



## The Philosophy of Hijab and Efaf and their Internalization Methods in Society

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**ABSTRACT: Introduction and aim:** "Hijab" is one of most valuable cultural and social representations of Iranian-Islamic civilization which its history goes back to before Islam emergence in Iran and in Islamic culture it has reached to its highest elevation and respect. This paper aims to consider the philosophy of hijab and to explain and to analyze the methods for its internalization in society.

**Methodology:** This paper used a descriptive-analytic method. At first different references and literature about hijab and dressing were studied, needed materials were written on fiches and then some methods which may be useful for internalization of hijab and dressing culture were evaluated one by one.

**Results:** Hijab and efaf as a religious phenomenon has high importance in Islamic teachings and it is necessary to pay high attention to social-cultural contexts as its bed. Its propagation needs fundamental and continued educations in family, school, university and society.

**Keywords:** Hijab, Efaf, Internalization, Culture.

### INTRODUCTION

One of most important religious concepts which have been constantly discussed in different cultural, social, and even political communities was the concept of "Hijab". It has been used by elites and middle class so much that it is hard to find someone who hasn't an image of it in his/her mind or doesn't know its meaning. The question of "dressing and hijab" turns into one of most controversy matters after cultural invasion to Islamic societies during two past centuries and its outcome at least is to fall in doubt about necessity of such important thing (Salehabadi, 2013, 114). The Iranian Islamic Republic's officials were occupied with the question of hijab as an important issue after Islamic revolution. At the beginning of the revolution the Islamic republic has intended to establish a society based on Islamic code and now hijab and efaf among them is one of concepts which are under discussion in scientific, collegiate, cultural, religious, and some executive organizations. Sometime we observe that many veiled women use bright and stimulant colors in their dressing and this gives an attractive beauty to their bodies so that while they have veiled and covered bodies but their beauty is visible and apparent as if they didn't have dress at all (Fazl Allah, 2008, 19) and this is far away from the spirit of hijab.

The women's dressing is a part of their internal value system and an indication of their thought (Yazdkhasti, 2007, 39) and internalization means consolidation and propagation of a new idea or plan in society (Soltan Tyrani, 1999, 111). Therefore, this paper tries to

examine hijab's philosophy and the methods for internalization of hijab culture according to religious teachings and researches, and then to suggest some suggestions aiming closing to favorable situation this regard.

#### *The Concept of Hijab and Efaf*

There are some specific words for hijab and its derivations in any language. For example, hijab in Persian means veiling, inhabitation from visibility, face covering, efaf, shame, curtain, hindrance, separation between two things, dressing (everything for covering body), mask, borqa', chador, cover, talisman (which is worn for repulsion of spell) (Dehkoda, 2006, 251).

Efaf is an Arabic word which has entered Persian language by Islamic and religious culture. Efaf means self-keeping and impeding ourselves from forbidden things and temptations. Ragheb Esfahani, in "Al-Mofradat fi Gharib Al-Quran", about Efaf said:

"Efaf is a psychic state which hinder desire from dominance over human being and Afif (virtuous) person is someone who has reached such state by continuous exercise and dominance over desire and lust" (Ragheb Esfahani, 1983, 320). Efaf conceptually has a meaning very broader than being away from adultery and prostitution. Holy Quran and narrations have used efaf in a meaning beyond sexual chastity and have defined it as moderation, self-restraint, dominance over self, patience, and resistant against illegitimate satisfaction and pleasure which placed in the field of sexual and bodily desires, and human's desire wants to satisfy it in an unlimited way.

### *Theory and History of Hijab*

The emergence of Hijab goes back to Adam and Eve, to the time in which these two great and honorable beings perpetrate a wrong and have eaten from the fruit of forbidden tree.

Therefore, eating the fruit of forbidden tree regardless of its role in the creation system has led Adam and Eve to encountering with the truth of nakedness in the realm of privacy and *efaf*, so they covered themselves with heavenly leaves immediately. This historical event simply shows that hijab and dressing as a sign of shame and chastity is a natural and internal matter and has an important role in psychic and spiritual health of individual and society.

### *Aim and Philosophy of Hijab*

What is the philosophy of hijab and why Islamic hijab code has been legislated?

According to Holy Quran the aim for legislation of Islamic hijab as a divine rule is attaining purity, chastity, and soul refinement. And this appeared in some verses as following:

"Oh the prophet, say to men who are in faith that they must keep away their eyes from improper and they must cover their private parts, which this is good for their purity" (Quran, Al-Noor, 30).

