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# Does Wearing Hijab Have any Effects on Social Routine Behaviours of Women Across Cultures? An Observational Study on Women in Germany and Iran



Left: Chador (complete Hijab), right: Hijab as a social obligation (photos: Bita Behravan).

## 1 Theoretical part

### 1.1 Introduction

In the recent decade, a lot of people from the middle east had sought refuge in Europe due to the non-convenient situation specially in the Middle East. A lot of asylums coming to Europe, are Muslims out of whom many are women who practice the Hijab. The cultural differences like freedom of clothing for women in Europe and feminist rights are the aspects that can bring changes in cognition and behaviour of the Muslim women. Aside from that there are now 1.8 Billion Muslims living around the globe and half of this number are women (Pew Research Center, 2017) and this large number is growing fast around the globe.

As an Iranian scientist who studied PhD in Germany, I noticed that there is a distance between the Hijabers and non-Hijabers when it comes to peer groups e.g. women with Hijab sat together in a class or at a student cafeteria.

The categorization of women into Hijabers and non-hijaber is not possible in Iran since wearing Hijab for women is a rule and not voluntarily. However, one can distinguish which women wear the Hijab just for the social obligation and

the women who wear the Hijab as a religious duty. Women who wear Hijab as a religious/traditional duty cover their hair completely and mostly wear Chador (it is a long [normally black] cloth that is worn on the head and this piece of cloth covers the whole body to the feet – see picture 1). However, women who do not wear Hijab as a religious duty and only because it is compulsory do not cover all their hair and show part of their hair and neck (picture 2).

Politics and social/governmental institutes support women with complete Hijab in Iran and encourage all women to wear the complete Hijab. As Shirazi (1993) explains, the politics about clothing that are based on Islamic rules in the middle east and specially in Iran, put women in the foreground. This means that women become the target for Islamic social symbols and have the duty to express their Islamic identity by wearing certain kind of cover; the Hijab.

The paper starts with describing the concept of Hijab and goes further to the motivations of wearing it with an eye on recent literature about the topic.

### 1.2 What is Hijab?

The term Hijab, when roughly translated means a partition, barrier, curtain or veil (Sheen et al., 2018). However, for Muslim women Hijab means to veil and to cover their heads as well as the whole body. Specifically, to hijab as a

verb means to cover the whole body except for the face, hands (till wrists) and feet (till ankles). The bodily cover of Muslim women is not supposed to be tight or anything that shows their bodily curves and feminine features. Hijab must be worn in front of all men except for brothers, fathers, husbands, father of husband, grandfathers, uncles, and children who are known as "Mahram". Rizvi (1992) mentions that the dress must be thick enough so as not to show the colour of skin or the shape of the body. It is necessary to remind our women folk that the purpose of hijab is not putting on any cloth but to hide the body. Transparent or thin clothes which reveal the colour of skin or shape of body are absolutely forbidden.

There are some rules for the clothing style of Muslim women as The Quran orders the women:

*"And say unto the believing women that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts, and they display not their 'Zinat' (adornment) except what becomes apparent of it; and they draw their 'Khumur' (head covers) over their 'Juyub' (neck-slits); and they display not their 'Zinat' except to their husbands, or their fathers, or the father of their husbands, or their brothers, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons, or their women or those whom their right hands possess, or the male servants void of sexual desires, or the children who have not yet attained the knowledge of women's secrets (or nakedness), and they should not strike their feet so that what they hide of their 'Zinat' becomes known; and turn you all unto Allah, O you believers, so that you may be successful." (Quran, 24:31).*

According to a Hadeeth (a collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad) women who display their bodies will go to hell:

*"...Their women will be dressed, yet naked; on their heads will be like the humps of lean camels; do curse them, for they are truly cursed." (Fataawa al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen, 2/825)*

