risks by doing things that are not typically done by niqab-wearing women, all in an effort to change public perceptions. This movement encourages the public to see that not all niqab-wearing women are part of a radical group and that diversity in religion is an expression of identity that is not dependent on how one dresses (Melynda, 2021).

Ainun, as an activist in Cadar Garis Lucu, often fills her account with quality content about peace. She does not hesitate to collaborate with activists from different religions. For example, in a post on Instagram titled "Cadar Garis Lucu Welcoming the New Year, Mba Nun | Sister Aquila FSE" (Figure 3) at the beginning of 2025, she cheerfully greeted Christmas and even embraced Aquila. She exemplifies how holidays should be celebrated and how mutual respect should be maintained.

Figure 3. Ainun's Content with Sister Aquila on Christmas Greetings



Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2025.

Figure 4. Content “Different Yet Living Together” from Cadar Garis Lucu



Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2025.

Ainun also shared content where she visited a Vihara and Kelenteng (temple) in Solo, Central Java, in a post titled “Different Yet Living Together” (Figure 4). In her content, she explains that the Tien Kok Sie Temple in Solo has become a place of worship for three faiths—Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism—which can practice their religions in the same (shared) space. This certainly symbolizes cooperation among three different belief systems.

In addition, Ainun frequently shares educational content on the Cadar Garis Lucu account, such as in Figure 5, where she posts about three extreme behaviors allowed in maintaining interfaith brotherhood. She details these behaviors as extremism in the desire to keep learning about the differences between people, extremism in having an open heart to understand and accept these differences, and extremism in the determination to preserve brotherhood for the sake of humanity, equality in the eyes of God and the state. She also shares content titled “No Tolerance for Intolerance,” in which she rejects the legalization of violence simply due to differences in beliefs, especially against women and children.

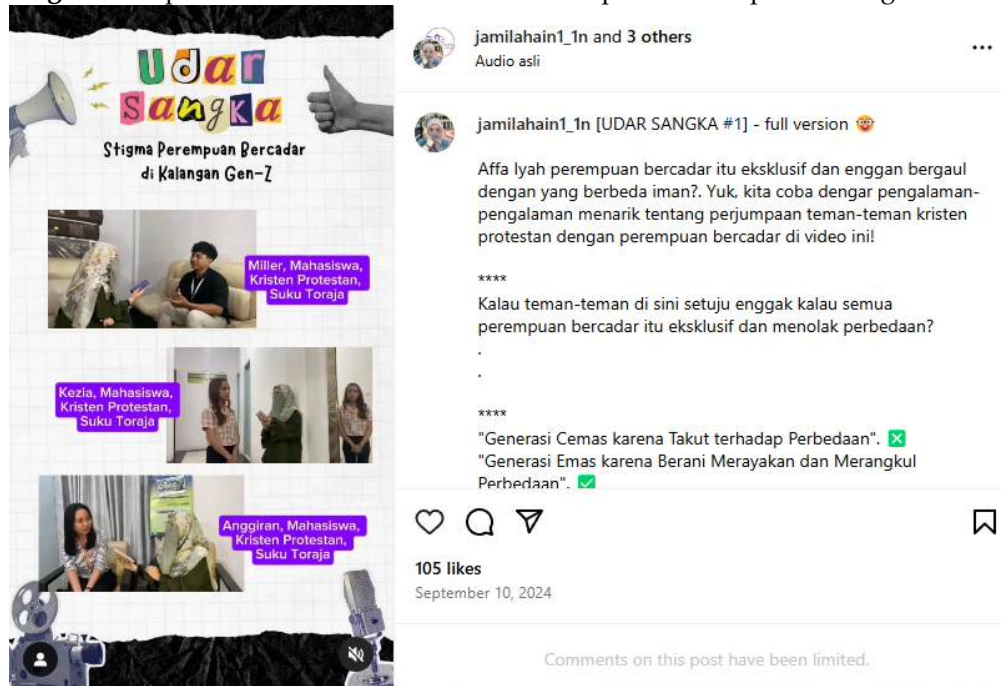
Figure 5. Cadar Garis Lucu Educational Content on Tolerance



Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2025.

