



WOMEN'S ETHNOBEAUTY: EXPLORING SOCIO-CULTURAL PRACTICES IN WOMEN'S BODY CARE

Tutung Nurdiyana ¹
Yusuf Hidayat ²

ABSTRACT

Objective: This research explores the ethno beauty of Banjar women, particularly delving into their perceptions of beauty within the context of Banjar culture, and how these perceptions influence their practices of body care.

Theoretical Framework: Study of ethno beauty among Banjar women as part of ethno science is an exploration of Banjar women's knowledge about beauty concepts and beauty care, which includes various categories in beauty care, Banjar women's classification systems in beauty care, and various factors that shape their knowledge about beauty such as beliefs, myths, beauty care behaviors, and the dynamics accompanying their knowledge about beauty.

Method: The study adopts qualitative research methods with a feminist ethnographic approach. Informants for this study were selected purposively, focusing on individuals knowledgeable about beauty, history, and culture within the Banjar community.

Results and Discussion: The findings of the research reveal that Banjar women's perspectives on beauty can be categorized into two main themes: physical or external beauty, and inner beauty. Physical beauty pertains to the outward appearance of women, emphasizing attributes such as cleanliness, fragrance, and radiance of the skin. In the Banjar language, beauty (*bungas*) is synonymous with a woman possessing immaculate, fragrant, and luminous skin. Hence, maintaining cleanliness and fragrance to achieve a radiant and fresh appearance is the primary objective of their body care practices. To attain physical beauty, Banjar women engage in various beauty treatments aligned with their beauty ideals. These treatments aim to achieve clean, smooth, and radiant skin.

Research Implications: From the presentation of the research results above, several conclusions can be drawn as follows: First, Banjar women's views on beauty are generally divided into two meanings: physical or outer beauty and inner beauty. The first meaning, physical or outer beauty, refers to a woman's beauty directed towards her physical form. Beauty (known as "bungas" in Banjar language) for Banjar women is interpreted as having clean, fragrant, and radiant skin. Cleanliness and fragrance of the body, making the body appear radiant and glowing, are their main goals in performing body beauty care to look beautiful and fresh. Second, to achieve physical (outer) beauty, Banjar women engage in beauty care with various forms of beauty treatments according to their conception of beauty, which is to obtain clean, smooth, and radiant skin. The practices performed by Banjar women are related to their beliefs or faith.

Originality/Value: As part of ethno science, the study of ethno beauty, which combines the words "ethno" and "beauty," literally means the beauty of a particular society or ethnic group. Thus, ethno beauty research can be defined as an effort to describe a society's knowledge system regarding beauty and beauty care practices, including myths, beliefs, culture, and beauty care practices along with their dynamics. As an ethno beauty study of the Banjar community, this research provides a comprehensive depiction of the Banjar society's knowledge of beauty and body beauty care practices. Generally, this ethno beauty study delves deeply into the phenomenon of Banjar women's beauty, covering several aspects including beauty concepts, values embedded in beauty care, myths and beliefs associated with beauty care practices, various forms of beauty care along with their benefits for the body such as balulur, batimung, bapupur, and other beauty treatments commonly practiced by Banjar women.

Keywords: Ethno beauty, Women, Banjar Community, Socio-Cultural.

¹ Lambung Mangkurat University, Performing Arts Education, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia.

E-mail: tutung.nurdiyana@ulm.ac.id Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9969-3190>

² Lambung Mangkurat University, Sociology Education, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia.

E-mail: yusuf.hidayat@ulm.ac.id Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5020-2258>



ETNOBELEZA FEMININA: EXPLORANDO PRÁTICAS SÓCIO-CULTURAIS NO CUIDADO COM O CORPO DAS MULHERES

RESUMO

Objetivo: Esta pesquisa explora a etnobeauty das mulheres Banjar, investigando particularmente suas percepções de beleza no contexto da cultura Banjar, e como essas percepções influenciam suas práticas de cuidado corporal.

Referencial Teórico: O estudo da etnobeauty entre as mulheres Banjar como parte da etnociência é uma exploração do conhecimento das mulheres Banjar sobre conceitos de beleza e cuidados de beleza, que inclui várias categorias em cuidados de beleza, sistemas de classificação de mulheres Banjar em cuidados de beleza e vários fatores que moldam seu conhecimento sobre beleza, como crenças, mitos, comportamentos de cuidados de beleza e a dinâmica que acompanha seu conhecimento sobre beleza.

Método: O estudo adota métodos de pesquisa qualitativa com abordagem etnográfica feminista. Os informantes para este estudo foram selecionados propositalmente, concentrando-se em indivíduos com conhecimento sobre beleza, história e cultura na comunidade Banjar.

Resultados e discussão: Os resultados da pesquisa revelam que as perspectivas das mulheres Banjar sobre a beleza podem ser categorizadas em dois temas principais: beleza física ou externa e beleza interior. A beleza física refere-se à aparência externa das mulheres, enfatizando atributos como limpeza, fragrância e brilho da pele. Na língua Banjar, beleza (bungas) é sinônimo de mulher com pele imaculada, perfumada e luminosa. Assim, manter a limpeza e a fragrância para alcançar uma aparência radiante e fresca é o objetivo principal das suas práticas de cuidado corporal. Para alcançar a beleza física, as mulheres Banjar realizam diversos tratamentos de beleza alinhados com seus ideais de beleza. Esses tratamentos visam obter uma pele limpa, lisa e radiante.

