

Merkmale der Übertragung sozialer Nachahmungsmechanismen in die persönliche Religiosität der modernen Jugend

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Abstrakt: Der Artikel beschäftigt sich mit Aspekten der Islamisierung und Radikalisierung der modernen Jugend. Terminologische Definitionen dieser Konzepte werden gegeben. Die Ergebnisse der Studie zur Motivation des Hijab-Tragens wurden demonstriert. Angepasstes Verhalten und Tendenzen, der Mode zu folgen, werden als Mechanismen sozialer Nachahmung betrachtet.

Schlüsselwörter: Jugend, Islamisierung, Radikalisierung, Hijab, persönliche Religiosität, religiöse Identität, religiöse Überzeugungen, Anreizmotiv, Konformität, Gruppendruck, muslimische Mode.

Features of the transfer of social imitation mechanisms Into personal religiosity of modern youth

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Abstract: The article deals with aspects of Islamization and radicalisation of modern youth. Terminological definitions of these concepts are given. The results of the study on the motivation of wearing hijabs were demonstrated. Conformal behavior and tendencies of following fashion as mechanisms of social imitation are considered.

Keywords: youth, Islamization, radicalisation, hijab, personal religiosity, religious identity, religious beliefs, incentive motive, conformity, group pressure, Muslim fashion.

Modern people live in a constantly changing reality and are eyewitnesses of the transformation of almost all areas - science, technology, culture and even climate. A person in this process, as an elementary particle of society, is presented not by a passive contemplator of the ongoing changes, but as an active transformer of reality.

At the same time, the objective fact is that people not only initiate and implement changes, but also become the objects of these changes themselves. This process can be seen especially clearly observed on the example of the youth environment. Today's young people differ from representatives of this social group of the 2000s or 1990s in moral and material values, goals, ideals, needs, motives, behavioral models, interpersonal communication style, and dressing manner.

The changes taking place in society have also affected spiritual needs. Against the background of the current political, economic and socio-demographic situation, the disputes of the youth's religiosity are one of the most urgent subjects due to the fact that young people, because of specific age characteristics, do not always act rationally, operating under the influence of emotions.

Recently, the media has raised the problem of modern youth's "Islamization" and "radicalisation". Moreover, these two concepts are sometimes used in the same context, from time to time in almost the same meaning and quite often associated with the wearing of hijabs. In this regard, in our opinion, it is necessary, first of all, to analyze the accuracy of the terms used.

Islamization refers to the process of strengthening the influence of Islam in various areas of state policy and public life, as well as an increasing number of people professing Islam in a particular region or country.

Religious radicalisation is an ideology that arises within the boundaries of a certain tradition, and then separates from it through criticism and opposition to the main doctrine, seeking for an uncompromisingly bringing their views to the final logical and practical conclusions [1].

As you can see, the meaning of these concepts is not synonymous, although both of them are certainly associated with personal religiosity. In addition, it would not be superfluous to emphasize that not some specific religions, national or other groups are subject to radicalisation - this is a process that can be observed in any confession.

The theme of hijabs has recently been one of the most controversial and discussed. Part of the reason lies in the fact that the hijab, as a visual marker, is associated with Islamization, and in some cases with radicalisation. That is why the problem of hijabs, as symbols of religious faith, requires a separate study and analysis.

Belonging to Islam, even if sometimes symbolic, is an important, socially significant component of identity for today's youth. However, our studies have shown that the motives for wearing the hijab can be dictated not only by religious beliefs.

The survey was conducted without providing options for answers, as it was important for us to understand the personal position of the respondents, and avoid of pushing them to choose the incentive motives we formulated. The respondents indicated the reasons why they decided to wear the hijab, and after processing the obtained results, 4 groups of logically similar options were identified.

Young women from one group indicated that they wear the hijab because it is a mandatory requirement for Muslim women. In the second group, the responses contained statements that the parents or husband insisted on wearing the hijab. The respondents of the third group pointed out that among their friends (classmates) many girls wear a hijab, and in order not to stand out, they also wear it. The fourth group of ladies expressed the opinion that hijab for them is not an attribute of religious faith, but an element of modern Muslim fashion (Fig. 1).

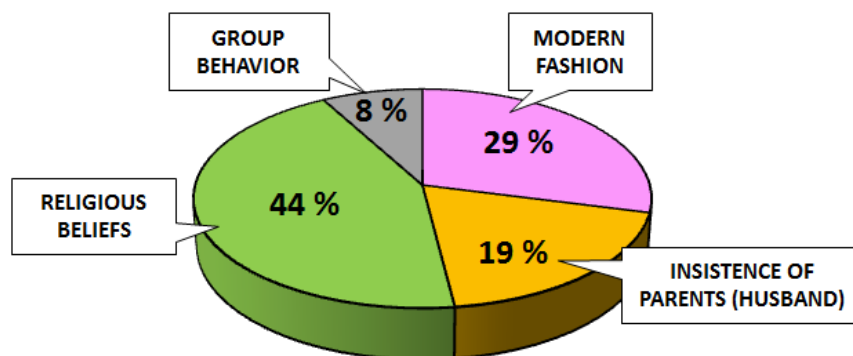


Fig. 1 The main motives for wearing hijab

The religious motivation for wearing the hijab, as well as the influence of the primary and secondary family on the formation of religious behavior patterns and adherence to religious normality, including in the Muslim dress code, are a separate topic for study, which will be covered in other publications. In this material, it is proposed to analyze such motives for wearing hijabs as conformal behavior and modern fashion, as forms of social imitation.