As a niqab-wearing woman, Ainun and the Cadar Garis Lucu account also showcase experimental content aimed at students regarding their perceptions of niqab-wearing women under the title “Stigma of Niqab-Wearing Women Among Gen-Z.” The content, such as in Figure 6, shows Protestant students' views on niqab-wearing women. In an interview for the content, three students were asked if they held a negative stigma toward niqab-wearing women. Initially, they answered yes, but after interacting and socializing directly with niqab-wearing Muslim women, their stigma was instantly disproven. This content is beneficial for other students to help them avoid being influenced by the negative stigma toward niqab-wearing women.

Figure 6. Experimental Content on Student Perceptions of Niqab-Wearing Women



Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2025.

Figure 7. Efforts to Combat the Niqab Stigma by Ainun on YouTube



Source: YouTube Cauldron Content 2023 and Senandika BDP 2024.

In addition to Instagram and X, Ainun also shares many stories on YouTube. She often posts content and has been invited as a guest speaker for several YouTube podcast channels. For example, she was invited by Andini Effendi to appear on the Cauldron Content channel to discuss her struggles as a Pancasila supporter while still wearing the niqab. In this podcast, she explained that the path to God's love is through love itself, even though some people believe that jihad means committing suicide. She was also invited as a guest speaker on the Bante Senandika BDP podcast titled Journey to the East, the Mission of Tolerance with Ainun Jamilah, Founder of Cadar Garis Lucu. In this podcast, she emphasized that the government must play a role in ensuring that religious freedom issues reach all regions, as some areas still struggle to implement tolerance in daily life. She further stressed that the presence of youth peace movements must be continuously encouraged because their involvement in peace issues is necessary, as older generations' concerns have been overshadowed, and peace is a collective issue for both young and old.

Public Response to Ainun Jamilah's Efforts

The presence of Cadar Garis Lucu has had a positive impact on the wider community, especially among peace activists in contemporary Indonesia. Every post on the Cadar Garis Lucu Instagram account receives comments stating that the content is inspiring, uplifting, and engaging. Some reactions from netizens to the images below serve as proof of this.

Figure 8. Netizen Reactions to Cadar Garis Lucu's Instagram and YouTube Post





Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu 2025 and YouTube Cauldron Content 2023.

In Figure 8 above, support for Cadar Garis Lucu and Ainun Jamilah is evident through positive comments from netizens. For instance, some comments say, "Awesome, keep up the struggle," and another adds, "Aahhhhhh... if wearing the niqab is like Dinda Ainun, that's so cool... but if others wear it, honestly, it's still a bit uncomfortable because generally, people are like, how do you see us who are different from them." These two positive comments indicate the response to the movement for peace through fighting the negative stigma against niqab-wearing women is much needed in the social media world.

Another response came from peace movements and peace communities in Indonesia. This is evident from the fact that Ainun, as the founder of Cadar Garis Lucu, is frequently invited as a speaker for various peace community events (see Figure 9). On the Cadar Garis Lucu account, she often publishes banners announcing her participation in events and programs related to peace discussions or seminars. For example, she was a speaker in a discussion titled Religious Rights Under the Shadow of Discrimination: The Case of the Ban on Jalsah Salanah of the Ahmadiyya Congregation in Indonesia. This event was hosted by the Pelita Padang Community (Pelita for Peace and Diversity) and the Solidarity for Victims of Religious Freedom Violations (Sobat KBB). Ainun also spoke at a dialogue titled Youth Across Faiths Declare the Jakarta-Vatican Declaration, held by Katolikana, a digital platform for Indonesian Catholics.

Figure 9. Poster of Ainun Jamilah as a Speaker at Various Peace Events





Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2025.

Figure 9 shows the presence of Cadar Garis Lucu and Ainun in spreading peace messages while also fighting the stigma associated with wearing the niqab. The trust from peace communities to invite Ainun as a speaker reflects the positive response to her unique presence on social media.

Moreover, articles in the mass media about Cadar Garis Lucu and Ainun further show a positive societal response. Several articles found by the researcher have appeared, calling for this movement to be spread to the public. This excellent, non-mainstream movement encourages peace while also dispelling the negative stigma associated with the niqab in Islam. Some of the articles that discuss Cadar Garis Lucu include Shinta Maharani's article on Tempo.co titled *Tolerance Campaign by the Cadar Garis Lucu Community* (2024) and Ais Fahira's article in Bincang Perempuan titled *Cadar Garis Lucu, A Voice for Women's Peace* (2025). Both articles discuss how Ainun and Cadar Garis Lucu strive for peace by challenging the negative societal stigma attached to Muslim women who wear the niqab.

