JKII: Jurnal Kajian Islam Interdisipliner
Vol. 11, No. 1 (2026), pp. 245-259, https://doi.org/10.14421/f5jhzm33

BEYOND DESACRALIZATION: THE RECONFIGURATION OF HIJAB MEANING ON TIKTOK THROUGH ÉMILE DURKHEIM'S CONCEPT OF THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE

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Abstract

This study examines the transformation of the meaning of the hijab in the TikTok era through Émile Durkheim's sacred–profane framework. As a visual-algorithmic platform, TikTok has become a significant space where young Muslim women display, negotiate, and reconstruct the meaning of the hijab through algorithmic logic, popular aesthetics, and digital culture. This research employs a qualitative approach using content analysis of 30 purposively selected TikTok posts under the hashtags #HijabJahat and #BaddieHijab, collected between January and March 2026. The data were analyzed thematically based on Durkheim's concepts of the sacred and the profane as articulated in The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. The findings indicate that the transformation of the hijab does not result in complete desacralization but rather in a process of symbolic reconfiguration. While the hijab continues to be recognized as a religious obligation, its visual expression is rearticulated through digital personas, visual trends, and algorithmic mechanisms. In this context, the sacred and the profane no longer function as rigid opposites but coexist within the collective consciousness of digital society. Digital ritual practices, such as hashtag participation, trend replication, and visual imitation, generate new forms of solidarity based on shared aesthetics as well as religious identity. This study contributes to the sociology of digital religion by demonstrating that social media does not eliminate the religious meaning of the hijab but transforms it into symbolic forms that reflect the dynamics of contemporary digital culture.

Keywords: hijab, TikTok, sacred and profane, Émile Durkheim, digital religion, popular culture.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis transformasi makna hijab pada era TikTok melalui kerangka sakral–profan Émile Durkheim. Sebagai platform visual-algoritmik, TikTok menjadi ruang penting bagi perempuan Muslim muda untuk menampilkan, menegosiasikan, dan merekonstruksi makna hijab melalui logika algoritma, estetika populer, dan budaya digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan analisis isi terhadap 30 unggahan TikTok yang dipilih secara purposif melalui tagar #HijabJahat dan #BaddieHijab selama Januari–Maret 2026. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik berdasarkan konsep sakral dan profan Durkheim dalam The Elementary Forms

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ISSN: 2579-4930 (p); 2775-8281 (e)

of Religious Life. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi makna hijab tidak mengarah pada desakralisasi sepenuhnya, melainkan pada rekonfigurasi simbolik. Hijab tetap dipahami sebagai kewajiban agama, namun praktik visualnya mengalami artikulasi ulang melalui konstruksi persona digital, tren visual, dan mekanisme algoritmik. Dalam konteks ini, sakral dan profan tidak lagi beroperasi sebagai dikotomi yang kaku, tetapi hadir secara bersamaan dalam kesadaran kolektif masyarakat digital. Praktik ritual digital, seperti partisipasi dalam tagar, reproduksi tren, dan imitasi visual, membentuk solidaritas baru yang didasarkan pada kesamaan estetika sekaligus identitas keagamaan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian sosiologi agama digital dengan menunjukkan bahwa media sosial tidak menghilangkan makna religius hijab, tetapi mentransformasikannya ke dalam bentuk-bentuk simbolik yang sesuai dengan dinamika budaya digital kontemporer.

Kata kunci: *hijab, TikTok, sakral–profan, Émile Durkheim, agama digital, budaya populer.*

Article History
Received: 05 May 2025
Approved for Publication: 06 June 2026

Introduction

Over the past two decades, the hijab has undergone a significant transformation of meaning in the public sphere, particularly since the rapid expansion of social media as an arena for the production and distribution of cultural symbols (Yunus et al., 2024). If previously the hijab was understood predominantly as a symbol of religiosity and Islamic identity for Muslim women, its meanings have become increasingly diverse and complex (Kavakci & Kraeplin, 2017; Muliana & Dewi, 2024). The emergence of platforms such as TikTok has accelerated this transformation through visual culture, virality algorithms, and large-scale trend creation. TikTok constructs a culture of digital imitation and visual trend reproduction that enables specific symbols to spread rapidly and collectively within digital public space (Zulli & Zulli, 2022). Consequently, the hijab no longer represents only spiritual obedience but also functions as a component of digital content produced for public consumption (Akou, 2010; Istiani, 2015).

