

AN ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN INSTAGRAM CAPTIONS ON THE @MISSHIJABSUMATERAUTARA ACCOUNT

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Abstract : This study aims to analyze the textual and visual message design in Instagram social media posts as a form of identity representation and public communication strategy. The research focuses on the @misshijabsumaterautaraa account, which consistently produces content themed around Muslim women, digital da'wah, and Islamic social values. Using a qualitative approach with content analysis methods, data were collected through documentation of posts and participatory observation conducted from January to April 2025. The findings reveal that the message design on this account integrates visual symbols, religious narratives, and participatory strategies to construct the image of the ideal Muslim woman: devout, modern, and communicative. Caption texts and visual elements work synergistically to build identity narratives, convey values, and encourage audience engagement within an online community. These findings affirm that social media functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a symbolic space rich in ideological meaning and social representation. This study contributes to the development of digital visual communication studies, particularly in the context of da'wah and identity formation in the era of new media.

Keywords: Communication Strategy, Instagram, Miss Hijab, North Sumatra

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Introduction

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the landscape of global communication. Social media, as a primary product of this digital revolution, has transformed the way individuals and groups convey messages, shape public opinion, and express identity. Instagram, as a visual-based social media platform, offers a unique space for users to communicate not only through images but also through text and other visual symbols. This combination of elements creates what is referred to as visual message design a form of multimodal communication with strong potential in shaping perception and social interaction.

Amid the growing reliance of society on social media as a source of information and a means of self-expression, it is crucial to understand how messages are constructed both visually and textually. In this context, Instagram functions not merely as a photo-sharing platform, but as a medium of social representation laden with cultural meanings, values, and ideologies. This renders Instagram a highly relevant subject for academic inquiry, particularly in the fields of communication and media studies (Sari, 2020).

One notable phenomenon worth exploring is how Instagram accounts that carry specific identities such as Islamic identity, femininity, or social activism strategically design their visual messages to construct a particular public image. The account @misshijabsumaterautaraa, for example, presents the representation of Muslim women in various social and cultural contexts. The message design featured in this account's posts not only conveys information, but also constructs narratives, invites interaction, and fosters a digital community grounded in certain values.

This study emerges from the need to explore in greater depth how text and visuals on social media are strategically used to construct meaning. While numerous studies have examined social media from the perspective of mass communication, research on message design within the context of visual communication and digital identity remains relatively limited, especially those employing qualitative approaches. Therefore, this study aims to address that gap by analyzing the design of textual and visual messages on Instagram as a form of contemporary communication practice.

The main research question addressed in this study is: how are textual and visual message designs on Instagram formed and used to communicate specific values? The objective of this research is to conduct an in-depth analysis of how communication design strategies are used to represent identity and values on social media, particularly through a qualitative approach to visual and textual content on the Instagram account @misshijabsumaterautaraa.

The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of theories and methodologies in the field of digital visual communication studies. Additionally, this research can serve as a practical reference for media practitioners, visual communication designers, and digital content managers in designing effective and meaningful messages for social media platforms.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach using a visual text analysis design. The qualitative method is chosen for its capacity to explore the underlying meanings embedded in textual and visual messages in a deep and contextualized manner. The research focuses on analyzing social media content that includes images, captions, and other communicative symbols to understand the communication strategies used in

constructing identity and conveying particular values. The primary object of analysis is the official Instagram account @misshijabsumaterautaraa, which consistently publishes content centered on Muslim women and Islamic values through visual and textual representations. The research examines posts published between January and April 2025 to ensure that the data reflect recent and representative communication patterns.

The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, selecting posts that meet specific criteria such as relevance to themes of visual communication and Muslimah identity, high levels of audience engagement, and the presence of both text and visual components that are considered representative. This approach allows for the selection of significant and meaningful content, providing a foundation for a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Data were collected through documentation and participant observation. Documentation involved gathering Instagram posts in the form of screenshots, captions, hashtags, and visual design elements, while participant observation was conducted by actively following the account throughout the research period to gain insight into communication context, audience engagement, and narrative development.

Data analysis was carried out using qualitative content analysis. This process included coding of both textual and visual elements based on thematic categories such as identity, religiosity, women's roles, and cultural symbols. These codes were then organized into broader categories that represent strategic patterns in message design. The final step involved interpreting the relationship between text and visuals through the lens of visual communication and message design theory. To enhance the validity of the findings, triangulation was applied by comparing the analysis results with relevant theoretical frameworks and contextual insights derived from observation. The reliability of the interpretation was further ensured through consistency checks on the coding process.

Results and Discussion

This study analyzes 12 purposively selected Instagram posts from the account @misshijabsumaterautaraa during the period of January to April 2025. All content was examined using a qualitative content analysis approach, involving stages of coding, categorization, and interpretation of meaning based on the theoretical framework of visual communication and identity representation.

Based on the data collection and analysis, the study found that the message design constructed through the combination of visuals and textual captions in the account's content reveals several dominant patterns. Initial coding of the texts and visuals identified that the message design strategies used in this account can be categorized into four main thematic areas, namely:

Representation of Muslimah Identity

The @misshijabsumaterautaraa account consistently presents Muslim women (Muslimah) wearing syar'i attire, elegant styles, and visual backdrops that reinforce Islamic aesthetic values. In many of the posts, soft color tones and feminine symbols are combined with inspirational captions, such as calls to uphold modesty, strengthen faith, or empower women in society.