Wearing Hijab (veiling) is a matter of debate by a lot of people like feminists, Muslims, and researchers. The topic of Hijab and the effects it can have on the women who wear it, along with the motivations of having Hijab have been and are being discussed in different settings and studies around the world. According to Ahmed:

*'Western narrative says that the veil signified oppression, therefore those who called for its abandonment were feminists and those op-*

*posing its abandonment were anti-feminists' (Ahmed, 1992, p. 162).*

Hijab can have its social effects, depending on its wearers, as Mahabir (2004) mentions, Hijab can limit, free women, and give power according to tradition, society and the women who wear it. It can limit women because, they do not have any choice of clothing and it frees women because, they do not need to dress up and look like the everyday fashion and trend that is advertised on Media.

In this study, the women with Hijab in Germany and women with complete Hijab (no hair shown) in Iran are named as Hijabers. The women without Hijab in Germany, and in Iran women who show parts of their hair are mentioned as non-Hijabers or non-followers.

### 1.3 Reasons to Veiling

Aside from being obliged to wear the Hijab due to Islamic rules, Muslim women can also have different individual and/or social reasons and motivations to wear the Hijab. There are a lot of research that had investigated the motivations of women who wear the Hijab in Islamic and non-Islamic countries (Sheen et al., 2018; Alkazi & Gonzales, 2018; Bhowon & Bundhoo, 2016). Some reasons for veiling are personal religious beliefs, religious liberty, acceptance as a 'good Muslim', reducing the impact of sexualized perception and protection from unwanted male gaze (Wing & Smith, 2005). This is in line with the verse in Quran (Quran, 24:31) that says believing women must lower their gaze and hide their beauty from men except for their husband, father, brothers, women and children who are not sexually mature yet. In another verse, it is said to Prophet Mohammed to tell his wives and daughters to wear the Hijab so that they won't be disturbed by men (Quran, 33:55)

Bhowon and Bundhoo (2016) discuss that there are the two main reasons for veiling. The first one is religious duty and the second is not to be focused on male attention and to earn respectful treatment. According to Moghadam (1994), many Muslim women seem to find their value, purpose and identity through the practice of religion since it deals with norms that are mainly about how to cover, move with and modify the body; Cash and Pruzinsky (2004) mention that the body itself is the main component of individuals' identity. Wearing a hijab emerges as a religious symbol and expresses the religious devotion of women. Here, religion puts individuals into a frame that is gender-based.

Regarding politics and whether the Governments of each society is secular or non-secular,

the motivation for wearing Hijab can be different. Wagner et al. (2012) state that the motivation for Hijab in Islamic countries (countries in which Muslims are the majority of the population) is different than the motivations of women who wear the Hijab in non-Islamic countries. In Islamic societies, mostly modesty and humbleness, trend and fashion, and being comfortable in public places where men are present is the main reason to do Hijab. According to Wagner et al. (2012), wearing the Hijab as majorities where the whole country is Muslim has little to do with religious reasons whereas in non-Islamic countries, the motivation for wearing the Hijab is showing the Islamic identity and obeying the rules of Islam itself. Honouring the family in traditional countries like Turkey is very vital and Muslim women must protect the honour by being obedient, decent and having proper Hijab (Glick et al., 2016). Hopkins and Greenwood (2013) have also mentioned that the motivation for wearing hijab can be the prevention of arousing lust in men. Some other researchers have also mentioned that many Muslim women wear the Hijab because of family pressures (Dwyer, 1999) he also mentions that these family pressures come from the honour culture among Islamic families that consider men as guardians of women. Men also have the duty to censor the femininity of women in their families.

It is also said in Sura Al-Nisa of Quran that men are the protectors and maintainers of women because Allah has made one of them excel over the other and also because they spend their possessions to protect. Thus, righteous women are obedient and guard the rights of men in their absence under Allah's protection. (see Qur'an, al-Nisa, 4:34; translation by Ali, 1934, p. 64; cited in Anwar 2006, p.18).