This phenomenon reflects broader changes in the function of religious symbols in modern society. Such transformation is not merely a change in dress style but a change in the way society constructs meaning around religious symbols amid digital capitalism and popular culture. The transformation of hijab meaning has become increasingly visible through the emergence of popular TikTok terminology such as 'Hijab Jahat' (Wicked Hijab), 'Hijab Judes' (Fierce Hijab), and 'Baddie Hijab' (Nasaruddin, 2022). These terms represent the construction of specific character types dominant, assertive, even antagonistic attached to the identity of veiled women. In this context, the hijab is no longer positioned solely as a symbol of spiritual submission and piety but also as a visual attribute supporting

digital persona, self-image, and branding in social media space (Brooke Erin Duffy, Emily Hund, 2015; Waqhidah & Pratamia, 2024).

Previous research on the veiling phenomenon among female university students has shown that the meanings assigned to the headscarf are not always internalized as an absolute religious obligation; they are frequently understood situationally and are shaped by external factors such as family, peers, and the social environment. The headscarf is understood as covering the aurat as well as a form of self-protection, yet in practice it is also positioned as a symbol of formality and appearance. Variations in religious understanding generate diverse motivations for veiling, ranging from spiritual orientations such as seeking God's pleasure to functions of self-control. In social terms, wearing the headscarf does not inhibit social interaction as long as norms of propriety are maintained, suggesting that the headscarf also functions as a flexible medium of social adaptation in daily life (Erawati, 2005).

Prior studies have generally discussed the hijab as a symbol of religious identity, fashion, and a form of social expression in digital media (Beta, 2014; Piela, 2013). However, previous research has tended to examine social media in general terms and has not specifically investigated TikTok as a space for the production of hijab meaning that is heavily shaped by visual culture, viral trends, and digital algorithms. Furthermore, earlier studies have focused predominantly on the hijab as a component of lifestyle or fashion commodity whereas the transformation of hijab in popular culture also signals a change in the position of religious symbols within modern consumption practices and global visual culture (Oxford Academic, 2026). Discussions concerning the transformation of hijab as a religious symbol undergoing negotiation between sacred value and profane expression remain relatively limited. Research on popular terms such as 'Hijab Jahat and 'Baddie Hijab' has not yet been substantially analyzed through the lens of the sociology of religion, particularly through the concept of the sacred and the profane.

Based on this context, this study offers novelty by focusing on the representation of the hijab on TikTok through popular terms that construct the identity of veiled women in digital space. This article does not merely discuss the hijab as fashion or visual commodity; rather, it reads the hijab as a religious symbol undergoing a reconfiguration of meaning within digital culture a phenomenon consistent with the development of urban Muslim identity increasingly connected to popular culture and social media (Beta, 2014) . To understand this phenomenon, this study employs Émile Durkheim's framework in The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, which divides social reality into two primary categories: the sacred and the profane.

According to Durkheim, the sacred refers to everything considered holy, set apart, protected, and separated from everyday life. In this context, the hijab as a religious obligation can be understood as a sacred symbol containing spiritual value and religious norms (Huda, 2023)Durkheim, 1995). Conversely, the profane refers

