Indonesia's Public Diplomacy through Modest Fashion in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's modest fashion has proliferated in the last decade. It encourages Indonesia to become the center of the world's modest fashion. In order to achieve this goal, Indonesia employs public diplomacy toward the global public and various countries, one of which is Turkey. However, the pandemic has limited international activities. This study examines Indonesia's public diplomacy through modest fashion toward Turkey during the pandemic. This research was conducted with a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques were carried out through a literature study. Meanwhile, the data analysis is carried out by reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions. This study shows that Indonesian public diplomacy through modest fashion in Turkey is carried out with a strategic communication dimension through a hybrid fashion show (offline and online) with the theme of introducing modest fashion in Indonesia. It is done to adjust public diplomacy during the pandemic, so the message to be conveyed can be adequately achieved. The purpose of this public diplomacy is to build the image of Indonesia in modest fashion and achieve economic interests by entering the Turkish market.

Keywords: Public Diplomacy, Modest Fashion, National Interest, Indonesia, Turkey

Modest fashion Indonesia telah berkembang pesat dalam satu dekade terakhir. Hal ini mendorong Indonesia untuk menjadi pusat modest fashion dunia. Tujuan tersebut berusaha dicapai dengan diplomasi publik terhadap publik global dan berbagai negara, salah satunya adalah Turki. Namun, adanya pandemi membuat aktivitas internasional menjadi lebih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tentang diplomasi publik Indonesia melalui modest fashion terhadap Turki pada masa pandemi. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dengan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui studi pustaka. Sementara teknis analisis data dilaksanakan dengan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa diplomasi publik Indonesia melalui modest fashion di Turki dilaksanakan dengan dimensi komunikasi strategis, yaitu melalui hybrid fashion show (offline dan online) yang bertemakan pengenalan modest fashion Indonesia. Hal ini dilakukan untuk menyesuaikan diplomasi publik pada masa pandemik agar pesan yang ingin disampaikan dapat tercapai dengan baik. Tujuan dari diplomasi publik ini adalah untuk membangun citra Indonesia dalam modest fashion dan meraih kepentingan ekonomi dengan memasuki pasar Turki.

Kata-kata kunci: Diplomasi Publik, modest fashion, Kepentingan Nasional Indonesia, Turki

Diplomacy has no longer limited between countries. Instead, it expands wider in many issues ranging from high to low politics. The public diplomacy phenomenon has been one of the diplomacy products run by several countries and non-country targeting a nation or public. Indonesia, for instance, implements its public diplomacy in a modest fashion way to build a good image in the fashion world. Furthermore, public diplomacy through modest fashion aims to make Indonesia the center of modest fashion. The term modest fashion itself refers to a type of fashion that is non-transparent, loose, and covers most of the body. Most consumers of this fashion are Muslim women (Lewis 2017). As the largest Muslim nation, Indonesia is aware of its potential in a modest fashion (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2019). Therefore, Indonesia put efforts to be the center of modest fashion through its public diplomacy.

Among some possible ways to conduct public diplomacy using modest fashion, Indonesia chose to implement it by holding fashion show events in several countries. Turkey was one of the targeted countries where the event would be held. Indonesia's modest fashion show in Turkey was held from April 7 to April 8, 2021. The event organizer was the Embassy of The Republic of Indonesia in Ankara, collaborating with an Indonesian local fashion brand named Makamarie. Makamarie has been known to be the biggest modest fashion aggregator in Southeast Asia (Modest Indonesia 2021). The interesting part about the event is that Indonesia still implements its public diplomacy through a modest fashion show in Turkey during a pandemic situation when daily activities were limited due to the social distancing policy applied in all countries. Diplomacy and other cross-border activity are also disturbed since the Covid-19 pandemic started in early 2020 (Abduazimov 2021).

As the second-best modest fashion developer in the world after the United Arab Emirates and before Indonesia, the selection of Turkey to be Indonesia's public diplomacy target is an appealing matter to be studied. Moreover, Turkey is also the third-biggest consumer of modest fashion globally (DinarStandard 2020). The two facts indicate that Turkey is not out of place in the world's modest fashion industry. In this regard, the writer will then study how Indonesia implements its public diplomacy using a modest

fashion as the instrument toward Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic. Some researchers have studied the conduct of public diplomacy during the pandemic. For instance, Lee dan Kim (2020) found that South Korea has been doing branding and public diplomacy by giving Covid-19 support, such as sending masks and medicine to other countries. Likewise, Jerdén (2021) finds that China's public diplomacy towards several European countries in the form of medical support has an objective to repair its poor image as Covid-19 first occurred in China. Meanwhile, Akcay (2021) and Pop (2021) discover that digital diplomacy through digital media becomes significant in a pandemic situation.