Increased conformity is a change in a person's behavior model or attitudes under the influence of judgments from the group, acceptance or rejection of a certain standard that is characteristic of that group, a measure of submission to group pressure. Based on the results of research in the field of the psychology of the conformal behavior of an individual in a group, it was found that 30% of the population has conformism. This means that a third of people tend to subordinate their behavior and change their views in the group, while women are more conformable than men [2].

To understand the reasons that prompted the girls to wear hijabs under the influence of the group, it is necessary to clarify that from the point of view of informational approach, a modern man cannot check all the information that comes to him, and therefore relies on the opinion of other people, when it is shared by many ones. A person succumbs to group influence because he wants to have a more accurate image of reality on the basis that, in his opinion, the majority cannot be wrong.

Here it is appropriate to outline the first problem - how accurately group's information (in our case, about wearing hijabs) really reflects the true essence of the concept itself and the certain prescriptions associated with it.

From the point of view of normative influence hypothesis, the individual shows increased conformity because he wants to be a part of the group, to avoid conflicts and sanctions for deviating from the accepted norm, to support his further interaction with the group.

The second problem in this segment, in our opinion, is that such a commitment to the group can have negative consequences. Of course, we are not talking about the

negative consequences of wearing hijabs. At the same time, if young women quite easily succumb to the influence of the group in some aspects, then it is quite possible to transfer the already familiar model of group behavior into destructive social imitation (for example, depersonalization, deviant behavior).

Considering social imitation in the form of following fashion trends, we would like to draw attention that hijab, as an element of modern fashion, is perhaps one of the most frequently discussed and complex problems. This is partly due to the fact that today religion itself for some young people is not a spiritual need, but a mainstream. The main question that we want to get an answer is how compatible religious clothing prescribed by the Shariah and fashion in general.

The appearance of the “Muslim fashion” concept is associated with regular fashion shows. In 2014 for the first time the “DKNY” brand presented its collection for the Muslim fast and called it “Ramadan”. “Mango” and “Zara” designers followed their example and the Italian fashion house “Dolce & Gabbana” presented a collection of hijabs in the form of headscarves, decorated with lace, embroidery, appliqué, rhinestones and semi-precious stones...

At the same time, it is a mistake to think that the hijab is just a headscarf. Translated from Arabic, hijab means “barrier, veil”. In addition, the intention to introduce hijab as a religious duty was given by Umar bin al-Khattab, the second righteous caliph. And in accordance with the history of the “ayah about a hijab” sending down, which is given in “Sahih al-Bukhari”, the second most important book in Islam after the Koran, the word “hijab” itself is used in the form of the imperative verb “uhjub”, which means “cover”:

“As for Umar, he said to the Prophet, sallallahu Alayhi wa Sallam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “Cover (uhjub) your wives” [3].

The word “hijab” can mean different types of Muslim clothing: a cape covering the whole body, only the face or head. Different countries and regions have their own versions of the hijab, covering the face and body to varying degrees: niqab, burka, abaya, sheila, khimar, chador, paranja and many others [4].

In the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, there are also many sayings regarding the modesty and shyness of women, which are interpreted as wearing the hijab. Thus, in one of them it is reported that “In Paradise, people will seek the Lord’s presence, and Allah will give special honor to those women who followed the hijab (the norms of dress for a Muslim woman in earthly life)” [5].

All Islamic theologians agree that the true meaning of the hijab is precisely to hide the beauty of a woman, but not to emphasize it. Even with regard to the hairstyle under the hijab, the Shariah indicates that the hair should not be tied in a bun at the top or back of the head, but hidden under a special cotton cap - “boni”-hat.

It is important to understand that hijab should not make a woman fashionable and stylish. Equally important that the hijab in the Islamic tradition is applied both to clothing (external hijab) and to the way of life of Muslim women (internal hijab).

For the “external hijab” there are a number of mandatory conditions that must be met when a woman leaves her home:

- all parts of the body must be covered, with the exception of those that are allowed not to be covered;
- tight-fitting clothing that emphasizes the woman’s figure or some parts of the her body are not allowed;
- hijabs made of transparent material are prohibited;
- hijab should not be with decorations;
- hijabs made of too bright material are not allowed, as well as extraordinary ones that attract the attention of outside men;
- wearing a hijab with clothes similar to men’s garments or in the style of “unisex” (trousers, jeans, tracksuits, sneakers, etc.) is excluded.