to things that are worldly, routine, functional, and devoid of special sacral dimension (Ramadhani, 2025). When the hijab is positioned as a fashion trend, an aesthetic accessory, or a creative content element on TikTok, it potentially shifts toward the profane domain as it is treated as an object of style and visual consumption (Kamaludin & Suheri, 2021). Durkheim's approach enables analysis of how the boundary between the sacred and the profane is negotiated in the dynamics of modern society, particularly in social media culture that is increasingly visual and consumerist. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the transformation of hijab meaning on TikTok through Émile Durkheim's sacred–profane perspective. Specifically, it examines how the hijab is represented in content tagged 'Hijab Jahat,' 'Hijab Judes,' and 'Baddie Hijab,' and how the boundary between religious sacrality and profane expression is negotiated within digital visual culture.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design with a descriptive-analytical approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research focuses on understanding the transformation of hijab as a religious symbol within digital culture, particularly on the TikTok platform. Research was conducted during the period of January to March 2026, with the scope of inquiry centered on TikTok as an arena for the production and distribution of symbolic meaning. TikTok was selected as the primary field site because of its high usage intensity among young generations and the emergence of trends such as 'Hijab Jahat and 'Baddie Hijab,' which indicate shifts in the representation of the hijab in digital space. TikTok's algorithmic architecture driven by engagement metrics, short-form video, and trend replication culture makes it qualitatively distinct from other social media platforms and therefore particularly relevant for studying the reconfiguration of religious symbol meaning (Zulli & Zulli, 2022).

Data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through digital observation of 30 TikTok posts using hashtags or narratives related to 'Hijab Jahat, and 'Baddie Hijab,' collected systematically during the research period. Content units were selected purposively based on three criteria: (1) visual relevance the content clearly foregrounds the hijab as a central visual element; (2) narrative framing the caption, audio, or on-screen text constructs a discernible persona associated with the hijab; and (3) user engagement posts with a minimum of 10,000 views were prioritized to ensure that the content reflects broader collective participation rather than isolated individual expression. Observation focused on visual form, style of dress, use of audio, captions, and user interaction patterns such as comments, view counts, and audience responses. Secondary data comprise academic journal articles, books, digital documentation, and prior studies related to the hijab, social media, digital culture, and sacred–profane theory. The table below summarizes the data profile.

Table 1. Data Profile of Analyzed TikTok Content

Hashtag	Number of Posts	Period	Selection Criteria
#HijabJahat	15 posts	Jan–Mar 2026	Visual relevance, narrative framing, min. 10K views
#BaddieHijab	15 posts	Jan–Mar 2026	Visual relevance, narrative framing, min. 10K views

Source: edited by authors

Data analysis employed an interactive analysis technique comprising data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Collected data were analyzed using Émile Durkheim's sacred–profane perspective as elaborated in The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. Within this framework, the hijab is understood as a sacred symbol carrying religious and spiritual value within Islamic teaching. However, in the context of social media, this symbol undergoes a process of meaning negotiation when produced as part of visual trends, fashion, and digital identity branding. Thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring patterns in visual representation, caption construction, and user interaction, which were subsequently interpreted in relation to the sacred–profane dichotomy. Through this approach, the study seeks to explain how the boundary between the sacred and the profane undergoes transformation in contemporary social media culture. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of data sources, combining visual observation, caption analysis, and secondary literature.

Émile Durkheim and the Sociology of Religion

Émile Durkheim Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) is one of the central figures in the development of modern sociology, whose contributions were decisive in establishing sociology as an autonomous and systematic scientific discipline. Born in Épinal, France, within a religious family, his background shaped his abiding interest in the social study of religion. Durkheim insisted that social phenomena must be understood as social facts—objective realities external to the individual that exert a coercive force capable of influencing and shaping individual behavior within social life (Giddens, 2009; Ritzer, 2011).

In The Elementary Forms of Religious Life (1912), Durkheim argued that religion functions socially to reinforce solidarity and a sense of communal belonging within a group. Religion, in his view, consists of a unified system of

beliefs and practices relative to sacred things that unite its adherents into a single moral community (Durkheim, 1995). The fundamental distinction between the sacred and the profane constitutes the elementary form of religious classification: the sacred refers to everything set apart and forbidden things imbued with collective reverence and insulated from ordinary life while the profane encompasses the mundane, routine, and utilitarian dimensions of everyday existence. Crucially, Durkheim maintained that this boundary is not fixed but socially constructed and historically variable, subject to negotiation through collective consciousness and ritual practice.