Implicações da pesquisa: A partir da apresentação dos resultados da pesquisa acima, várias conclusões podem ser tiradas como segue: Primeiro, as opiniões das mulheres Banjar sobre a beleza são geralmente divididas em dois significados: beleza física ou exterior e beleza interior. O primeiro significado, beleza física ou exterior, refere-se à beleza da mulher voltada para sua forma física. A beleza (conhecida como "bungas" na língua Banjar) para as mulheres Banjar é interpretada como ter uma pele limpa, perfumada e radiante. A limpeza e a fragrância do corpo, fazendo com que o corpo pareça radiante e brilhante, são os seus principais objetivos na realização de cuidados de beleza corporal para ficar bonito e fresco. Em segundo lugar, para alcançar a beleza física (externa), as mulheres Banjar envolvem-se em cuidados de beleza com diversas formas de tratamentos de beleza de acordo com a sua concepção de beleza, que é obter uma pele limpa, suave e radiante. As práticas realizadas pelas mulheres Banjar estão relacionadas às suas crenças ou fé.

Originalidade/Valor: Como parte da etnociência, o estudo da etnobeauty, que combina as palavras "etno" e "beleza", significa literalmente a beleza de uma determinada sociedade ou grupo étnico. Assim, a pesquisa em etnobeauty pode ser definida como um esforço para descrever o sistema de conhecimento de uma sociedade em relação à beleza e às práticas de cuidados de beleza, incluindo mitos, crenças, cultura e práticas de cuidados de beleza, juntamente com a sua dinâmica. Como um estudo de etnobeauty da comunidade Banjar, esta pesquisa fornece uma descrição abrangente do conhecimento da sociedade Banjar sobre beleza e práticas de cuidados com a beleza corporal. Geralmente, este estudo de etnobeauty investiga profundamente o fenômeno da beleza das mulheres Banjar, cobrindo vários aspectos, incluindo conceitos de beleza, valores incorporados nos cuidados de beleza, mitos e crenças associados às práticas de cuidados de beleza, várias formas de cuidados de beleza, juntamente com seus benefícios para o corpo, como como balulur, batimung, bapupur e outros tratamentos de beleza comumente praticados por mulheres Banjar.

Palavras-chave: Etnobeauty, Mulheres, Comunidade Banjar, Sociocultural.

ETNOBELLEZA DE LAS MUJERES: EXPLORANDO LAS PRÁCTICAS SOCIOCULTURALES EN EL CUIDADO DEL CORPORAL DE LAS MUJERES

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Esta investigación explora la etnobelleza de las mujeres Banjar, profundizando particularmente en sus percepciones de belleza dentro del contexto de la cultura Banjar, y cómo estas percepciones influyen en sus prácticas de cuidado corporal.



Marco teórico: el estudio de la etnobelleza entre las mujeres de Banjar como parte de la etnociencia es una exploración del conocimiento de las mujeres de Banjar sobre los conceptos de belleza y el cuidado de la belleza, que incluye varias categorías en el cuidado de la belleza, los sistemas de clasificación de las mujeres de Banjar en el cuidado de la belleza y varios factores que dan forma a su conocimiento. sobre la belleza, como creencias, mitos, conductas de cuidado de la belleza y las dinámicas que acompañan su conocimiento sobre la belleza.

Método: El estudio adopta métodos de investigación cualitativos con un enfoque etnográfico feminista. Los informantes para este estudio fueron seleccionados intencionalmente, centrándose en personas conocedoras de la belleza, la historia y la cultura dentro de la comunidad Banjar.

Resultados y discusión: Los hallazgos de la investigación revelan que las perspectivas de las mujeres de Banjar sobre la belleza se pueden clasificar en dos temas principales: belleza física o externa y belleza interior. La belleza física se refiere a la apariencia exterior de la mujer, enfatizando atributos como la limpieza, la fragancia y la luminosidad de la piel. En el idioma banjar, belleza (bungas) es sinónimo de una mujer que posee una piel imaculada, fragante y luminosa. De ahí que mantener la limpieza y la fragancia para lograr una apariencia radiante y fresca sea el objetivo principal de sus prácticas de cuidado corporal. Para lograr la belleza física, las mujeres de Banjar se someten a diversos tratamientos de belleza alineados con sus ideales de belleza. Estos tratamientos tienen como objetivo conseguir una piel limpia, suave y radiante.

Implicaciones de la investigación: De la presentación de los resultados de la investigación anterior, se pueden extraer varias conclusiones: Primero, las opiniones de las mujeres de Banjar sobre la belleza generalmente se dividen en dos significados: belleza física o exterior y belleza interior. El primer significado, belleza física o exterior, se refiere a la belleza de la mujer dirigida hacia su forma física. La belleza (conocida como "bungas" en el idioma banjar) para las mujeres de Banjar se interpreta como tener una piel limpia, fragante y radiante. La limpieza y la fragancia del cuerpo, haciendo que el cuerpo luzca radiante y resplandeciente, son sus principales objetivos al realizar cuidados de belleza corporal para lucir bella y fresca. En segundo lugar, para lograr la belleza física (exterior), las mujeres de Banjar se dedican al cuidado de la belleza con diversas formas de tratamientos de belleza de acuerdo con su concepción de la belleza, que es obtener una piel limpia, suave y radiante. Las prácticas realizadas por las mujeres Banjar están relacionadas con sus creencias o fe.