The rules of the “external hijab” also do not allow the use of perfumes and cosmetics, because these attributes attract male attention. Build-up of eyelash and nails, covering it with nail polish (or shellac), especially making a tattoo or piercing are prohibited. Shoes with heels or a high platform are also excluded, as such models are aimed at visually increasing the length of the legs and height, making the female figure more slender, and therefore more attractive than it really is. Shariah considers this as a kind of deception and a desire to show beauty, which is forbidden for Muslim women.

The main aim of the listed requirements is to create in the process of communication a man’s orientation towards the woman’s personality, but not on her appearance, which can distract or generate illicit thoughts or desires.

With regard to the “internal hijab”, Islamic theologians note that for a Muslim woman, the hijab should be a life position, a marker of chaste behavior, modesty, religiosity and spiritual restraint in the spirit of Islam. After all, it is no coincidence that the ayah on the commandments in female outlook begins with the words “*And tell the believing women to suppress their gazes and keep their chastity*”. And only then there is an indication of the dress code: “*They should not show any parts of their body, except for what is necessary*”¹.

If the hijab should serve as a model of morality, modesty and chastity in the appearance and behavior of a woman - how correct is it to create fashionable hijab collections with bright Sicilian prints from “Dolce & Gabbana” and rhinestones from “Swarovski”?

Of course, the world of women’s fashion is a dynamic concept. And the influence of the East on world catwalks cannot be underestimated. Certainly, fashion houses in order “to make a name” for themselves, retain authority or increase popularity, strive to present something new, extraordinary, and beautiful. Indeed, this is how it should be, it is according these rules that the world of fashion exists.

¹ The Holy Quran, “an-Nur” Surah, 31st ayah
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The first question is - why did fashion designers focus on the hijab? After all, there are many other women's headdress - hats, berets, shawls, scarves, kerchiefs, tippets. Is the limit of designers' imagination exhausted?

The second question is - where can this road lead us? Will the "exploitation" of the hijab (originally as a model of chastity and modesty) be limited only to the world of fashion?

Here are some reliable, but controversial and disturbing facts.

The "State Of The Global Islamic Economy Report" noted that in 2020, Muslim consumers around the world spent on fashion clothing and accessories about \$ 330 billion - about a quarter of all turnover in this area. At the same time, the report emphasized that for modern Muslims, compliance with fashion remains a part of their identity. This statement has become a full-fledged fashion concept for some time now.

Already today, the desire of modern Muslim women to comply with the requirements of the Islamic tradition and at the same time to lead an active lifestyle has led to the creation of the so-called "euro-hijabs". This concept means Muslim clothing, which can combine fashion trends and Shariah norms. In Muslim religious clothing in line with trends fashionable materials, colors, prints, adornments etc. are used at present time.

"Behind the transformations of the hijab is much more than just variations in clothing, it is a change in the worldview of women in the Muslim world, their desire for emancipation," - the Western media write.

Shelina Janmohamed (Muslim), vice president of advertising agency "Ogilvy Noor", wrote the book "Generation M: Young Muslims Changing the World," trying to prove that hijab is almost a manifesto of Islamic feminism: a woman can do everything in a hijab what she does without it. Shelina approves that young Muslims (she calls them "Millennial Muslims", "New Muslims" or "Generation M") are tired of sad stories about wrapped women with limp heads. "They want to buy not just symbols of luxury or beautiful things with recognizable logos, but products that fit their beliefs, confident that fashion accessories will help them to become *better Muslims*," - Shelina Janmohamed writes. As they say, unnecessary comments.

In conclusion, we would like to note that youth occupies a special place in the processes of radicalisation. Even the names of some terrorist groups reflect this, for example, "Taliban" means students and "Al-Shabab" - young people. The main social and demographic life cycles of a person, including the formation of spiritual principles and guidelines, take place at a young age.

In our opinion, the problems presented in this article deserve not only close attention and in-deep study, but also immediate response. We have to state that modern technologies allow one person or a small group to simultaneously influence the consciousness, psyche, values and attitudes of a huge number of people, without having direct contact and interaction with them. And our young people are maximally involved in the IT environment and are influenced from outside.

Today, it is almost impossible to meet explicit calls with a destructive religious meaning. On the one hand, this is provided by numerous network filters that analyze information in files and block destructive content. On the other hand, the vigilance and professionalism of the intelligence services ensure the highest possible information security.

But our ideological opponent began to study new methods of controlling the youth environment. For example, alike situation was with the development of computer game platforms containing aggressive or distorted religious subjects. Changes in religious attitudes under such influence do not occur as quickly and massively as during direct propaganda. But the effect is obvious: terrorists-singletons, killing believers in mosques, churches and synagogues, school shooters, because of which dozens of innocent people die every year.

It once seemed incredible that “shooters” could cause terrorist attacks, that computer games could transform consciousness so much. However, now this is our reality. Today, it seems just as incredible that fashion trends can change the religious consciousness of young people. But it is precisely for this age group that modern fashion is focused. Moreover, we are talking not only about fashion for clothes, but also about stereotypes, behavior models, attitudes, including religious ones.

The lack of an appropriate understanding of religious doctrines due to insufficient religious literacy can lead young people into the ranks of various destructive and pseudo-religious organizations. And given the pace of globalization, this trouble may knock on the door of our house very soon.

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