Scholars of digital religion have extended Durkheim's framework to contemporary contexts. (Campbell, 2013). argues that digital media create new 'networked publics' in which religious authority is no longer monopolized by formal institutions but is distributed across participatory platforms. (Cheong, 2014). similarly demonstrates that online spaces enable believers to renegotiate religious norms and identities without abandoning their doctrinal commitments. These insights are directly relevant to the present study, which reads TikTok as a new form of social arena in which the sacred–profane boundary is actively renegotiated through visual participation.

The Hijab as Sacred Symbol: Islamic Normative Foundations

In Islamic jurisprudence, the obligation to maintain modesty and cover the aurat forms the normative foundation for hijab practice. Classical exegetes have consistently interpreted relevant Quranic verses as establishing the normative basis for Muslim women's covering: the headscarf functions not merely as a physical head covering but also as a means of concealing specific parts of the body to prevent public exposure (Ibn Kathir, 1999). This interpretation demonstrates that the hijab carries simultaneously a religious and a social function in shaping Muslim women's identity and behavior.

Contemporary exegesis maintains this dual function while contextualizing it within modern social life. Quraish Shihab's Tafsir al-Misbah explains that the use of the outer garment in public is associated with the preservation of women's dignity and the establishment of ethical boundaries in social interaction (Shihab, 2002). The hijab is thus understood not merely as an individual symbol of religiosity but as a representation of social value embedded within Muslim communal life.

When analyzed through Durkheim's concept of collective representation, the hijab can be understood as a symbol that derives its legitimacy from the shared consciousness of the Muslim community (Durkheim, 1995). Its sacredness does not reside solely in the physical garment but in the values and meanings collectively attributed to it. As such, the hijab functions as a symbol connecting the individual to a broader moral community what Durkheim would call a site of collective effervescence, a point of convergence between personal identity and communal solidarity (Pickering, 1984). This finding aligns with (Erawati, 2005) research

showing that headscarf use is not only driven by religious consciousness but also serves as a medium for social identity formation, and with (Piela, 2013) work on Muslim women's online identity negotiation in Western contexts.

The Hijab as Collective Symbol: The Sacred in Digital Space

The findings of this study indicate that the hijab is still understood by the majority of social media users as a symbol of piety and compliance with religious teaching. Despite appearing in diverse forms and styles, the presence of the hijab continues to refer to a collectively recognized Muslim female identity. This confirms that modernization of the media does not automatically erase the social function of religious symbols; rather, those symbols undergo adaptation without losing their religious meaning entirely. In this respect, Durkheim's theory regarding the integrative function of religion remains relevant for explaining how the hijab maintains its position as a collective moral symbol amid digital cultural change (Durkheim, 1995).

As a sacred symbol, the hijab carries an implicit yet powerful set of normative rules. These include wearing the hijab in a manner that fully covers the aurat, choosing unobtrusive colors, and maintaining behavior consistent with the value of simplicity (Pulungan & Adenan, 2024). Such norms derive not only from religious texts but are also reinforced through social control within Muslim communities (Ashani et al., 2025). The hijab thus functions as a collective representation that affirms mechanical solidarity that is, social unity formed through shared values, beliefs, and religious practices (Durkheim, 1995). In the sacred framework, violations of hijab norms are frequently perceived not merely as aesthetic errors but as moral or religious transgressions, demonstrating that the hijab is situated within a domain separated from profane everyday life (Setiadi et al., 2026.

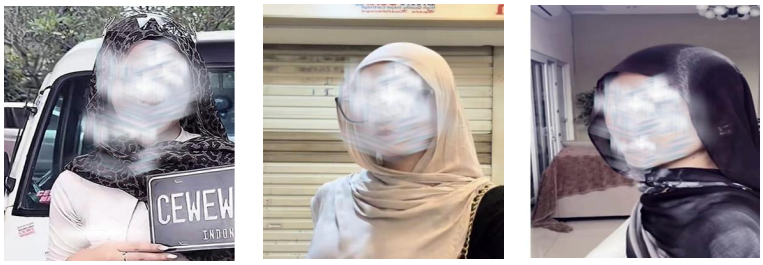
Compared with Muliana and Dewi's (2024) study, which emphasizes the transformation of hijab as part of student fashion trends, the present research shows that the religious dimension persists as the fundamental framework of meaning underlying hijab practice on social media. This corroborates Kavakci and Kraeplin's (2017) finding that Muslim women who publicly identify as religious on social media simultaneously maintain and renegotiate their religious identity, rather than abandoning it under the pressure of popular culture.