In a more specific manner, several past research has also attempted to study the use of fashion as an instrument of public diplomacy. For example, Karamy (2020) tries to discover the case of fashion diplomacy in sister provinces between West Java and South Australia. The research eventually finds that the participation of West Java in the Adelaide Fashion Show in 2017 and the Adelaide Fashion Festival led to the promotion of Indonesia's modest fashion. Concurrently, another study by Kumalaningrum (2021) discovers that fashion has become one of South Korea's public diplomacy through Hallyu. On the other hand, Asafo-Adjei (2019), in his study, discovers that Africa Print Fashion is also a way for Ghana as public diplomacy to fulfill its national interest. Similarly, Zahidi (2017) discovers that Indonesia engages Batik as its public diplomacy in ASEAN Economic Community to increase export capacity to Southeast Asia countries. Meanwhile, Nopitasari dan Fithriana (2018) discover that modest fashion diplomacy has become Indonesia's creativity to support Halal Tourism.

This study is a qualitative descriptive study, a method to utilize qualitative data and descriptively explain to represent a phenomenon as a whole. In this case, the phenomenon is Indonesia's public diplomacy in Turkey. This study then applies the concepts of public diplomacy, modest fashion, and national interest as analysis tools to help the writer describe the matter of the study. Data gathering techniques are collected by literature reviews, such as compiling relevant information from books, study reports, official reports, journals, and online portal articles. This study has in common with previous research on the phenomenon

of public diplomacy through fashion and public diplomacy in a pandemic. However, this study explicitly explains Indonesia's modest fashion in Turkey.

Indonesia Modest Fashion

Modest fashion is loose and untransparent clothing that does not accentuate body shape when being worn. This fashion is closely related to religious values because the decision to wear it is most likely based on religion and culture (Hisyam et al. 2019). In that regard, modest fashion often links with Islamic fashion. However, this kind of fashion is sometimes worn by the believers of other religions, such as Christian and Jewish (Lewis 2017). As in Indonesia's case, modest fashion tends to be Islamic fashion. The vast number of young Muslim women who wear more covering clothes has driven the rapid growth of modest fashion in Indonesia (Ulfa 2019). In the Islamic view, modest fashion refers to items of clothing to cover the head and body based on Sharia law. This sharia law lays out the requirements that women's clothing must meet, such as loose cutting, not accentuating body shape, using thick material, and hiding the skin underneath or untransparent (Nestorović 2016). Modest fashion in Indonesia began in 1990, to be exact, when Asosiasi Perancang Pengusaha Mode Indonesia (APPMI) introduced modest fashion in 1993 (Adinda 2020).

In the recent decade, Indonesia's modest fashion trend has advanced, marked by Indonesia becoming the best third rank modest fashion developer globally based on the State of the Global Islamic Economy's report in 2019-2020. Besides, Indonesia has also become the most significant fashion modest consumer, with about 300 trillion rupiahs expense each year (DinarStandard 2020). Through figure 1, it is apparent that the modest fashion trend is increasing each year. Since 2014, Indonesia has become one of the top five countries with the biggest expense in the world. In 2014-2018, Indonesia went up from the fifth rank to the third rank with a modest fashion expense of about 21 billion USD. It is equal to 7.4% of global modest fashion spending (Databoks 2020). It represents that the modest fashion trend in Indonesia has rapid growth.

Niai Pengeluaran Produk Fesyen Muslim Indonesia
Sumber : State of the Global Islamic, 2014-2019

21
20
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12,69
12
2014
2017

Figure 1. Indonesia's Modest Fashion Market

Source: Databoks (2020)

Wdataboks

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the modest fashion industry in Indonesia was still growing despite all the hurdles (Susilawati 2020). The maximization of online platforms is one of the measures which boosted Indonesia's modest fashion. Since the pandemic hit, various home fashion or large-scale industries started to push their marketing online. Evermos, a new online platform, is one example of an online platform that supports the development of modest fashion in a pandemic situation. Evermos is an e-commerce dedicated to Muslim products, which has collected about 8.25 billion USD (DinarStandard 2021). The development of modest fashion in Indonesia is also marked by the turning up of modest fashion designers and brands in Indonesia. Well-known modest fashion designers like Dian Pelangi, for instance, succeed in bringing Indonesia's modest fashion to the New York fashion stage. Then, there are also designers like Itang Yunaz, who, with his style, managed to combine traditional and modern in harmony, or Ria Miranda, who developed pastel colors modest fashion style. Today, more and more modest fashion brands are arising with their own characteristic. Few brands known for their unique characteristics are Wearing Klamby, Jawhara Syari, Tethuna, and

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Dian Pelangi Fashion (Aditya 2021).