Originalidad/Valor: Como parte de la etnociencia, el estudio de la etnobelleza, que combina las palabras "etno" y "belleza", significa literalmente la belleza de una sociedad o grupo étnico en particular. Por lo tanto, la investigación sobre etnobelleza puede definirse como un esfuerzo por describir el sistema de conocimiento de una sociedad sobre la belleza y las prácticas de cuidado de la belleza, incluidos mitos, creencias, cultura y prácticas de cuidado de la belleza junto con su dinámica. Como estudio de etnobelleza de la comunidad Banjar, esta investigación proporciona una descripción completa del conocimiento de la sociedad Banjar sobre la belleza y las prácticas de cuidado de la belleza corporal. En general, este estudio de etnobelleza profundiza en el fenómeno de la belleza de las mujeres de Banjar, abarcando varios aspectos que incluyen conceptos de belleza, valores integrados en el cuidado de la belleza, mitos y creencias asociados con las prácticas del cuidado de la belleza, diversas formas de cuidado de la belleza junto con sus beneficios para el cuerpo, como como balulur, batimung, bapupur y otros tratamientos de belleza comúnmente practicados por las mujeres Banjar.

Palabras clave: Etnobelleza, Mujeres, Comunidad Banjar, Sociocultural.

RGSA adota a Licença de Atribuição CC BY do Creative Commons (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



1 INTRODUCTION

This research examines the customary practices of Banjar women regarding body beauty treatments. They engage in regular beauty routines tailored to their specific needs, thus integrating these treatments into their daily lives as habitual practices. The custom of nurturing



physical beauty is a widespread phenomenon among women worldwide, transcending ethnic boundaries. What distinguishes Banjar women's approach to body beauty treatments is their adherence to traditional methods. This entails the utilization of natural ingredients without the incorporation of chemical additives and the avoidance of modern equipment despite the prevalence of the contemporary beauty industry.

The Banjar community possesses local knowledge in traditional body beauty care practices specific to Banjar, known as “timbang,” or more commonly referred to as “batimbang.” In Banjarmasin, the capital city of South Kalimantan, the place for traditional Banjar beauty care is called the “rumah timbang,” or timbang house. These timbang houses began to emerge in the early 1990s, as recounted by a 55-year-old informant named Robiah. Robiah was the first to introduce the concept of timbang houses in Banjarmasin. To date, she oversees 14 timbang houses scattered across Banjarmasin and Banjarbaru, and even in Central Kalimantan under the name ‘Hafabi.’ The idea to establish timbang houses originated from the observance of Banjar women's meticulous attention to body beauty care through regular routines.

According to Mrs. Robiah's account, Banjar women of that time would personally create and concoct their own beauty care ingredients based on their knowledge. She herself possessed expertise in crafting and concocting typical Banjar beauty care materials. Mrs. Robiah acquired this skill from her mother and grandmother, who were also vendors of self-made beauty care products. Her grandmother, in turn, learned the art of crafting beauty care materials from her own maternal grandmother. Essentially, the behavior of Banjar women in this regard can be seen as a practice of preserving traditions passed down from ancestors as a cultural heritage. The Banjar community retains local knowledge, which is upheld by Banjar women in the realm of body beauty care.

Banjar women, as recounted by Mrs. Robiah, used to create and concoct their own body beauty care ingredients based on their knowledge at that time, and she herself possessed expertise in crafting and concocting typical Banjar beauty care materials. Mrs. Robiah acquired this skill from her mother and grandmother, who were also vendors of self-made body beauty care products. Her grandmother, in turn, learned the art of crafting beauty care materials from her own maternal grandmother. Essentially, the behavior of Banjar women in this regard can be seen as an activity of preserving traditions from ancestors as a cultural heritage. The Banjar community retains local knowledge, which is still upheld by Banjar women in terms of body beauty care.

The consistency and loyalty of Banjar women in practicing traditional Banjar beauty care amidst the influx of various modern beauty treatments indicate that these traditional



practices hold a special place in the hearts of Banjar women. Despite the availability of numerous modern beauty treatments, they continue to adhere to the traditional Banjar beauty care practices. The behavior of Banjar women in preserving these beauty care traditions, thereby ensuring the continuity of traditional Banjar beauty care within the community, is intriguing and warrants further investigation to understand the motives behind Banjar women's usage and preservation of these local beauty care practices.

In the city of Banjarmasin, there are approximately 73 beauty care establishments, comprising 29 *timbang* houses (providing traditional body beauty care services), 19 beauty salons (offering a blend of traditional and modern beauty care services), and 25 beauty clinics (providing modern beauty treatments such as medical procedures for skin and beauty care). The ingredients used for body beauty care treatments in *timbang* houses typically consist of processed materials produced within each establishment. They create and concoct beauty care ingredients from natural materials, with rice being the main ingredient, supplemented by flowers, leaves, fruits, roots, tree bark, and spices sourced from the natural richness of South Kalimantan.

Body beauty care for women in Banjarmasin is not only carried out at specialized establishments offering beauty care services but can also be done at home by calling upon individuals who work as body beauty care practitioners. The profession of those providing traditional Banjar body beauty care services is known as “tukang lulur.” Banjar women, in general, engage in body beauty care. Women in Banjarmasin from various age groups, including teenagers, housewives, and even those in the elderly age group of 56-65 years, undergo body beauty care treatments. Banjar women who have daughters begin introducing body beauty care to them at the age of 12 or when they start menstruating on average. Mothers during their daughters' teenage years start teaching them how to care for their bodies and beauty based on their own experiences.