The Profane: Desacralization through TikTok Aesthetics

Amid the powerful influence of globalization and cultural digitalization, hijab use has emerged as a flexible, context-dependent Muslim visual identity marker. In this situation, hijab style is no longer understood solely as an expression of individual piety but also as a form of social identity expression shaped by market preferences, ownership of cultural capital, and the algorithmic logic of social media (Izzah, 2025). This shift reflects a process of symbolic meaning differentiation in

hijab practice among urban Muslim women, simultaneously combining religious value with aesthetic value.

Social media is one of the communication tools that has developed rapidly in recent years, especially with the increasing use of smartphones. In addition, social media has become a platform that is actively accessed, particularly among adolescents and young people who are highly engaged in social media activities (Pratama et al., 2022), and it has become an inseparable part of modern society (Erawati et al., 2023). The emergence of terms such as “Hijab Jahat” (evil hijab), “Hijab Judes” (rude hijab), or “Baddie Hijab” indicates a shift in meaning from the sacred to the profane. In contemporary Muslim fashion culture, the hijab no longer solely represents religiosity but has also become part of modern aesthetics and global visual consumption (Muslim Fashion, 2026).



Pictures 1. Examples of "Hijab Jahat" Styles on TikTok Social

Within Durkheim's framework, the profane category refers to everything worldly, routine, and openly usable in a functional way without attachment to particular sacred values or constraints (Maksum & Kholish, 2025)(Pickering, 1984). In contemporary digital society, the concept of the profane becomes increasingly relevant for reading phenomena that emerge on social media, particularly those related to the transformation of religious symbol meaning.The term 'Kerudung Jahat' (Wicked Veil) did not emerge from theological discourse but from popular digital language. In the world of beauty and fashion, the word 'jahat' (wicked/evil) is used to describe something strikingly beautiful, dangerously attractive, or transformative to an extraordinary degree (Suara.com, 2026). Content analysis of the 30 posts examined in this study reveals a recurring visual grammar: creators deploy assertive facial expressions, bold color contrasts, and rapid transition effects to construct a 'fierce' persona, while retaining the hijab as an unquestioned visual anchor. This simultaneously demonstrates both the persistence and the plasticity of the sacred symbol.

Nevertheless, the term desacralization must be understood carefully. Research data indicate that what is occurring is not the disappearance of sacred meaning but rather an expansion of the symbolic function of the hijab. A symbol previously dominant in the religious domain now also operates in the domain of

popular culture and the digital economy. In Durkheim's perspective, this condition can be understood as an encounter between the sacred and the profane in modern society (Durkheim, 1995). TikTok presents a new social space in which religious symbols interact with algorithmic logic, popularity, and visual aesthetics. As a consequence, the hijab is no longer interpreted in a singular way but undergoes a pluralization of meanings according to the context of its use. In TikTok's algorithmic logic, aesthetic value and visual uniqueness determine content visibility more than the religious message embedded within it. As a result, the hijab undergoes a reorientation of meaning from a symbol of collective compliance toward a symbol of individual lifestyle that is flexible and contextual (Hasanah & Permana, 2025)(Campbell, 2013).

This process represents what may be termed 'symbolic desacralization': when an object previously situated in the sacred domain begins to be used in profane practice without fully losing its social legitimacy. The hijab remains respected as a religious obligation, yet at the same time it is fashioned into a creative medium that follows the dynamics of digital trends. This finding differs from (Kamaludin & Suheri, 2021) study, which tends to view changes in religious symbols as a form of sacredness displacement, and from (Cheong, 2014). argument that digital media inevitably erode religious authority. The present research instead shows that religious symbols can maintain their religious legitimacy even while appearing in more flexible and contextual forms, consistent with Campbell's (2012) 'online-offline religious integration' model.