Observing the significant development of modest fashion trends in Indonesia, the government of Indonesia, along with the modest fashion designers and fashion industry owners, then united a vision to put Indonesia as the center of modest fashion in the world. The vision is included in President Jokowi's second period to be a priority agenda in the Making Indonesia 4.0 program, especially to spur the creative Industry in a modest fashion (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia 2019). The government efforts to support modest fashion development were then executed by some programs like Modest Fashion Project (MOFP) and Modest Fashion Founders Fund (ModestFFFund). MOFP is held by The Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia each year to deliver a modest fashion start-up industry in Indonesia (Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia 2020). Meanwhile, ModestFFFund is a yearly program idea by The Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia along with sharia Banking and professionals. This program aims to accelerate capital and capacity building for fashion brand founders to go global (Modest Fashion Founders Fund 2021). Both MOFP and ModestFFFund were held in 2021 in a pandemic situation under strict protocol with an expectation to keep Indonesia's modest fashion growing in a pandemic situation.

Public Diplomacy Indonesia through Modest Fashion in Turkey during the Pandemic

The vision to be the center of the world's modest fashion cannot be realized only by using domestic programs but also by doing several international activities capable of building Indonesia's good image in the world's modest fashion. In relation to the image-building necessity, this need is usually fulfilled by implementing public diplomacy. According to Melissen (2005), public diplomacy is an attempt to influence people or an organization abroad in a positive act, resulting in changing people's way of view or organization toward a nation. Meanwhile, Wang (2006) defines public diplomacy as an attempt to increase communication quality amongst countries and society, which impact the political, economic, social, and diplomacy practical has no longer controlled

by the government. Meanwhile, Tuch defines public diplomacy as a communication process between a government and a foreign public to make certain ideas, goals, institutions, culture, and policy objectives understandable (Melissen 2005). According to those definitions, it is understood that public diplomacy is an attempt to promote certain interests positively, which leads to influencing the public abroad.

Further explained by Nye (2004), public diplomacy is a type of diplomacy that has at least three dimensions. The first dimension is daily communication, which refers to activities routinely done all day utilizing media information and communication to attract sympathy, interest, and attention to reach all society in the nation. The main target is to deliver messages and information to the foreign public. This dimension utilizes daily media like audio, visual, or audiovisual. Meanwhile, the second dimension is strategic communication, a branding effort of a theme through daily events and activities to deliver core messages and influence the opinions of targets. Lastly, the third dimension is long-term relationship development, usually realized through collaboration, training, seminar, scholarship, student exchange, or conferences (Nye 2004).

Based on the definition of public diplomacy that has been laid out above, it can be understood that Indonesia has run several attempts on public diplomacy toward the global public to promote its modest fashion industry. The hybrid fashion show at Wisma Indonesia, Ankara, Turkey, titled "Introducing Indonesia: A Hybrid Fashion Event" on April 7 and April 8, 2021, is one of the examples. The term hybrid fashion show means that the event was held offline and online to adapt to the pandemic when there was a limitation in the invitation to follow the government's strict health protocols. The hybrid strategy was chosen because Indonesia strived to obey the health protocol but still aspired to make the event to be publicly watched (Pradana 2021). YouTube and Zoom were then selected to be the online platform to live-stream the event to reach more audiences. The fashion show had seven of Indonesia's modest fashion local brands. Those are Elzatta, one of the modest fashion brand pioneers; Wearing Klamby, the highest modest fashion online sale engagement on social media; Jawhara Syari, a brand focusing on Sharia style; Tethuna, a unique fashion with Sulaman Karawo endorsed by Bank Indonesia Gorontalo; Medina Zein, a modest urban brand from entrepreneur Medina Zein; Restu Pratiwi, modest brand for formal style; and Hwan Eco Ethnic, an ethnic scarf brand.