Several typical Banjar beauty care treatments include lulur, *timbang*, pupur (powder), and ratus (known in Banjar language as balulur, batimbang, bapupur, and baratus). While there are various types of body beauty care treatments for specific body parts, the most distinctive one is *timbang*, hence the beauty establishments in Banjarmasin are called ‘timbang houses.’ The Banjar community has its own concept of beauty according to their culture. The concept of beauty in their society is constructed based on the conditions of the environments they inhabit and various beliefs and myths they hold in social life. As an ethnic group, the Banjar community has its own concept of beauty. According to the Banjar language dictionary, the term for beauty used by Banjar people is ‘bungas’. (Hapip, 2008: 20). However, the term ‘bungas’ is not exclusively reserved for women; it is also used to describe handsome and attractive men. The



concept of beauty among Banjar women leans towards cleanliness and radiance of the skin, as expressed by Jumiah (45 years old, a homemaker), who defines beauty as being healthy, clean, and fragrant, while according to Hj. Dharma (55 years old, a bridal makeup artist), beauty entails glowing skin, a clean face, and no body odor. Based on the accounts of these Banjar women, beauty in Banjar society is not about having the glamorous looks of a movie star with a slim figure, but rather about having clean skin and a pleasant body scent. This is as expressed in one article regarding the description of Banjar girls and women as “*bungas-bungas*.” “*Bungas*” is not merely a term; in reality, Banjar women are renowned for their natural beauty and the radiant, olive-yellow complexion of their skin (Solikha, 2017). The Banjar women's concept of beauty as being clean and radiant is certainly based on several beliefs that shape their conception of beauty, making the phenomenon of beauty and beauty care a complex one.

This is certainly different from the mainstream notion of beauty in Indonesia, which equates beauty with fairness. In the early 20th century, during Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, the image of Caucasian fairness was used to depict beauty in advertisements published in women's magazines. When Japan took control as the new colonial power in Indonesia from 1942 to 1945, they promoted a new ideal of Asian beauty, but fairness remained the preferred skin color. In post-colonial Indonesia, especially during the presidency of the pro-American leader, Soeharto, from the late 1960s onwards, American pop culture became one of the strongest influences through which the ideal of fair Indonesian beauty was articulated and negotiated (Saraswati, 2013, p. 1). Currently, Indonesia is experiencing a K-Pop (Korean Pop) culture phenomenon, where fairness still remains an influential factor in shaping the ideal skin color in the country.

The concept of beauty in Indonesian society is largely influenced by the beauty industry, which often looks to the West and constructs the notion that beauty is synonymous with fairness, along with certain body ideals such as a sharp nose and slim figure. These media-driven beauty standards have led many women worldwide, including in Indonesia, to pursue them through various beauty treatments. For instance, to achieve fair skin, many women undergo treatments at salons or beauty clinics, and some even opt for whitening injections for quicker results.

The image of fair beauty in Indonesia is driven by capitalist owners of beauty care products. According to Saraswati, since colonial times, publications from the colonial era have undoubtedly provided ample evidence of the representation of Caucasian women as the beauty ideal in dominant beauty discourse; and beauty products claiming to whiten the skin have also been marketed (Saraswati, 2013, p. 80). As seen in advertisements from that era (1994), one example being Hazeline Snow, which claimed that its product could make facial skin white. At



that time, the ad featured two actors named Susan Bachtiar and Marcellino, with the theme “As White as Jasmine.” Currently, products licensed in London and manufactured in Malaysia are still available in Indonesia. Over time, the packaging may have changed, but they still claim to whiten facial skin.

The practice of beauty care among Banjar women, as outlined above, has various unique aspects. Beauty care practices are carried out routinely by all layers of Banjar women. Their concept of beauty does not adhere to the Western modern beauty conventions that have also influenced the general perception of beauty in Indonesia. Therefore, the study of beauty and beauty care practices among Banjar women is intriguing. Such studies aim to comprehend various aspects of beauty and beauty care among Banjar women, encompassing concepts of beauty, beliefs, myths, and historical aspects related to beauty care. Hence, discussions on beauty and beauty care constitute an examination of a set of Banjar societal knowledge within the framework of ethnobeauty.

“Ethnobeauty” is a term that is not yet widely recognized in academic circles. It can be referred to as a concept related to “ethnoscience,” which originates from the Greek word “ethnos,” meaning “nation,” and the Latin word “scientia,” which means “knowledge.” (Werner & J.Fenton, 1970, p. 537). Therefore, ethnoscience can be defined as a “system of knowledge and cognition typical of a given culture.” (Sturtevant, 1964). Considering the vast and extensive knowledge of a society or ethnic group, which cannot be fully grasped by just one anthropologist, anthropologists typically focus on studying only one field. For example, the knowledge of a particular ethnic group about plants, animals, music, and so on. From this arises terms such as ethnobotany, ethnozoology, ethnomusicology, ethnoecology, and so forth (Ahimsa, 2011, p. 13).

As part of ethnoscience, the study of ethnobeauty, which combines the words “ethno” and “beauty,” literally means the beauty of a particular society or ethnic group. Thus, ethnobeauty research can be defined as an effort to describe a society's knowledge system regarding beauty and beauty care practices, including myths, beliefs, culture, and beauty care practices along with their dynamics. As an ethnobeauty study of the Banjar community, this research provides a comprehensive depiction of the Banjar society's knowledge of beauty and body beauty care practices. Generally, this ethnobeauty study delves deeply into the phenomenon of Banjar women's beauty, covering several aspects including beauty concepts, values embedded in beauty care, myths and beliefs associated with beauty care practices, various forms of beauty care along with their benefits for the body such as balulur, batimung, bapupur, and other beauty treatments commonly practiced by Banjar women. Furthermore, it



explores motivations behind beauty care practices and various dynamics associated with beauty care, such as the dynamics of marital relationships within families, relationships among women in the community, and various cultural aspects related to Banjar women's beauty, such as the tradition of "jujuran".