With knowledge about the concept of Hijab, we understand that not only Hijab is a piece of cloth to covers women's bodies but also a symbolic reminder for women to behave as they have been ordered by Quran or other Hadiths in Islam.

#### 1.4 Behaviours associated with Veiling

Wearing Hijab is one aspect of conforming to rules of religion, tradition, society, etc. The concept of Hijab can also tell us more about the behaviors expected from women. Namely, celibacy before marriage, obedience from males who are either the fathers, uncles, brothers or husband and a rather passive behavior that does not attract attention (decency) in public specifically where men are present.

Regardless of religion, a lot of social norms are related to how people represent and behave with their bodies. Nearly all interpersonal behaviors of

human beings including body-related behaviors in a social context which involve mutual influence processes which are directed by interactions within face-to-face situations in smaller social units as well as direct or indirect interactions specially in bigger social units namely the whole society (Forgas & Williams, 2001). This is also the case with Hijab; all in all, women in Islam are supposed to be modest, have certain behaviours that do not attract attention e.g. speaking with a rather lower voice and not speaking in a way that might be pleasing for men. This is in accordance with the Quran:

*"If you fear Allah, then do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech" (Quran, 33:32).*

This sentence in Quran, tells the reader that some men are ill-willed and that's why women should always cover themselves.

Regardless of Hijab, the social psychology of dress is concerned with how an individual's dress affects the behaviour of self as well as the behaviour of others toward the self (Johnson & Lennon, 2014). Hijab is also a clothing that can be studied in a social psychological aspect.

#### 1.5 Hijab and Identity

Using the theory of social identity of Tajfel (1981) as a theoretical background, social identity is part of the self-concept of an individual, which is formed through the membership to a social group and their standards, values as well as the emotional significance of this group.

Important aspects of social identity are the ethnic/religious identities (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2011). At that, important components of identity can be highlighted: self-identification, sense of belonging, in-group attitudes, centrality, which have relevance for all groups, and recently, involvement, which is group specific and defined in terms of behavioural practices. Specific practices exist in behavioural aspects of identity, which can be private or public. Differences between one religious identity and another become discernible through practices. Based on Droogsma (2007), the 'tangible marker of differences' in the Western context, to distinguish Muslims and non-Muslim women is the practice of wearing the hijab; something that separates the Islamic and non-Islamic women and bolds the differences between them.

The most obvious marker of Muslim identity is the veil. When analyzing identity related behaviour, it is obvious that members of a group have specific attributes to challenge out-group stereotypes to in-group (Hopkins & Kahani-Hopkins, 2004;

Klein & Azzi, 2001), or publicly present their social identity to enable group behavior of others or to consolidate their own group membership.

## 2 Research Questions

The following research questions will be investigated in this study. The reason to do this observation is to first observe and compare the routine behaviours of women with and without Hijab following the research question:

1. Are there any differences in everyday socializing and outer behavioural routines of the followers and non-followers? Or does wearing Hijab (following the belief-system) have significant effects on outer behaviour and routines of women?
2. Do hijabers differ in the intensity to conforming?
3. Are there any visible social behavior differences among women with and without Hijab in a social context?
4. Is there a difference between the effectiveness of different social environments on wearing the Hijab in secular? Non-secular societies?
5. Are there traces of modified ways of covering among Hijabers?
6. Does wearing Hijab create in-group out-group bias for followers?

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Observation for data collection

The observation method is a covert observation which means that researchers record the group's activities without the knowledge of the group. It will help researchers to see how groups organize themselves by race, sex, and religion, for example by sitting in a corner of a lunchroom and observing how they even choose their seats (Forsyth, 2014, p. 35).

The reason to choose observation as the first method for this study is that according to Patton (2015), the first-order purpose of observational data is to describe in depth and detail the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in activities, the meanings of what was observed from the perspectives of those observed. The descriptions should be factual, accurate and thorough. Baumeister, Vohs, and Funder (2007) argue that studying the human behaviour specially in the field of personality and social psychology is mostly limited to self-report ques-

tionnaires, which normally ask individuals about their inner states such as what they think, or why they do what they do; he then concludes that the self-reports of individuals are not always the same as what they do, and hence not necessarily accurate.