Example of a caption quote:

“A woman who guards her aurat is safeguarding her dignity. #EmpoweredMuslimah #HijrahTogether”

Visuals and text work in synergy to construct the narrative that Muslimah identity is not solely reflected in clothing, but also in thoughts, attitudes, and the values upheld. This aligns with Winarno (2017), who states that visual communication on social media can serve as a medium for affirming group identity through symbols and digital narratives.

Da'wah and Spiritual Values

Most of the posts do not merely focus on fashion or self-image, but also embed moral messages and social values, such as empathy for others, Islamic education, and the role of women in da'wah. Captions frequently include verses from the Qur'an, hadiths, or daily spiritual reflections. For example, one post features an image of a woman with a serene expression accompanied by the caption:

“Never grow tired of doing good, for Allah never tires of rewarding kindness.”

These messages illustrate that the account is not merely concerned with constructing an image, but also with conveying deeper values and meanings. This strategy demonstrates how visual communication design can be employed to strengthen the da'wah dimension in digital spaces, aligning with Sardianto's (2020) findings on the integration of value and form in visual communication.

Participatory Strategies and Audience Engagement

From a visual design perspective, the @misshijabsumaterautaraa account consistently utilizes a modern aesthetic cohesive filters, soft typography, and the strategic placement of logos or community symbols. These elements contribute to the creation of a strong brand image in the eyes of its followers. On the textual side, captions are crafted in a communicative style that is both personal and participatory, often concluding with a question or call to action, such as:

“What does hijrah mean to you? Share your thoughts in the comments!”

This approach reflects an understanding of two-way interaction mechanisms on social media and demonstrates the use of message design that is adaptive to the platform's characteristics. This supports Creswell's (2014) assertion that in qualitative research, it is essential to interpret communication within its social context and patterns of user engagement.

The participatory element is evident in the way captions are framed as questions or dialogue invitations, such as:

“What does hijrah mean in your life?” “Tag your hijrah friend who always supports you!”

These interactions foster a sense of intimacy and help build a cohesive virtual community. Furthermore, the consistent use of hashtags like #MuslimahBersatu, #HijrahBareng, and #HijabersSumut reinforces the collective identity of the digital community.

Interpretative Analysis

The three main findings of this study collectively reveal that the Instagram account @misshijabsumaterautaraa employs a highly structured and meaning-conscious communication strategy, in which visual design and textual content function

not merely as aesthetic complements but as representational and symbolic tools. This integration serves a dual purpose: first, as a medium for constructing a distinctive socio-religious identity for urban Muslim women; and second, as a vehicle for conveying value-laden messages packaged through visual narratives that are widely accessible to digital audiences. More than just disseminating information, the account actively reconstructs a desired social reality through visual storytelling a strategic use of images and captions that carry particular ideological intents.

The representations displayed such as veiled women with confident expressions, Islamic quotes rendered in elegant typography, and culturally symbolic visuals like flowers, twilight skies, or Arabic calligraphy are far from neutral. Each element is carefully curated to shape public perceptions of the ideal Muslim woman: devout, gentle, intelligent, and graceful. This aligns with the concept of *performative representation* in communication studies, where identity is not only displayed but actively constructed through symbolic acts and representational practices within the digital public sphere.

Social media platforms like Instagram, in this context, function not merely as technical tools but as dynamic symbolic spaces (Azzahra, 2024). These spaces facilitate the negotiation of religious values, popular culture, and personal branding strategies. Account administrators act as curators of identity and meaning, crafting content that appeals emotionally, aesthetically, and spiritually.

This process illustrates that message design in social media is inherently ideological, embedded with specific representational agendas that can influence the collective identity construction of its followers. Furthermore, the communication pattern built by the account is participatory and inclusive key characteristics of the social media ecosystem. Dialogic captions, the use of community hashtags such as #HijrahBersama and #MuslimahBerdaya, and calls to discussion all indicate an approach that positions the audience not merely as passive recipients but as active members of a digital community contributing to the discourse on contemporary Muslim womanhood.

In this light, visual communication serves not only as a medium for conveying meaning but also as a means of creating and reinforcing social connectedness through symbolic interaction. Thus, this study affirms that visual communication design on social media constitutes a complex cultural practice. It involves aesthetic dimensions, values, interaction, and ideology that intertwine in constructing broader social meanings. The content produced and consumed does not merely reflect reality but actively constructs a new social reality a visual world that unites belief, aspiration, and solidarity within the Muslimah community through creative and communicative digital formats.

Conclusion

Based on the overall analysis, it can be concluded that the Instagram account @misshijabsumateraautaraa employs an integrated message design strategy that combines text and visual elements to achieve complex communication goals: reinforcing identity, conveying values, and shaping social interaction. The messages conveyed are not only religious in nature but also aesthetic, inspirational, and communicative. This account successfully constructs a digital narrative that resonates with the spiritual and emotional needs of its audience, particularly young Muslim women. The visual and textual message designs are not randomly constructed, but are

based on a clear understanding of social media characteristics as spaces for expression, identity, and interaction. Therefore, this study demonstrates that social media platforms like Instagram serve not only as tools for communication, but also as symbolic spaces rich in meaning, strategy, and ideology.

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