The practice of beauty care among Banjar women indicates that it holds significant importance in their lives, both within their households and in their social environments. It is not merely about fulfilling their personal satisfaction or appearing beautiful in public; rather, it also signifies that beauty is a means for Banjar women to strengthen their position in society and within their families. Therefore, this study also reveals how women take various actions to make beauty a meaningful aspect of their relationships with other actors, such as men, husbands in family life, and fellow women in their community.

Beauty as a form of capital, where Banjar women utilize it as a tool to enhance their bargaining position with men, is an intriguing phenomenon revealed in the ethnobeauty study of Banjar women. This phenomenon differs from the findings of Wolf (2001), In her study on women and beauty in relation to capitalist societies, Wolf argues that beauty, as an ideal image women are expected to achieve, becomes a means through which men subordinate women. In capitalist societies, women are expected to maintain beauty and adorn themselves according to the desires of the beauty industry and in line with men's perceptions of beauty, thereby indirectly placing women in a subordinate position to men. In Banjar society, beauty within the cultural framework can serve as a tool for Banjar women to enhance their bargaining power with men. Therefore, this study emphasizes the connection between beauty and culture rather than the connection between beauty and capitalism in market economies. The relationship between beauty and the relationship between women and men in Banjar society can be understood by using gender analysis.

This analysis seeks to understand the polarization of Banjar women in their relationship with men, especially their husbands. It also aims to explain this polarization along with the various social mechanisms possessed by women that lead to such relationships, as well as the efforts made by women to negotiate their relationships by utilizing beauty as one of their resources to enhance their bargaining position. This study is based on the phenomenon that Banjar women from various classes and social statuses pay great attention to body beauty, leading them to routinely engage in body beauty treatments at specific intervals. The body beauty treatments performed by Banjar women still utilize natural ingredients, traditional equipment, and methods. The body beauty treatments owned by the Banjar community are a tradition that continues to exist and endure among Banjar women to this day.



Beauty and beauty care among Banjar women constitute a culture that evolves throughout women's lives. As a cultural product, beauty implies that within it lies the fact of the development of Banjar women's culture influenced by the motifs, myths, and beliefs of the Banjar social environment and its dynamics. The formation of the culture of body beauty care among Banjar women occurs dynamically in line with the development of societal thinking. This study also aims to raise awareness among Banjar women constructed by the social and cultural realities that lead Banjar women to continue traditional beauty care practices routinely and to uncover male domination practices through beauty. Additionally, this research seeks to explain how women utilize beauty as a means to strengthen their social position both within the family and in society.

To understand beauty and elucidate the body beauty care of Banjar women as a cultural product of Banjar society along with its dynamics, this study employs ethnobeauty as a framework to deeply investigate the theme. Therefore, the issues arising from this research are: How do Banjar women interpret and understand knowledge about beauty as unique beauty (ethnobeauty) through the social and cultural practices of women's body care?

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research explores the theme of beauty among Banjar women within the framework of ethnobeauty studies. Ethnobeauty is a term that remains relatively unfamiliar in the academic world. Nevertheless, the researcher employs this concept to refer to the study of beauty as a product of specific cultures with distinct characteristics. The concept of ethnobeauty is likened by the author to several terms known in the anthropological field, such as ethno-ecology, ethno-botany, ethno-medicine, and ethno-pharmacology, which depict and elucidate a phenomenon within the cultural framework of a society (Koentjaraningrat, 1984, p. 45).

Ethnobeauty is part of ethnoscience. The term ethnoscience has evolved within the Anthropology tradition, related to the redefinition of culture, where the meanings of old cultures are often interpreted differently. Some anthropologists define culture as patterns of human behavior, while others define it as the entirety of human actions, thoughts, and their outcomes. Still, others use different formulations. If so, then culture as an important concept needs to be redefined because in such an understanding, culture no longer encompasses the results of behavior or the behavior itself. Culture has a narrower meaning here. The concept of culture needs to be redefined where its meaning should be clearer and more specific. Culture can thus be defined as:



“..whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge” (Goodenough, 1964a, p. 36).

Culture, in the end, is: knowledge. Therefore,

“culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior or emotions. It is rather the organization of things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating and otherwise interpreting them as such. The things that people say and do, their social arrangement and events are products or by products of their culture as they apply it to the task of perceiving and dealing with their circumstances..” (Goodenough, 1964a, p. 36).

With this new definition of culture, the ways to describe a culture also undergo changes. As what is essentially presented is a body of knowledge, consisting of nothing other than categories and criteria for establishing these categories, cultural descriptions then entail depictions of classification systems, categorization systems, which require new methods to describe them effectively (Ahimsa, 2011, p. 13). Referring to the terms above, the concept of ethnobeauty, which is a combination of the words “ethno” and “beauty,” literally means ethno refers to society or nation and beauty means beauty, so ethnobeauty can be interpreted as the beauty belonging to a particular society or nation. Thus, the study of ethnobeauty can be understood as an attempt to describe and explain beauty practices conducted by specific ethnic communities, which include myths, beliefs, culture, beauty practices, and the dynamics therein.