The large following on Cadar Garis Lucu's account and Ainun Jamilah's account also indicates a positive response from the community. Ainun Jamilah's Instagram account currently has 4,500 followers. Although this number is not very large, it is quite significant as it represents her as a peace influencer.

The most significant responses also come from two niqab-wearing women, SN (20 years old) and AS (21 years old). Both are active students at a public university in Bandung, West Java. SN has been wearing the niqab for one year, and the reason for wearing it is that she follows her parents, especially her mother, who insisted on her wearing it. She shared with the researcher that although her decision to wear the niqab started as a command from her parents, she is now fully confident in doing so and feels no burden at all. She is not bothered by the stigma that many people place on niqab-wearing women, seeing them as radical and closed-minded. When asked about Ainun Jamilah and Cadar Garis Lucu, she responded that it is a personal matter, and as long as it does not contradict Islamic teachings, it is not prohibited. She also added that she would support the movement, though she does not intend to join such a movement.

"In my opinion, it's just a personal matter, it's okay, whether you want to be a peace activist or a promoter of harmony, that's fine. As long as it doesn't contradict our faith in Allah, it's okay. If people are involved in good deeds, it's fine with me. This is about *fastabikul khairot* (competing in doing good); those who compete in the way of Allah will surely be rewarded with heaven. I won't reject or forbid anyone; I'll just say it's each person's business, and if it's good, then it's good. But, I haven't thought of joining or being involved in it" (Interview, February 17, 2025).

Similarly, AS does not blame Ainun or the Cadar Garis Lucu movement. A woman who decided to wear the niqab nine months ago for personal reasons believes that what Ainun and

Cadar Garis Lucu are doing is perfectly fine as long as they have good intentions. She only hopes that the image of niqab-wearing women is not further tarnished by irresponsible behavior.

"I'm fine with it; go ahead. Especially if the intention is to change the stereotype that wearing the niqab is bad and hijab is bad. That's all good. But I hope that the movement doesn't end up worsening the image of the niqab. So far, the niqab is associated with radicalism terrorism, but let's not make it seem like if you wear the niqab, you should be socially isolated. You should hang out with pious people. But if the movement is for good, I really agree, because everything is also *innamal 'amalu bin-niat* (intentions judge actions)" (Interview, February 17, 2025).

From both interview excerpts, it can be analyzed that even though SN and AS do not participate directly in the Cadar Garis Lucu movement, they both support Ainun Jamilah's efforts to fight the negative stigma against niqab-wearing women, particularly through her peace efforts. SN emphasized that good intentions and alignment with Islamic teachings are important, so she gives space for anyone who wants to join the movement as long as it does not compromise religious principles. AS expressed a similar view, highlighting that as long as the movement aims to change the negative stereotype of the niqab and focuses on doing good, she fully supports it. Although both women do not plan to be directly involved, they appreciate the initiative's positive impact, which is breaking down the negative image attached to niqab-wearing women and encouraging change based on good intentions. Their support indicates that, despite differences in approach, the spirit of fighting social stigma and advocating for goodness within the community is positively received.

One peace activist, Jasmine Putri from the Peace Ambassador of West Java (Duta Damai Jawa Barat), mentioned that Ainun's struggle is admirable and can serve as an example for other peace activists. She greatly appreciates Ainun's efforts to eliminate the negative stigma surrounding women who wear the niqab in Indonesia.

"I really appreciate Ainun from me, as a harmony activist, I am very happy and proud that there is an active Muslim woman on social media who dares to challenge the stigma that women who wear the niqab are bad, radical, or extreme. If I were in that position, I wouldn't be able to endure it, I guarantee. And I can use her as an example of a real struggle" (Interview, March 6, 2025).

In the interview, Jasmine Putri gives high appreciation to Ainun's efforts in removing the negative stigma often attached to women who wear the niqab in Indonesia. Analyzing this statement reveals recognition of Ainun's courage in confronting the negative stereotypes frequently associated with niqab-wearing women, such as being radical or extreme. Jasmine, also a peace activist, states that Ainun's struggle is not only relevant to combat discrimination against niqab-wearing women but can also inspire other peace activists to bravely challenge stigmas in society. This illustrates how individuals like Ainun can become agents of social change, providing a concrete example of addressing prejudice and injustice often faced by specific groups, in this case, niqab-wearing women. Ainun's struggle demonstrates that social change is not only driven by policies but also by individual efforts involving courage and determination.