Digital Ritual and New Forms of Solidarity

Analysis of the practices of hashtag use, hijab tutorials, and visual trend reproduction reveals a new form of ritual in digital space. TikTok users repeatedly follow the same patterns through the use of particular audio tracks, visual styles, and content formats. This mirrors what Durkheim identified as the ritual dimension of collective life: the repeated enactment of shared practices that reaffirms communal belonging and renews the social bond (Durkheim, 1995).

Durkheim emphasized that rituals serve the primary function of creating and maintaining social solidarity. In the context of traditional society, religious rituals reinforce collective consciousness and renew group members' commitment to sacred values (Nurhadi & Budhi, 2025). In the digital era, however, the form of ritual has undergone transformation. On the TikTok platform, patterns of imitation and visual trend reproduction demonstrate the formation of a participatory digital culture based on the collective repetition of specific symbols and styles (Zulli & Zulli, 2022) Practices such as 'hijab tutorials,' hijab style challenges, and the use of specific hashtags (#HijabJahat, #HijabTutorial, #CleanLookHijab) can be understood as new digital rituals.

These digital rituals exhibit recurring and relatively uniform patterns, in which users imitate specific trending hijab-tying styles, use the same music, and

apply similar visual transitions. Content is subsequently re-uploaded with minor personal variations so that, while appearing creative, it remains within the same structural template. This repetition creates a kind of cultural template followed collectively by users. Although participants do not know one another personally, involvement in the same trend produces a sense of belonging to an imagined community connected through shared symbols, styles, and visual patterns.

In this context, the solidarity formed undergoes a transformation. It is no longer constituted solely through shared religious belief but increasingly through shared aesthetic taste, style preferences, and participation in the same digital trends. This shift from mechanical solidarity based on religious uniformity toward an organic solidarity rooted in aesthetic participation represents a significant sociological development that extends Durkheim's own theoretical insights (Durkheim, 1995; Firsanty et al., 2025). Zulli and Zulli's (2022) concept of 'imitation publics' on TikTok provides useful framing here: the platform incentivizes mimetic reproduction of content, creating collective identity through stylistic convergence rather than doctrinal agreement.

The hijab thus serves as a symbol bridging two domains simultaneously. On one side, it retains traces of sacredness as a religious obligation laden with spiritual value and Islamic identity. On the other, it operates in the profane domain as an object of aesthetics and a digital commodity subject to the logic of trends and visual culture (Izzah, 2025). This affirms that the meaning of religious symbols is dynamic and contextual, continuously renegotiated through social practices that develop within TikTok's fast-paced, repetitive, and participation-based visual ecosystem.

Symbolic Reconfiguration: Beyond Desacralization

The principal finding of this research is that the transformation of hijab meaning on TikTok is more accurately understood as a symbolic reconfiguration than as desacralization. The hijab is retained as a religious symbol, yet simultaneously acquires new functions as a medium for identity expression, aesthetics, and digital cultural participation. Theoretically, these results demonstrate that the sacred–profane dichotomy proposed by Durkheim does not operate rigidly in digital society; rather, both categories co-exist within the same social practice (Durkheim, 1995).

The hijab can simultaneously be a religious symbol and an object of popular culture without necessarily forfeiting all of its sacred legitimacy. This finding enriches the sociology of digital religion by showing that social media is not merely an arena for the commodification of religious symbols but also a space for the reproduction of meaning that allows religious symbols to adapt to social change (Cheong, 2014). The phenomenon of hijab on TikTok is therefore more accurately understood as a form of meaning negotiation between religious tradition and contemporary digital culture a process describes as 'fashioning faith' in which material practices and spiritual commitments are interwoven rather than opposed.

Comparing the present findings with prior research: Muliana and Dewi (2024) found that changes in headscarf use are influenced by social trends and identity construction; Hasanah and Permana (2025) identified the commodification of hijab through promotion and endorsement practices on social media. The present study is consistent with both but advances the analysis by situating these phenomena within Durkheim's sacred–profane framework. This positions the transformation of hijab meaning not merely as a consequence of popular culture or the digital economy, but as a process of meaning negotiation operating within the collective consciousness of Muslim society. Consequently, commodification and religiosity are not necessarily in opposition; they can co-exist within the same digital social practice.