Although the concept of ethnobeauty is not widely used in general terms, studies on beauty within a society have actually been conducted, albeit not thoroughly explored as done by Friedan (1980), the study examines the concept of beauty in contemporary Americans, namely the concept of inner beauty. Wolf (2001) the study examines the myth of beauty in capitalist society and Saraswati (2013) the study examines the myth of beauty in Indonesia, emphasizing the element of taste and criticizing Eastern beauty as being laden with colonial influences.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research describes the ethnobeauty of Banjar women, particularly their interpretations of beauty within the context of Banjar culture, leading them to engage in beauty care practices in their lives. Additionally, the study will explain how Banjar women interpret



beauty care within the context of their relationships with men in their families and communities, along with the implications of this interpretation for utilizing beauty to support their positions in these relationships.

The study employs a qualitative research method with a feminist ethnographic approach. The feminist ethnographic approach is used to uncover specific cultural aspects that are being examined, where the research subjects are considered to experience marginalization practices in their lives and are capable of seeking various solutions for their empowerment. This research approach is part of the ethnographic research method. According to Geertz, in anthropology, what researchers do in the field is ethnography. Ethnography is various efforts to collect and analyze anthropological phenomena as a form of knowledge (Geertz, 1992, p. 6).

The research informants in this study are determined using purposive sampling, which means selecting informants based on several considerations by the researcher to obtain information relevant to the research objectives. Thus, in line with the topic, informants are chosen among those knowledgeable about beauty, history, and Banjar culture. They consist of three owners of traditional beauty treatment houses, a Hafabi employee, a traditional scrubber, a bridal makeup artist, a dermatologist, and three academics. Research informants also include three cultural experts.

The informants in this study are not only women but also men. This is because the main discussions in this topic are not limited to women only, but also involve a broader discussion about women, requiring insights from men to understand women. Regarding this research, understanding beauty care is not only perceived from the perspective of women as subjects but also requires insights from men to obtain comprehensive data. Therefore, this research includes four men, namely husbands of Banjar women who engage in beauty care practices.

Several methods are employed in this research to obtain the desired data, such as observation, interviews, field notes, and documentation. In the data analysis stage, the researcher will categorize the data based on validation criteria. This data categorization is tailored to the issues raised and presented in this research. Based on these data, the research aims to unveil the results of the analysis by describing, illustrating, and elaborating propositions about Banjar women's ethnobeauty as accurately as possible.

These propositions about Banjar women's ethnobeauty are further discussed with the theories used in this research, namely feminist theory and ethnobeauty. Through this discussion process, several theoretical findings are generated, which have implications for the development of previous theories, both critiquing and supporting them. Thus, this research presents innovations regarding the concept of ethnobeauty.



4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study of Banjar women's ethnobeauty reveals that the beauty of Banjar women is a body of knowledge within the Banjar community regarding beauty, encompassing beauty concepts, myths, and various beliefs associated with beauty interpretation. The concept of Banjar women's beauty cannot be separated from the cultural values of the Banjar community. The concept of beauty among Banjar women is linked to the values held by Banjar women, as evidenced by the development of beauty interpretation that aligns with their beliefs. Especially the beliefs of Banjar women, both Islamic and pre-Islamic (rooted in Banjar culture).

As mentioned above, the Banjar ethnicity is divided into two sub-ethnicities: Banjar Muara and Banjar Pahuluan. These two Banjar sub-ethnicities have different ethnic roots, with Banjar Muara rooted in the Dayak Ngaju ethnicity and Banjar Pahuluan rooted in the Bukit ethnicity. The Banjar ethnicity was formed during the Banjar kingdom era, where Islam became their identity. Thus, the two different ethnic roots of Banjar, namely the Dayak Ngaju and Bukit people, can merge into the Banjar ethnicity due to their commonality as part of the Banjar Kingdom citizens and their shared religion, Islam. This causes the values surrounding Banjar women to originate from two sources of values, namely the Kaharingan religion for maritime Banjar people and Islam for Banjar people. The differences in values held by Banjar women make them differ in understanding the concept of beauty. Despite both maritime and contemporary Banjar women interpreting beauty with the same concept of cleanliness and radiance, they differ in the way they practice beauty care, especially regarding the implementation of practices to radiate their beauty, which is related to differences in beliefs.

The strong influence of cultural values on the concept of beauty among Banjar women is in line with what Rischer and Koo have conveyed (2014) and Wiasti (2010). Rischer dan Koo (2014) defining the body as a socio-cultural and historical phenomenon, and the meaning of beauty reflects the values or norms that evolve within a society. In line with Rischer and Koo, Wiasti (2010) suggests that cultural values will influence the construction of beauty, but he adds that the construction of beauty will evolve over time and be determined by changing forces according to the era. The strong influence of Banjar cultural values on the construction of the concept of beauty among Banjar women differs from the construction of beauty in various regions of the Archipelago and even in various parts of the world, where the concept of beauty is constructed by capitalism with its market ideology, as demonstrated by Wiasti (2010) and the influence of media as a conduit for the beauty industry that constructs the concept of beauty, as demonstrated by Puspa (2010).



The media, as a tool to shape and alter public opinion, is utilized by capitalists to construct beauty according to their interests in promoting their cosmetic products. Murwani (2010) revealing the significant role of media, particularly television advertisements, in shaping the discourse on beauty in society, especially those related to women's beauty products. Even Chakravarty (2011) In his study on "Reflections on The Body Beautiful in Indian Popular Culture," it shows how beauty is constructed by media technology, where beauty is likened to being in front of the screen of image-makers. It is shaped by media personnel according to their desires. They can create scenarios in the formation of the beautiful image.