Naturalistic observations take place in the field. It is a circumstance of being in or around an ongoing social setting for the purpose of making a qualitative analysis of that setting.

Patton mentions that firsthand experience with a setting allows the inquirer to be open and discovery oriented, observing the routines might show the observer some unaware reactions or behaviours of the people that might be different when they are asked in an interview (Patton, 2005, p. 333). Limitations of interview like selective perception of participants, self-censorship, and tendency to impress the interviewer do not exist in the observation. Therefore, conducting a direct observation is needed in this study as the topic is a sensitive one. Here, in the observational part, the impact of wearing Hijab on outer behaviour will be observed. Observing the "possible" differences in social behaviours among Hijab wearers and non-wearers is the aim of this observation.

Considering the advantages of observations in social psychological studies, the observation is covert and took place in public places which are: university campus, shopping malls, cafes and restaurants where women could be observed in groups.

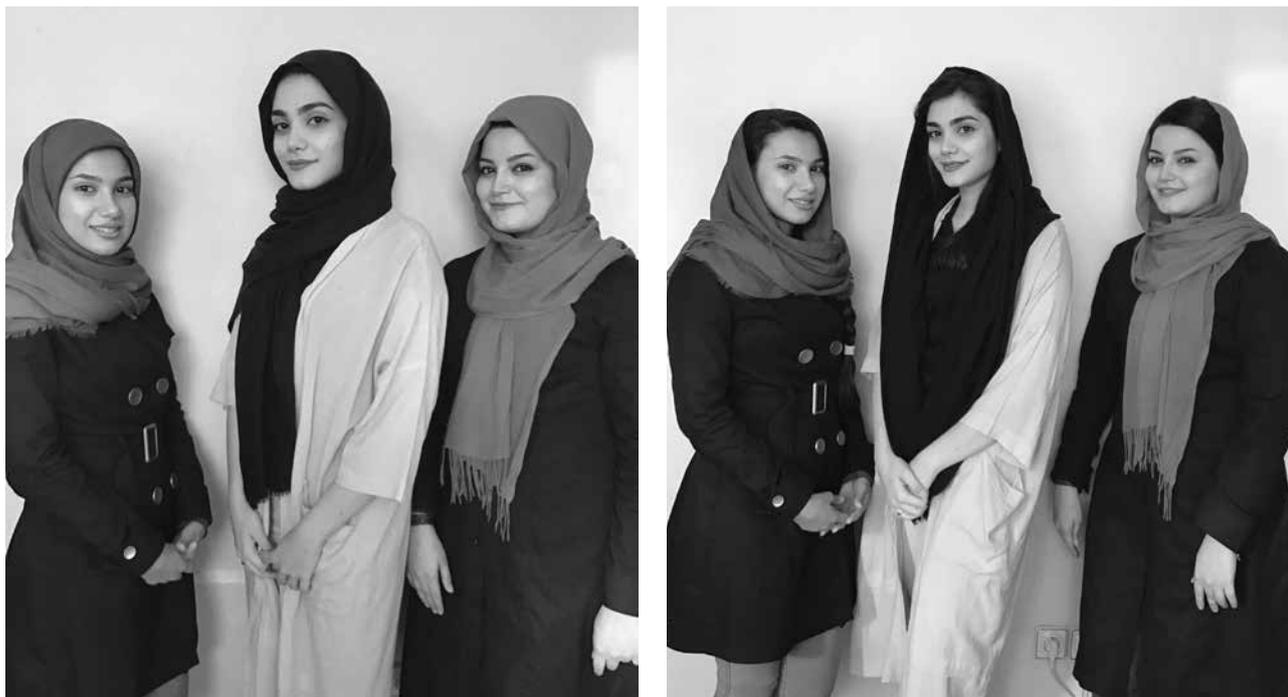
### 3.2 Ethics

This study is dispensed with informing the observed individuals. According to APA ethic codes for research (Godwin, 2009), there is no need for asking for permission in order to conduct anonymous questionnaires, naturalistic observations, or archival research for which disclosure of responses would not place participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or damage their financial standing, employability, or reputation and confidentiality is protected.