The hybrid fashion show in Ankara is an obvious form of Indonesia's public diplomacy toward Turkey's public. In fact, the target has broadened to include not only Turkey's public since the event was held online and accessible to the public around the world. The fashion show in Turkev introduces Indonesia's modest fashion to the foreign public with the result that Indonesia's modest fashion is widely known and boosts Indonesia's modest brand to participate in Turkey's and Europe's markets (Istanbul 2021). Furthermore, the public diplomacy through the fashion show also targets Turkey's government since the event invited Turkey's first lady as an honored guest. Emine Erdogan eventually attended the event along with Turkey's Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, Minister of Industry and Technology, textile owner, fashion chain owner, blogger, and fashion experts. Indonesia's fashion show was the first offline event held in Ankara during the pandemic (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2021). It means Indonesia was not only putting efforts into building its international image and creating public opinions regarding its modest fashion industry but also building a good relationship with Turkey's government. Besides, the first lady's attendance also further strengthened Indonesia's efforts to shape Turkey's public opinions regarding Indonesia's position as a developer of modest fashion.

Based on the concept of public diplomacy explained by Nye (2004), it can be said that Indonesia's modest fashion public diplomacy in Turkey has then included in the first and second dimensions of public diplomacy. The first dimension, which is daily communication, could be seen through the activities of Indonesia's embassy in Turkey on its social media, such as Instagram (@ INDONESIAINANKARA), Twitter (@IndonesiaAnkara), Facebook and YouTube (Indonesia in Ankara), and the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (www.kemenlu.go.id/ankara). In addition, each time

the hybrid fashion show events were held, Indonesia's government broadcasted the event through the embassy's YouTube channel and the brands' website, for example, at markamarie.com/ introducingindonesia. Previously, the government also updated information about the event through social media accounts. The information shared covers the seven of Indonesia's modest fashion brands that participated, the event manager info, Indonesia's sponsorship, community, and the videos and photos of the event. Therefore, Indonesia's modest fashion public diplomacy in Turkey has also been included in the strategic communication dimension because Indonesia attempted to build an image or self-branding through a modest fashion show held online. Indonesia attempts to do branding, so Indonesia is not only known for its pam but also modest fashion. Even though the protocol is strict, the first fashion show held during the pandemic ended successfully. Emine Erdogan, the first lady of the host country, attended the event. She seemed interested and enthusiastic about Indonesia's modest fashion brands by showing her gratitude towards the brands.

Indonesia's public diplomacy, however, has not vet reached the third dimension of public diplomacy that is conceptualized by Nye (2004), which is the long-term relationship development. For example, through the conduct of a hybrid fashion show in Ankara, there has been no collaboration between the government of Indonesia and the government of Turkey in a modest fashion yet, but it does not mean that collaboration may not happen in the future. Nevertheless, collaboration occurred between the private sectors of the two countries. After the fashion show, Markamarie and the Indonesian brands that participated in the event, along with the designers, met several of Turkey's apparel companies. Additionally, a business meeting between private equity companies also discussed a plan to build a warehouse and sales platform (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia 2021). It is the first step to broadening relations between Indonesia and Turkey in the field of modest fashion.

Indonesia's Interest in Modest Fashion

Diplomacy is an instrument for a nation to reach its national interest in international relations. This use of diplomacy is also apparent in Indonesia's public diplomacy on modest fashion in Turkey. Sharp (2005) describes public diplomacy as a direct connection to people or a country to advance its interest and values (Sharp 2005). Based on those definitions, it is understood that the goal of public diplomacy is to fulfill particular interests. On the other hand. Nuechterlein (1976) defines national interest as a need and desire felt by a nation with other nations consisting of an external environment (Nuechterlein 1976). In other explanation, Liu (2014) defines a nation's interest as a basic perception of a nation's interest composition, its interest, objective, values, and how it proved those values. Meanwhile, Dyke (1957) explained a nation's interest as value, desire, and interest that must be protected or reached by a nation to each other (Dyke 1957). Those definitions infer that national interest is an objective, goal, demand, and interest attempted by a nation to reach, protect, and defend its connection to other countries.

Indonesia's public diplomacy effort through modest fashion in Turkey links to its eagerness to be the center of the world fashion modest. Indonesia's modest fashion characteristics that raise culture and ethnic fabric become its strength and uniqueness when introduced to the international public. In addition, the growth of young designers across the country has brought something fresh and new to Indonesia's modest fashion. As a result, Indonesia has progressively grown into modest fashion specific in design innovation and its program. According to the State of the Global Islamic Economy Report (DinarStandard 2020), Turkey is the second best after UEA for modest fashion. In 2018, Turkey also ranked third as the fifth largest exporting country of modest fashion amongst the OIC countries. Turkey's modest fashion export value reaches 2.3 billion US dollars annually (DinarStandard 2019/2020). The rank makes Turkey a productive modest fashion producer and growth rapidly. Turkey has also ranked first in modest fashion spending with 29 billion US dollars per year (DinarStandard 2019/2020). Moreover, Turkey directly borders Europe causing the assimilation between Europe and Asia.

