Investigating the Relationship between personality traits and Problem-Solving Techniques in Female College students with Appropriate and Inappropriate Hijab

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Abstract

The purpose this study was to investigate the relationship between personality traits and problem solving techniques in two groups of female students with Appropriate and Inappropriate hijab. The sample of this study included 150 female students in two groups (in each group n= 75) from all of the female students of Guilan university as chosen with convenience sampling. In this study NEO-PIR personality inventory was used (Mc crea & Costa 1985), Cassidy & long (1996) scale. The result of data analysis showed significant difference between two the groups in agreeableness and Openness to experience subscales of personality traits, helplessness, creativity, approach and subscales of problem solving.

Keywords: Personality traits, Problem Solving, Hijab;

Introduction

As one of the distinctive features between human beings and animal, covering or avoiding nudity is an instinctive tendency. What people wear, which reveal their identity, is also a distinguishing indicator of their social classes. In the case of covering human body a number of studies have been carried out such as Mishel Foko; Sarkhosh and Jahandideh (1999); Black (2002); Entwistle (2001); Sassatelli (1999); People’s clothing is an indicator which is easily decoded by others (Hamidi and Faraji, 2007)

The issue of Islamic covering and wearing hijab is also frequently addressed in Holy Quran such as following:

[...] And when they tasted of the tree their shame was manifest to them and they began to hide (by heaping) on themselves some of the leaves of the Garden [...] (Qur’an 7: 22). Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely Allah is Aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof [...] (Qur’an 24:30-31). O Prophet! Enjoin your wives,
your daughters, and the wives of true believers that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad) That is most convenient, that they may be distinguished and not be harassed. [...] (Qur'an 33:58–59)

The type of human clothing can reflect intellectual systems, worldviews, values and intellectual horizon dominating him. Erratic and modish people who constantly change their clothing and style of their adornment appearance, are considered somehow as dependents to alien cultures, strangers and unknown identity so one of the very important issues for women which has been stressed and recommended in Islam, is the observance of hijab that all theologians are unanimous in its obligation And several verses of Quran mentioned above, confirm this obligatory command.

Several research results showed that by increasing and strengthening the religious values in people, tendency towards hijab also increase in them (Kermanshahian, 1998). In their study on personality characteristics of worshipers, Ahmadi and Amiri (2002) concluded that students, who have a tendency to prayer, enjoy higher self confidence, higher internal control and lower sensation seeking.

In another study about the lifestyle and women's clothing in Tehran, Hamidi and Faraji (2007) have identified nine types of personalities which included: hijab as duty, hijab as the ideology, traditional hijab, aesthetic hijab, reflective hijab, clothing as lifestyle, fashionable clothing (Internet type), Fashion less, or women who do not follow any fashion, feministic clothing. Investigating the personality characteristics of volunteers of cosmetic surgery, Alamdar-e-Saravi and Qalebandi (2004) concluded that most patients volunteering to have cosmetic surgery, have a narcissistic personality pattern which indicates the influence of psychological factors on the demand for cosmetic surgery and the relationship between people’s appearance and personality patterns.

The second category of variables is related to personality characteristics and ways of problem solving. Some research results have shown that one important indicator of mental health is problem solving skill and decision making (Bornstein, 2003; Mirowsky and Ross, 1990; Kathryn et al., 2003). Jafee and D Zurilla (2009) in their study titled personality “problem solving and drug abuse” has concluded that the logical and effective problem solving skills play a significant mediating role in the sense of helplessness and use of alcohol and marijuana. Also Mac Moran and colleagues (2007) in their study titled “the relationship between personality and social problem-solving skills in adults” concluded that the personality type B, borderline, is related to attention deficit hyperactive problem solving and personality type C, avoidance, is negatively related to problem solving style lacking attention deficit hyperactive. Also in Iran, Mohammadi (2004) in his research regarding problem-solving styles and public health, has achieved these results: among problem solving styles, helplessness, creativity and inhibition are accounted as the best predictor of social dysfunction respectively - Problem-solving styles of frustration and creativity, are the most important predictor of depression - inhibition in problem solving have been predictor of anxiety and physical symptoms- helplessness, trust in problem solving and creativity explain the public health.

This study aims at investigating personality and problem solving in female students with appropriate and inappropriate hijab.

**Methodology:**

Research design: in this causal-comparative research 150 female students of Guilan University in 2004-5 academic years have been selected through convenience sampling and have been divided into two groups (75 people per group) with appropriate and inappropriate hijab. The criteria specified for the appropriate hijab have been canonical rules.