Additional Analysis

The findings show that the transformation of hijab meaning in TikTok content under the hashtags #HijabJahat and #BaddieHijab does not lead to the total elimination of religious value; rather, it constitutes a change in the way that symbol is represented and interpreted. Content analysis reveals that the hijab continues to be referenced as part of religious obligation, yet appears in visual forms that foreground aesthetics, self-confidence, and personal identity. This demonstrates that the hijab no longer functions solely as a symbol of collective piety but also as a medium of self-expression in digital space. This phenomenon shows that the boundary between the sacred and the profane is dynamic. Religious symbols do not move entirely from the sacred domain to the profane; instead, they operate in both simultaneously. In the context of social media, the hijab becomes a religious symbol that retains religious legitimacy while also forming part of visual culture shaped by algorithm, trends, and the logic of digital popularity.

Interpreting these findings through Durkheim's framework: the collective consciousness that defines the hijab as sacred is no longer shaped exclusively by conventional religious communities but also by user interactions, digital trends, and algorithmic mechanisms (Durkheim, 1995). The use of hashtags, mass participation in trends, and the reproduction of similar content demonstrate the formation of new solidarity grounded in digital visual culture. In this condition, the hijab does not lose its sacred meaning but undergoes rearticulation: the symbol continues to represent Muslim identity, yet simultaneously functions as a vehicle for social recognition, self-image construction, and participation in popular digital culture. The transformation is therefore more accurately understood as symbolic reconfiguration than as desacralization.

This study demonstrates that Durkheim's sacred–profane concept retains analytical value for reading religious phenomena in the digital age, but requires contextual adjustment (Durkheim, 1995). In digital society, the boundary between the sacred and the profane is not maintained through rigid separation but through an ongoing process of negotiation. Social media constitutes a new arena for the

reproduction of religious symbols and the formation of social identity. The transformation of religious symbols on social media does not necessarily lead toward secularization; digital media can generate new forms of religiosity that adapt to visual culture and contemporary communication technology (Campbell, 2013; Cheong, 2014). This contributes to the growing field of digital religion studies by demonstrating that the sacred–profane distinction must be understood processually rather than structurally in networked environments.

Based on these findings, strengthening digital religious literacy is important to help young people understand the representation of Islamic symbols in a more critical way. Universities, hijaber communities, and religious institutions can collaborate to create educational spaces that encourage the creative use of social media without neglecting the moral and spiritual values attached to religious symbols. Social media should be viewed not as a threat but as a space for education, religious identity strengthening, and culturally contextual Islamic outreach suited to the characteristics of the digital generation.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the transformation of hijab meaning in TikTok content tagged #HijabJahat and #BaddieHijab cannot be understood as a process of desacralization that wholesale eliminates religious value. The hijab remains regarded as a religious symbol with sacred legitimacy in the collective consciousness of Muslim society. However, within digital space, the symbol undergoes an expansion of function and meaning through visual representation practices that foreground aesthetics, identity expression, and participation in popular culture. The hijab thus functions not only as a marker of collective piety but also as a medium of self-expression operating within the logic of social media.

Based on Durkheim's framework, the relationship between the sacred and the profane in digital society is neither dichotomous nor mutually exclusive; both are simultaneously present within the same social practice. The hijab retains its sacred dimension as a religious symbol while interacting with algorithmic mechanisms, trends, and the profane digital visual culture. What occurs is therefore not a linear shift from the sacred to the profane, but a symbolic reconfiguration that produces a plurality of new meanings. The study also finds that digital rituals hashtag use, visual trend reproduction, and content imitation on TikTok generate new forms of solidarity grounded in visual participation and digital culture rather than in uniformity of religious norms alone.

This research contributes to digital religion sociology by showing that social media is not merely an arena for the commodification of religious symbols but also a space for collective meaning production and the formation of new solidarity among young Muslims. The novelty lies in connecting Durkheim's classical sacred–profane theory with popular cultural practices in the TikTok era. Future research should develop digital ethnographic approaches and in-depth interviews with

content creators and audiences, as well as cross-platform comparisons, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of hijab meaning transformation in contemporary digital society.

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