The development of domestic modest fashion and the significance of Turkey's position in the global modest fashion industry eventually became an appeal for Indonesia to introduce its modest

fashion internationally. That effort is not without a result, the collaboration that does not occur now but in the future. Indonesia wishes to collab with Turkey to open a showroom for several modest fashion brands in Turkey, which shows and introduces a ready-to-wear concept brand. Indonesia also offers various styles like east meet west. In that opportunity, Indonesia's modest fashion brands are a pioneer, digital winner, suar'i leading fashion, ethnic modern, urban look, edgy look, and motive scarf (Wulandari 2021). Furthermore, the progress of collaboration between Turkey and Indonesia's modest fashion will create a community in Turkey. Indonesia's modest fashion brands will work together with Indonesia's ministry to open a showroom in a strategic place where anyone can see. Hence, the collaboration will correctly deliver the distribution of Indonesia's modest fashion in Turkey. The collaboration is viable because Indonesia and Turkey have the same Muslim majority, making the two countries attach to a similar culture. Additionally, it is necessary to collaborate to survive the pandemic. Modest fashion brand requires activities to stand in the market. This collaboration and activity lead to open a modest fashion business between Indonesia and Turkey, particularly around the world (Aslan 2021).

On the other hand, Indonesia's interest is also related to economic interest. Economic interest is an interest to gain profit as the market broadens and increases export. The main objective of holding a hybrid fashion show in Ankara is to enter Turkey's modest fashion market. Turkey is the second-biggest modest fashion consumer, its expense beyond Indonesia (DinarStandard 2020). For sure, the modest fashion market in Turkey becomes a chance for Indonesia to increase its profit. Fashion itself is one of the biggest foreign exchanges in Indonesia's creative economy. Based on BPS data in 2016, the fashion sector has donated foreign exchange up to 166T rupiahs or 56% of the total export of creative products (Hariyanti 2018). In 2018, Indonesia's textile and textile products industry became the nation's foreign exchange earner with an export value of 13.22 billion USD, an increase of 5.55% compared to 2017. The growth rate of the textile industry throughout 2018 was recorded at 8.73% or was able to exceed the national economic growth of 5.17% (Indonesia 2019). Meanwhile, another interest relates to culture. Indonesia has an interest in introducing Indonesia's

culture through its modest fashion since Indonesia's modest fashion is often mixed with ethnic and cultural elements. Hence, through the conduct of public diplomacy using modest fashion, Indonesia expected Turkey's public to know Indonesia better. The modest fashion public diplomacy may also lead to creating a good connection between the public, government, and businesses in both countries.

Conclusions

This study shows three dimensions of Indonesia's public diplomacy effort through modest fashion in Turkey. This accomplishment happens because of teamwork between Indonesia's government, Turkey's government, local communities, and the international public. Daily communication through social media, websites, and YouTube allows everyone, whenever at any time to see the creation of Indonesia's modest fashion brand in Turkey. Besides, strategic communication in the middle of the pandemic, like the Hybrid Fashion Show on April 22 in Turkey, shows Indonesia successfully introduced its modest fashion to the international public. The hybrid fashion show attempts to adjust Indonesia's public diplomacy during a pandemic. In this case, a limitation caused by a pandemic is faced through digital media that can bring Indonesia's public diplomacy to its maximum. This matter forms a long-term relationship between Indonesia and Turkey in the modest fashion industry. It allows Indonesia to strategically open a showroom for Indonesia's modest fashion brands so Turkey's society can easily find the creation of Indonesia's modest fashion brand. Public diplomacy of modest fashion applies to certain interests and objectives. Its objective is to introduce a better image of Indonesia as the center of modest fashion worldwide. Meanwhile, Indonesia's interest in this matter is economic interest to broaden Indonesia's modest fashion market in Turkey and tighten the relationship between the countries, especially in the modest fashion industry. Besides, Indonesia wishes for a sustained relationship with Turkey in the modest fashion industry so Indonesia can introduce its modest fashion to Turkey's society because Turkey is the secondbest of modest fashion developer in the world.

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