### 3.3 The site

In Germany, the site to do the observation was at three different cafeterias of the Duisburg-Essen university at campus Essen, the library, and the entrance halls of different faculties at the campus, as well as public transportations like buses, trains and trams, cafes, restaurants, shopping centres and playgrounds.

The observation in Iran was done in public places like bazars, public transportation, restaurants and cafes.



Different methods of wearing Hijab in Iran (photo: Bita Behravan).

### 3.4 Design

A manual for observing the appearance (clothing and make up) and visible social behaviours (e.g. way of walking, tone of speech with members of group etc.) was prepared after a 3 day pilot observation. Two observers sat in public places and note down the behaviours that could be observed. This manual was prepared to classify the observed behaviours into different categories so that all target behaviours could be noted down by observers.

The Observation in Germany was done for about 80–90 hours in a period of three weeks during the day time, using the help of a psychology graduate as a co-observer. Having a co-observer can also lessen the bias of the observer and increase the inter-observer reliability that is measured by the percentages of times that the observers agree on a specific behaviour (Godwin, 2009). The same observation happened in Iran for 67 hours and without an assistant.

### 3.5 Sample and Setting

The sample in Germany was chosen from two different groups of females ( $N = 119$ ) including non-European looking women without Hijab ( $N = 52$ ) and women non-European with Hijab ( $N = 67$ ). The age range for the sample is not specified due to the conditions of naturalistic observation where there is no intervention of researcher to interfere in the natural behaviour of participants and also since the observation is a covert one.

The total sample in Iran ( $N = 69$ ) was chosen from two different groups who were followers ( $N = 41$ ) and non-followers ( $N = 28$ ). One important aspect that should be considered is that due to the obligation of Hijab wearing in Iran, all the women wear the Hijab. To distinguish the followers and non-followers “the method of wearing Hijab” among Iranian women was considered. The difference between veiling in Iran is already mentioned above.

A situation sampling was chosen to do this study. According to Shaughnessy and Zechmeister situation sampling for observational studies involves observing the behaviour in as many different locations and under as many different circumstances and conditions as possible (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister, & Zechmeister, 2012, p. 96). By using situation sampling the results will not be limited to specific conditions and because of diversity of subjects, the generality of findings will be greater.

#### 3.5.1 Possible errors in sampling process

The sampling however, has some errors in it. The target women as mentioned above were women with non-European roots mainly from countries like Turkey, Arabic origin countries, etc. In order to recognize these women especially the ones without Hijab, the sampling could not be precise. Since these women were observed in groups, the criteria to categorize them was that they spoke with either Turkish or Arabic language in between their talks.

It is also true that most of the Iranian population are Muslims and less than 1 % of the population have a religion other than Islam (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (2008-04-15).

### 3.5.2 Conformity and non-conformity to Hijab in Iranian society

There are different ways to wear Hijab in Iran, if women are covering their hair completely or wearing Chador (the long black cover) it can show that they are wearing the Hijab in order to fulfil their task as Muslim women (Hijab as a symbol of decency and conformity). However, if women are wearing Hijab in a way that parts of their hair and neck is visible it can show that this is only due to obeying the rules of the current political government. Picture 3 can show the difference between two methods of wearing Hijab in Iran.

The picture on the left shows the complete Hijab and the picture on the right shows a sign of non-conformity. When parts of hair and neck are shown, it can show that wearing Hijab is only to obey the political rules.