Challenges and Obstacles Faced by Ainun Jamilah

Ainun and Cadar Garis Lucu's struggle has not always been smooth, especially as she addresses sensitive issues and boldly fights the negative stigma against niqab-wearing women. She has encountered several challenges, which the researcher has gathered.

First, the challenge comes from netizens who are opposed to the content and movement promoted by Ainun. For instance, this is reflected in the following image, where a netizen criticized Ainun for saying "Merry Christmas" in her post (see Figure 10). A netizen with the username @nandaanisya Putri

made a cynical comment, arguing that such greetings are forbidden in Islam. “Why say that? We are Muslims; we should avoid things like this as it resembles them,” the comment said. This was then responded to by Cadar Garis Lucu, stating, “Follow what we think is suitable for us because Islam has diverse views. Feel free to choose and carry out our choices without feeling superior or imposing judgments on others.” In another post where Cadar Garis Lucu showed support for the Ahmadiyah community in Kuningan, Ainun and her account received cynical comments from netizens who opposed her. This is something that inevitably happens, as supporting minority groups is often viewed negatively in Indonesia.

Figure 10. Cynical Comment from a Netizen on Cadar Garis Lucu's Account



Source: Instagram @cadargarislucu, 2025.

Second, digital security poses a challenge. Ainun revealed that their community account had been subjected to cyberattacks or backlash, highlighting the vulnerability of their presence in the online world. “We have experienced cyberattacks, so that became a major challenge for us,” Ainun stated in Fahira (2025).

Third, another challenge comes from the geographic distance separating community volunteers across various regions of Indonesia. This makes it difficult for them to gather in person and hold offline events, creating an obstacle that reduces the effectiveness of discussions and direct coordination. Ainun added, “We are spread across Indonesia, so it’s difficult to meet face-to-face. And organizing offline events is also quite challenging” (Fahira, 2025).

Fourth, another challenge is that many women involved in this peace movement also have to face a double burden—managing household responsibilities while continuing to lead the movement. “Some of us also have to carry out household duties while continuing to manage this movement” (Fahira, 2025). Despite these challenges, Ainun and the Cadar Garis Lucu community continue to strive to carry on their fight, even though they face obstacles every day.

Fifth, the stigma against her for wearing the niqab while advocating for peace. In a podcast with Andini Effendi on the Cauldron Content YouTube channel, Ainun explained that she had experienced this stigma. This especially occurred when many bombings were carried out by female perpetrators who also wore the niqab, which contributed to the stigma. However, Ainun clarified

that this fact could not be denied or blamed, as there are varying interpretations of jihad. Many people believe that jihad involves bombing, which is hard to refute. What Ainun emphasized is that she successfully mediated with victims of terrorism through her approach, helping to remove the stigma. "Thank you, Ainun, you healed me from the trauma," one of the victims of the Bali Bombing 2 said in the podcast, explaining how Ainun helped them overcome their traumatic experience (Cauldron Content, 2023).

Discussion: The Efforts of Niqab-Wearing Women in Promoting Peace Amidst Stigma

This research provides a clear picture of society's views on niqab-wearing women, especially in the context of the social stigma associated with their clothing choices and religious identity. Based on the findings of a survey involving 45 respondents, the majority of society still holds negative perceptions towards niqab-wearing women, with 37.78% of respondents evaluating them negatively and 33.33% remaining neutral. However, despite these persistent views, there is hope and support for niqab-wearing women to demonstrate goodwill and contribute to society, particularly through the peace activities they engage in. This indicates a tension between the negative view of the niqab as a symbol of radicalization and the acceptance of niqab-wearing women involved in more inclusive and moderate social movements.

This phenomenon aligns with the sociological theory put forward by Erving Goffman in his work *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (1963), where individuals or groups subjected to social stigma often face challenges in building and maintaining a positive identity in the eyes of society. Goffman explains that stigma can damage the identity of individuals or groups and lead to social discrimination. In the case of niqab-wearing women, this stigma arises from the association between the niqab and radicalization, even though not all niqab-wearing women adopt such ideologies (Donnelly & Wright, 2013). The findings of this study show that although niqab-wearing women are often viewed negatively, there are efforts to dismantle this stigma through peace activities and interfaith dialogues conducted by communities such as Cadar Garis Lucu.