The concept of beauty among Banjar women is interpreted differently by coastal Banjar women (the ethnic root of Banjar) and Banjar women. Coastal Banjar women (in the past) tend to understand beauty in its physical aspect or external beauty, while Banjar women interpret beauty in two aspects: physical beauty or outer beauty and behavioral beauty or inner beauty. Physical beauty or external beauty refers to the interpretation of women's beauty from the physical aspects, leading to assessments based on facial features, skin, and body shape. In the context of physical beauty, the Banjar community perceives beauty as women with glowing and fragrant skin. The Banjar notion of beauty also relates to the beauty concept developed by both sub-ethnic groups of Banjar, namely the Pahuluan sub-ethnic group rooted in the Dayak Ngaju ethnicity, who refer to beauty as "bekeng," and the coastal Banjar sub-ethnic group rooted in the Dayak Ngaju ethnicity, who use the term "bungas" for beauty, yet both carry the same meaning: beauty is having clean and radiant skin.

Banjar women's knowledge of physical beauty is understood in two forms: profane beauty, acquired through physical care practices such as Banjar-style beauty treatments, so that physically, women appear beautiful; and sacred beauty, where beauty is interpreted as a phenomenon closely related to the divine as the entity capable of radiating women's beauty. To attain beauty, various religious rituals are required to unlock the aura of women's beauty, enabling them to shine and glow. This sacred form of beauty can also be referred to as unseen beauty, beauty that is not visible but becomes apparent only by unveiling their beauty through various rituals or practices believed to originate from the entity possessing beauty, which can radiate the light of their beauty.

The concept of physical beauty among Banjar women, which emphasizes clean and radiant skin, differs from the concept of beauty in most Indonesian societies, where beauty is interpreted as having fair skin, as constructed by the media and capitalist industries, as demonstrated by Wiasti (2010), Murwani (2010) and Puspa (2010). Even in a more assertive language, Yulianto (2007) indicate the influence of the media that leads to Indonesian women's



worship of fair skin as the ideal complexion representing beauty. Similarly, Arimbi (2011), indicate that several contemporary magazines use front covers depicting global beauty, which is American beauty with fair skin, as the true beauty.

Through physical care, women of Banjar ethnicity perform various beauty treatments such as *baratus*, *balulur*, *batimung*, and others, as well as spiritual-religious treatments with various practices or mantras that can emit an aura of light and radiance from their bodies. For the pre-Islamic Banjar people (before Islam, the Dayak Ngaju, and the Bukit people), they could emit the aura of their women's beauty by performing *laku lampah* and various mantras that could emit the aura from the women's bodies. The importance of religious ritual aspects in emitting the aura or radiance from women's bodies is still believed by them even after they have changed their beliefs (after embracing Islam), but they replace these practices with Islamic practices and prayers.

In addition to the concept of physical beauty (outer beauty), Banjar women also understand beauty as inner beauty or spiritual beauty, which consists of beauty through the practice of Islamic teachings as well as good behavior, manners, and obedience in carrying out religious commands (Islam). Their obligation to adhere to Islamic law as a manifestation of behavior that can produce inner beauty means that beauty care practices are only undertaken if they align with Islamic teachings. Some old habits in beauty care that are not in line with Islamic teachings are no longer practiced by Banjar women, such as reciting mantras from pre-Islamic beliefs, which have been replaced with various prayers derived from Islamic teachings.

The concept of inner beauty in the concept of Banjar women's beauty is in line with what Friedan conveyed (1980) the concept of inner beauty. However, the meaning of inner beauty for Banjar women is the beauty emanating from those who are obedient and follow the teachings of Islam, possess good personalities, and embody the friendly and smiling image of Banjar women. This differs from Friedan's concept of inner beauty, which leans towards intelligent, knowledgeable, and well-educated women. In other words, both Banjar women's and Friedan's concepts of beauty emphasize the importance of women's qualities in enhancing their beauty, but the qualities emphasized are somewhat different, with Banjar women focusing on good behavior and Friedan on intellectual qualities.

The Banjar women's knowledge system about beauty (ethnobeauty), as outlined above, suggests a strong connection between beauty and religious teachings (Kaharingan and Islam). The linkage between Banjar women's beauty, including their beauty care practices, and religion is evident, thus making Banjar women closely associated with beauty care practices. Consequently, all Banjar communities, regardless of age and social strata, regularly engage in



beauty care within specific timeframes. The connection of Banjar women's ethnobeauty with religion differs from some findings indicating that beauty in global society is closely associated with capitalism and the beauty industry, as demonstrated by Bordo (2003) the constructed beauty ideals by Hollywood and Disney films, as well as toys like Barbie dolls, reinforce Eurocentric beauty standards worldwide as consumer capitalism, adopted as an economic model by most countries in Asia, South America, and Africa, to varying extents (Bordo, 2003, p. 18).

Similarly, Frost (2001) demonstrates that beauty is a construct orchestrated by beauty industry agents aiming to profit from the products they release through the beauty image they shape to suit their business interests. Even Wolf (2001) In "Beauty Myths," it is shown that women are victims of beauty capitalism, where in order to attain a beautiful body, they often harm themselves to fit the beauty standards set by the beauty industry. The ethnobeauty of Banjar women demonstrates the strong concept of beauty as clean and radiant skin, based on religious values, and does not adopt the global beauty concept of white skin as propagated by various capitalist media. It shows a very strong relationship between beauty and capitalism (the beauty industry), reinforcing what Ida stated that global culture entering national localities is not immediately accepted because there are still many conflicts encountered, especially in the form of the strong connection between religious values and local culture.