The assumption is that the women with Hijab are more constraint and closed in the social environment and show more passive and conservative behaviours which can later determine their extreme resistance to change. They are probably closed and judgmental toward the non-followers which can determine their tendency to dislike and judge the non-followers. Hence, the social freedom that the followers have is less than non-followers.

Since modest behaviour is expected from women with Hijab, I assume that these women would have an overall extended shyness than the non-wearers of Hijab hence, they talk more quietly, laugh less and more quietly, use less make-up and any beauty enhancement methods on their faces, use neutral and less bright colours compared to women who do not wear Hijab.

The selection of peer groups can also say a lot about the flexibility and openness of the two groups. The heterogeneity of the groups when they include only Hijab wearers or when they include only women can also tell about Hijab wearers 'openness toward non-followers'. The development of observation categories is explained in the footnote.<sup>1</sup>

## 4 Detailed Interpretations of the Results

Do followers differ in the intensity of conforming? If yes, why? The followers differed in the intensity of conforming. However, the results did not show any significant difference between

the severity of conformity. There were generally 6 people seen in Germany who had Hijab but along with tight clothes, heavy make-up and a visible neck who were looking attractive and were gaining attention which maybe was because of the paradox. This paradox is known informally as Hijab for Allah and other clothing parts for Abdullah that means the head is covered but other parts are seen. This can be explained by different reasons like the pressure of the family (Dwyer, 1999), or fashion and the desire to look trendy as Wagner et al. (2012) state. In this case we can see that at least for some followers, wearing Hijab is only at the level of conformity, because just the head-scarf is not what is expected from Muslim women but also long and loose clothes, which are not worn by many Hijabers in Germany. Commodification as described by Shirazi (2010), is a turning of idea, belief, or point of view for the purpose of profit which is in line with the level of conformity described by Kelman (1958), when the individual brings changes in the outer behaviour to mingle and to benefit from it and as he describes when a behaviour is accumulated, learned or accepted on the compliance level, the probability of modifying or changing the target behaviour will increase because the acceptance of the behaviour or concept had been only on the surface and not internalized. The fact that some Hijabers only have their Head-scarf out of the whole clothing rules can show us that maybe if there were no pressure from family or other different social groups, these specific group of Hijabers might take their head-scarfs off.

Are there any outer behavioral differences among followers and non-followers in a social context? This question was investigated by the observable behaviors that were detected such as fluency of movement. There was a significant difference between Hijabers and non-Hijabers in both countries regarding behavioral differences. The Hijabers tended to have more fluency in their movements. They were more careful with the movements of their hands and legs. Very quick changes of bodily gestures were almost not seen among Hijabers. These fluent movements and the smoothness of gestures looked almost like the Victorian era noble women who practiced their gestures as a duty.

Being a woman automatically puts responsibilities specially on Muslim women to be careful with their behavior in public. Sentences like "A woman should act like a lady" is a sentence that is heard in many societies within families specially within traditional societies.

Nasser (1997) states that the hijab 'sends a public message, about the wearer and about the re-

<sup>1</sup> After a pilot observation of women, the observable target behaviours were determined, e.g., bodily gestures like way of walking, talking as well as the clothing, make-up etc. Social behaviours like laughter, loudness of speech etc., were chosen because according to Stacey (2012): "Haya" is a natural and inherent shyness and a sense of modesty that contracts with laughing loud or speaking loud, and Muslim women are ordered to have the Haya.

relationship between the wearer and the potential viewer' (1997, p. 409). Wearing the hijab motivates women to observe their behavior and realize their religious identity and avoid unwanted behavior. Consequently, the Hijab can be utilized as an instrument of behavioral self-monitoring and self-awareness, which expresses their religious beliefs and identity. This difference was seen in observations and is in line with Nasser's statements.