Moreover, the findings also reveal a contradiction in society's perception of niqab-wearing women. On the one hand, they are seen as individuals who are closed off and radical, but on the other hand, they receive support to participate in positive social activities. This phenomenon can be explained through the social construction theory developed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1991). They argue that social reality is not objective but is constructed through social interactions and shared meanings. In this case, the stigma against niqab-wearing women is the result of a social construction formed through narratives in society that link the niqab with radicalization. However, the efforts of niqab-wearing women to present themselves as agents of peace and religious moderation can contribute to altering this social construction so that the niqab no longer becomes a symbol of violence or intolerance.

This research has implications for the importance of understanding that the stigma attached to niqab-wearing women is not permanent (Frost, 2011). Society has the potential to change its views on niqab-wearing women if there are tangible efforts to involve them in positive and meaningful social activities (Kerr & Stanley, 2021; Nichols, Welborn, Gringle, & Lee, 2021). This shows that individuals or groups who are stigmatized can change society's perception by introducing values of goodness and peace, as demonstrated by Ainun Jamilah and the Cadar Garis Lucu community. The study also reveals the importance of education and interfaith dialogue in addressing fear and hatred based on ignorance or external influences (Diamond & Alley, 2022).

The findings of this study highlight the gap between society's perception of niqab-wearing women and the reality that many of them are involved in positive activities, such as promoting peace and religious moderation. This phenomenon arises due to stereotypes formed from incorrect social perceptions and media influences that often link the niqab with extremism and terrorism (Hamdi, 2022). Social media, for instance, has become a battleground for the identity of niqab-wearing women, where they face not only criticism but also cyberattacks and cynical comments

that reinforce the existing stigma. Although this stigma is based on limited and incorrect views, it still has a significant impact on how niqab-wearing women are treated in society (Hossain & Mughal, 2021).

Therefore, what Ainun and her movement experience in promoting peace must continue to be strengthened by enhancing the movement that has been started by Ainun Jamilah and Cadar Garis Lucu to promote the values of tolerance, peace, and diversity, more interfaith dialogue and collaboration between communities should be encouraged to reduce existing tensions and misunderstandings. Additionally, it is important for relevant institutions, such as educational institutions, the media, and the government, to play an active role in educating society about the importance of diversity and religious freedom, as well as combating negative stigma that can harm certain groups. Public education campaigns and efforts to involve niqab-wearing women in broader social discussions can also be strategic steps to change society's views more comprehensively.

4. CONCLUSION

This research finds that although social stigma against niqab-wearing women in Indonesia remains very strong, the efforts made by Ainun Jamilah through the Cadar Garis Lucu community have the potential to change these negative perceptions. The study reveals a contradiction in society's views on niqab-wearing women; on the one hand, they still view niqab-wearing women negatively, but on the other hand, they support the peace initiatives promoted by them. This provides a new perspective, showing that society does not solely attribute the stigma against niqab-wearing women to deep-seated hatred but instead to the evolving socio-cultural factors that influence it. Through the peace efforts made by Ainun, who is active on social media, the research found that social media plays a significant role in changing the negative narratives in society and helping educate the public about diversity and the importance of religious moderation.

The novelty of this research lies in emphasizing that the peace movement led by niqab-wearing women through digital platforms such as Instagram and Twitter can alter society's views of them. Unlike previous research that focused mainly on the negative impact of stigma on niqab-wearing women, this study finds that efforts like Cadar Garis Lucu have a broader positive impact, namely creating an inclusive dialogue space and reducing the potential for radicalization. This research also offers new insights into how social media can combat extremism, spread peace values, and encourage society to become more tolerant.

The added value of this research is its contribution to the development of the concept of religious moderation in the digital context and its introduction of social media as a means to advocate for peace and diversity. This study also provides a new perspective on the role of niqab-wearing women in influencing more inclusive social narratives and challenging long-standing stereotypes about them. Furthermore, this research contributes to social theory, particularly regarding how stigmatized groups can use social media to fight for their rights and challenge dominant narratives.

However, this study also has limitations, particularly in terms of the limited scope of respondents from specific areas, such as the city of Bandung, which may not represent the views of all of Indonesian society. Additionally, while this research provides an overview of the positive impacts generated by the Cadar Garis Lucu community, more research is needed to explore whether this movement can truly change society's views on a larger scale. Future research could expand the sample size and further investigate the challenges faced by this group in various regions of Indonesia, as well as examine the long-term effectiveness of this peace movement.

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