**Instrument**

1. NEO-PI-R Personality Questionnaire:
NEO-PI-R questionnaire, Costa and Mac Carey (1992), measures five factors of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness based on the five-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Test-retest coefficients of the scale in an interval of three months are obtained between .83 and .75 (Costa and MAC Carey, 1992).

2. Cassidy and Long Scale (1996):

This 24-item scale composed of six factors; helplessness, inhibition in problem solving, creativity, problem-solving confidence, avoidance style and approach style.

Results:

To compare the personality characteristics of female students in two groups with appropriate and inappropriate hijab, T-test was used whose results reported have been in Table 1.

| Variable                          | appropriate hijab | Inappropriate hijab | T     | df  | Sig |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------|-----|-----|
|                                  | M    | SD | M    | SD |     |      |      |
| Neuroticism                      | 21.17| 7.35| 22.77| 7.7 | 0.86| 148  | 0.38 |
| Extraversion                     | 29.89| 5.48| 29.03| 5.51| 0.96| 148  | 0.33 |
| Openness to experience           | 25.39| 4.74| 27.97| 5.35| 3.13| 148  | 0.01 |
| Agreeableness                    | 29.32| 5.33| 27.32| 4.91| 2.39| 148  | 0.01 |
| Conscientiousness                | 33.77| 5.34| 31.31| 6.99| 2.42| 148  | 0.10 |

The results in Table 1 show that in two study groups, only two factors of Openness to experience and agreeableness has a significant difference. Openness to experience factor represents the more Openness to experience of students with inappropriate hijab in comparison with students with appropriate hijab. In the agreeableness factor, it indicates greater agreeableness of students with appropriate hijab in comparison with students with inappropriate hijab.

To compare the problem solving methods of two groups of female students with appropriate and inappropriate hijab T-test was also used whose results have been reported in Table 2.

| Variable                          | appropriate hijab | Inappropriate hijab | T     | df  | Sig |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------|-----|-----|
|                                  | M    | SD | M    | SD |     |      |      |
| Helplessness                     | 0.69 | 0.99| 1.03 | 1.26| 1.802| 148  | 0.05 |
| Inhibition in problem solving     | 2.32 | 0.86| 1.92 | 0.93| 2.745| 148  | 0.06 |
| Creativity                       | 3.53 | 0.84| 2.97 | 1.33| 3.070| 148  | 0.00 |
| Confidence in problem solving     | 2.51 | 1.22| 1.83 | 1.41| 3.157| 148  | 0.24 |
| Avoidance                        | 2.13 | 1.06| 2.17 | 1.01| 0.238| 148  | 0.51 |
| Approach                          | 3.55 | 0.68| 3.27 | 0.96| 2.053| 148  | 0.04 |

Results of Table 2 show that the two groups differ significantly only in the ways of helplessness problem solving, creativity, and approach. In helplessness factor, the average of students group with inappropriate hijab is higher than
the average of students group with appropriate hijab. In creativity and approach factors average of group of students with appropriate hijab is higher than the average of group of students with inappropriate hijab.

Discussion:

The issue of hijab is one of those matters which are always discussed in our society and different opinions have been expressed about it. The type of human clothing can reflect intellectual system, worldviews, values and intellectual horizon dominating him. Type of human clothing in each society not only depends on climatic and environmental conditions, but also represents values and norms governing culture of that society. Comparison of personality characteristics in two groups of students have shown that regarding openness to experience of students with inappropriate hijab is higher than students with appropriate hijab and this difference is significant, but with respect to agreeableness factor, students with appropriate hijab were at a higher level. In other personality factors a significant difference has not been observed.

Also comparison of two groups from the aspect of using different problem-solving methods has shown that students with inappropriate hijab will be stricken more by helplessness in the case of problem solving and the two groups differ significantly regarding this method of problem solving, however, students with the appropriate hijab were at a higher level regarding strategies of creativity and approach and in the case of problem solving use these two strategies more than other groups. Difference between two study groups in other styles of problem solving was not significant. A few researches have been done on personality characteristics of worshipers by Ahmadi and Amiri (2002) and on personality characteristics of cosmetic surgery volunteers by Alamdar-e-Saravi and Qalebandi (2004). Therefore, the results should be generalized with caution.

Also considering the limitations of researches done in this area and limitations of present study such as low sample size and using convenience sampling method, it is recommended that broader research be carried out considering this issue to increase the possibility of generalizing the results with greater confidence.

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