5 CONCLUSION

Study of ethnobeauty among Banjar women as part of ethnoscience is an exploration of Banjar women's knowledge about beauty concepts and beauty care, which includes various categories in beauty care, Banjar women's classification systems in beauty care, and various factors that shape their knowledge about beauty such as beliefs, myths, beauty care behaviors, and the dynamics accompanying their knowledge about beauty. From the presentation of the research results above, several conclusions can be drawn as follows: First, Banjar women's views on beauty are generally divided into two meanings: physical or outer beauty and inner beauty. The first meaning, physical or outer beauty, refers to a woman's beauty directed towards her physical form. Beauty (known as "bungas" in Banjar language) for Banjar women is interpreted as having clean, fragrant, and radiant skin. Cleanliness and fragrance of the body, making the body appear radiant and glowing, are their main goals in performing body beauty care to look beautiful and fresh.



The concept of beauty among Banjar women, namely clean, fragrant, fresh, vibrant, and radiant skin, if traced back to the ethnic roots of the Banjar people, namely the Dayak Ngaju people as the roots of the Banjar Muara people and the Bukit people as the roots of the Banjar Pahuluan people, their concept of beauty is also the same as Banjar people nowadays, which is clean and radiant skin, so various beauty care efforts are directed towards obtaining clean and radiant skin. The second meaning is beauty seen from the aspect of a woman's personality, known as inner beauty. Women's inner beauty emanates from their behavior, especially from their speech and utterances. Inner beauty is crucial for Banjar women to possess in order to appear beautiful. Especially if a beautiful appearance is followed by good behavior and speech, then the beauty possessed by women will appear perfect.

Second, to achieve physical (outer) beauty, Banjar women engage in beauty care with various forms of beauty treatments according to their conception of beauty, which is to obtain clean, smooth, and radiant skin. Banjar women and Dayak Ngaju and Bukit women (the ethnic roots of the Banjar) engage in physical beauty care with various Banjar-specific beauty treatments such as herbal steaming, body scrubs, and body wrapping. In addition to various forms of beauty treatments, Banjar women believe that physical beauty is also a beauty that is latent within their bodies, which can be radiated through various practices they consider capable of radiating their beauty. The practices performed by Banjar women are related to their beliefs or faith. For Banjar Bahari women (before Islam), they perform various practices originating from their beliefs as Kaharingan adherents. Whereas for Banjar women who have embraced Islam, they perform various practices in accordance with the teachings of Islam they adhere to.

REFERENCES

- Ahimsa, P. H. (2011, Mei 6). Paradigma, Epistemologi, dan Etnografi dalam Antropologi. *Perkembangan Teori dan Metode Antropologi*. Surabaya: Jurusan Antropologi Universitas Airlangga.
- Arimbi, D. A. (2011). *The Globalization of Beauty: The Face of Indonesian Teen Magazine*. Osaka: The Second Asian Conference on Media and Mass Communication.
- Bordo, S. (2003). *Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*. California: University of California Press.
- Chakravarty, S. S. (2011). Reflections on The Body Beautiful in Indian Popular Culture. *Sosial Research, Vol 78: No 2: Summer 2011*.
- Frieden, B. (1980). *The Feminine Mystique*. London: W.W. Norton and Company Ltd.
- Frost, L. (2001). *Young Woman and The Body: A Feminist Sociology*. London: Palgrave.



- Geertz, C. (1992). *Tafsir Kebudayaan, Terjemahan: Francisco Budi Hardiman*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Goodenough, W. (1964a). *Cultural Anthropology and Linguistics, dalam Language in Culture and Society, D.Hymes (ed.)*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Koentjaraningrat. (1984). *Kamus Istilah Antropologi*. Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Murwani, E. (2010). Konstruksi 'Bentuk Tubuh Perempuan' Dalam Iklan Televisi. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, Volume II, Nomor 1, Juni*.
- Puspa, R. (2010). Isu Ras dan Warna Kulit Dalam Konstruksi Kecantikan Ideal Perempuan. *Jurnal Masyarakat Kebudayaan dan Politik, Volume 23, Nomor 4*.
- Reischer, E., & Koo, K. S. (2014). The Body Beautiful: Symbolism and Agency in the Social World. *Annual Review of Anthropology*. ProQuest Sociology.
- Saraswati, A. L. (2013). *Seeing Beauty, Sensing Race in Transnational Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Solikha, N. (2017, Januari 2017). *Inilah Alasan Kenapa Cewek Banjar Bakal Membuatmu Jatuh Cinta Setengah Mati*. Retrieved from Boombastis: <https://www.boombastis.com/cewek-banjar/86255>
- Sturtevant, W. (1964). Studies in Ethnoscience. *Transcultural Studies in Cognition, A.K.Romney dan R.G.A.D'Andrade (eds.)*, *American Anthropologist Special Publication 66 (3), Part.2.* , 99.
- Werner, O., & J.Fenton. (1970). *Method and Theory in Ethnoscience or Ethnoepistemology, dalam Handbook of Method in Cultural Anthropology, R.Naroll dan R. Cohen (eds)*. New York: Natural History Press.
- Wiasti, N. M. (2010). Redefinisi Kecantikan Dalam Meningkatkan Produktivitas Kerja Perempuan Bali di Kota Denpasar. *Piramida: Jurnal Kependudukan dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia, Edisi 15*.
- Wolf, N. (2001). *Mitos Kecantikan: Kala Kecantikan Menindas Perempuan, Terjemahan: Alia Swastika*. Yogyakarta: Niagara.
- Yulianto, & Visia, I. (2007). *Pesona Barat: Analisis Kritis-Historis Tentang Kesadaran Warna Kulit di Indonesia*. Jakarta dan Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.