Is there a difference between the effectiveness of social environments regarding politics (secular and non-secular societies) on wearing the Hijab? The Hijabers were different compared to non-Hijabers in two countries. Having a friendly behavior toward the group along with having a positive or negative tone, differed in two countries. Iranian Hijabers were less friendly, and had a less positive tone compared to their counterparts in Germany. This could be the effects of politics on women. The Hijabers are a majority in Iran and wearing a complete Hijab like Chador is encouraged in the whole society (from Billboards to TV advertisements). In Germany, this is not the case and Hijabers are the minority. According to Forsyth (2014), the minority needs to have qualities to be able to attract the majority. This can be said that Hijabers being more friendly and positive in Germany can be a result of being a minority in this country. If the minority wants to have a good reputation, they need to have a proper facade and in this case of being friendly and positive as a Muslim.

Are there any traces of modified ways of covering among followers? Why? The traces of modifying the Hijab rules was seen among the Hjabers in Germany but not in Iran. These traces were wearing short jackets, make-up and wearing above ankle trousers were chosen. In Germany, the non-Hijabers tended to wear short jackets, have less make-up and wear longer trousers, however, there were followers who did the same. Looking really fashionable, wearing tight leggings or heavy make-up were also seen in followers in Germany. According to Prophet Mohammad, a woman is not allowed to make her clothes tight when she goes out of her home (Mohamadi-Eshtehardi, 2007). Since showing the ankle is not allowed in Islam, the reason behind wearing above ankle pants could show that the concept of Hijab is not accepted completely by such individuals. Modifying some Islamic rules, as it was mentioned in the first research question might be due to the possibility that the concept of Hijab was never internalized in these people or that they changed their internalized beliefs overtime, due to their peers or the secular society.

This modification of Hijab was not seen in Iranian Hjabers. The reason behind it can be the encouragement of politics on Hijab and the fact that the more a person covers herself as woman, the more she is appreciated as an obedient and responsible member of society. When a person modifies the Hijab, it is considered as being a non-follower in Iran. Compliance could be the level of conformity for Hijabers in Iran as well but since the politics motivates wearing complete Hijab, in other words when the politics as the power holder supports this issue, it will not be possible to say if Hijabers are complying or have internalized the concept of Hijab.

Does conforming to values in belief-systems create in-group outgroup bias for followers? We can realize that the peer groups were more homogenous (consisting of only followers or non-followers) in Iran. In Germany, 44 % of the observed women were co-existing in mixed and more open groups while in Iran only 23 % of the observed women were in mixed groups. The feelings of self-worth can be enhanced by stressing the group's superiority (Forsyth, 2014) and by identifying with the group, the feeling of belongingness can be stressed as well. The feeling of superiority can exist more in Iranian homogenous groups since being a follower is considered as a superiority. This is not the case in Germany, since tolerance and diversity is being encouraged within the society.

Another reason for having less ingroup bias in Germany can be explained by individualism in Germany and collectivism in Iran. As Forstyh (2014) explains, the collectivists tend to be trusting and caring for the ingroup members, but individualists consider their membership to have loose associations with any norms. As Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkove (2005) state, Iran is a collectivist and Germany is an individualist country and the openness of peer groups in Germany can be due to growing up in an individualistic country.

Groupthink (Janis, 1982) can also be another reason for Muslim women to choose their peers from the ones who look and think alike. This happens specially in cohesive groups and Janis states that these groups have suffer from close-mindedness, have pressures toward uniformity. It is noteworthy to mention that there is a Hadith of Prophet Mohammad: whoever, dress-up and modify her appearance like my enemies, is indeed my enemy as well (Sheikhottaefeh, 1986). Janis (1982) states that groupthink happens in political groups more often. Considering that Hijab is connected to politics in Iran, it is not surprising to see that groups are more homogenous in Iran than in Germany.

#### 4.1 General Discussion

Some variables related to self-grooming such as: having make-up on, having visible ankle trousers (related to fashion and beauty), having painted or made nails were observed. A study by Sheen et al. (2018) was conducted to see the ratings of facial attractiveness by showing pictures of a woman with Hijab and no Hijab. 60 practicing Muslims between 17–24 years old were asked significantly different, they rated the picture without hijab as more attractive. It is when attractiveness of the face is perceived as a whole and hair and eras play an important role in this perception of beauty. A study by Author (2017) showed that Iranian and German women with no single exception claimed that beauty is important for women.

Regarding to the results of this study, women with Hijab in Iran and Germany differed significantly from women without Hijab regarding the variables that are related for example women with Hijab had much less make-up on in comparison to the ones without.

Although very interesting exceptions were seen during the observation such as women with Hijab with short and tight jackets and rather a lot of make-up, according to Hopkins & Greenwood (2013), Hijabers also want to show their Islamic identity, wearing tight clothes, having ankle free trousers in public places for Hijabers can also show us that only "the head cover" is for them a symbol for Islamic Identity.

In the end it is important to mention that Hijab is a strong collective identity symbol, that some Muslim women choose to practice it daily. When this collective identity is encouraged in general in a society, it can bring a division between the ones who practice it and the ones who do not. The female followers have the symbol of Islamic collective identity on their heads (Hijab) that distinguishes them in the first sight, carrying a symbol of social identity all the time, can bring limitations to express oneself, and consequently modified ways of covering are seen which only have one feature of the whole concept of Hijab, "the head scarf". Fashion and trend is another aspect that is the case in some of Hijabers in Germany because the colorfulness of clothes was not different among followers and non-followers. There were a lot of Hijab women who wore colors like pink, gold, etc. This was not the case in Iran and again it can be rooted in politics because Chador is considered by Iranian government as "The Better Hijab" and its color is black.

#### 5 Conclusion

Putting all the above together, it can be concluded that there could be a possibility that women in cover, like to be fashionable by wearing make-up and pretty colorful clothes and by being feminine but they are restricted by rules that they praise. This can show that despite what the women of Hijab say about not feeling any limitations, there might be still some hidden feelings of being limited among these women. It can also be concluded that since some Hijab wearers specially in Germany (a free land) tend to wear tight clothes that can clearly show their curves, using rather exotic colors like pink or red, they have probably been influenced by the rules of Hijab only on conformity level (Kelman, 2006). It means that for the sake of not being punished, not being ignored by the Muslim society, they wear the Hijab that is not very similar to what Quran suggests for women.

We can also conclude that since modesty and humbleness is a duty for Muslim women, behaviors which do not attract attention such as being more quiet, using less colorful clothes and less make-up, wearing longer clothes, and even using less accessories is seen in both countries among women who wear their Hijab.

It seems that women are the defenders of an Islamic identity specifically in Germany but on the other hand Hijab, is a symbol of obedience toward the policy and rules in Iran. It is highly condemned when a woman does not have a proper Hijab in Iran and this could be why the groups of women in Iran rather to choose members who are Hijab-wise alike. In other words, there is no need for an Iranian Hijaber to show her positivity and calmness because, the clothes that she has chosen are already approved by the policy in Iran. In Germany however, in order to show the majority that Hijabers are good, or an advertisement for Islam which says women of Hijab are the righteous ones, Hijabers should to some extent be more open, friendly, and even colorful than the Hijabers who are already considered as the praised majority.

##### Limitations of study

One important limitation was the sampling errors that were explained earlier. Another limitation for the study was the need to be really covert in observation that was impossible sometimes. It was hard to find a spot where would attract no attention in order to observe without problems. This was harder to do in Iran since studying about Hijab and its effect can be considered as taboo and can have consequences like being arrested or questioned by moral po-

lice, so the time to observe in a special spot had to be limited not to attract any suspicion in Iran.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The behaviour of Muslim women with Hijab toward men was not the target in this study however, traces of flirting behaviours was seen in Hijabers who were waiting in a line or at the library with other men. This could also be a matter of observation for further studies.

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