"Oh the prophet, say to your women and daughters and to women who are in faith that they must cover closer themselves by their chadors, and this is more good for them who wants to be known as chaste women and free from harassment, and God is the most merciful and forgiver" (Quran, Al-Ahzab, 59).

Since looking at alien women stimulates men lustfully and this leads to depravity and immorality, then God commanded women to have hijab and to cover their bodies, and also commanded men to keep their eyes from looking at alien women and made this haram for them, as Imam Reza said:

"Looking at veiled hair of married and unmarried women is haram because such looks stimulates men and leads them to perpetrating immorality behaviors in a realm that entering it isn't halal and isn't proper" (Majlesi, vol. 104, 34).

From above verses and narrations it is concluded that Islamic hijab is necessitated because it brings refinement, purity, and chastity, and self-restraint for society's members.

### *Methods for Internalization of Hijab and Efaf in Society*

#### *1. Faith Strengthening*

If we want to propagate hijab culture with virtue of *efaf* and modesty it is necessary that at first to strengthen individual religious beliefs in a society, because this is the spirit and foundation of people's morality and behavior. A weakened faith is the most important cause of a bad hijab.

Faith is like a shelter which keeps people safe from falling in sins. Imam Ali said: people's faith is represented itself by their acts (Amadi, 1994, 40).

A complete knowledge of religion and strengthening of Islamic beliefs among society's members is the first step towards internalization of hijab culture. If this happened then we won't have the problem of bad hijab in Islamic society. For example, Quran has recommended to women as follows:

"Oh the prophet, say to your women and daughters and to women who are in faith that they must cover closer themselves by their Jalbat (chadors)" (Al-Ahzab, 59). Here for majority of interpreters Jalbat means chadors. Strong faith and right beliefs have the most influential role in individual and social life. The more internal chastity, the better hijab observes (Nokhbeh, 2007). Therefore, strengthening of faith and obedience to God's orders are internal and stable factors for propagation and internalization of hijab culture in society.

#### *2. Giving Information about Rules*

Lack of awareness about Islamic rules and dressing limits is another cause for bad hijab. A woman believer must have belief in what Islam regards as values and must know that her personality and respect is indebted to her great spirit, high thought, clear heart, and purified soul and these invited her to a human and Islamic manner. So she must be aware that an ornate body and a charming appearance don't symbolize her personality.

The prophet Mohammad said: "the best woman is one who makes up herself for her husband shows her beauties for him, but is covered before aliens" (Bahar Al-Anvar, vol. 103, 235). Therefore revival of original Islamic and divine culture and its propagation in society is an important step towards spreading and internalization of hijab in society.

#### *3. Arguing in favor of Hijab and its Positive Effects*

When the philosophy and cultural, social, and family effects of hijab and *efaf* to be described for the youth in reasonable and proper way, then they can reach a reasonable understanding of hijab and *efaf*.

#### *4. Identification and Introduction of Better Patterns of Hijab*

We must pay attention to this matter that human being naturally is a pattern chooser being and pattern acceptor being. They are seeking to find their beliefs embodied in another person and identify themselves with this pattern. Therefore, an important step towards propagation of hijab culture is providing proper models. Fatemah Zahra as the symbol of *efaf* and as an example for all Muslim women said: "the best woman is one who doesn't see a man and no man is able to see her". When Fatemah was walking outside of home in society her kerchief was tight very much around her head and her body was covered by an encompassing cloth.

She walked with equanimity in a solemnity way, and her walking was reminder of the prophet. In her will to her husband said: "prepare for me a coffin in which my body to be concealed and its structure to be so and so". Therefore, introduction of an exemplar to women of new generation and its precise explanation would propagate hijab culture in society.

##### *5. Modification of Media's Advertisings and Officials of Hijab in Society (Radio, Television, and ...)*

Publication of books, films, and CDs are some fields that need precise supervision. Also strong suppression of insidious and semi-intellectual attempts for reproduction of products which are against propagation of efaf and hijab culture.

Other cultural instruments available for introduction and propagation of hijab in society are newspapers and magazines. Nowadays almost all people dealt with such media and these media will have wider role in society. Therefore, we can use such public media for public education purposefully.

Another effective instrument for hijab promotion is magic box, television. Television, nowadays, is placed in the heart of public life, and it can be said that almost all members of society are using it somehow. Its audiences aren't limited to a specific group; rather all are its audiences. Therefore, it is necessary for cultural decision makers, especially radio and television's managers, to use this public media in a realistic and proper way by correct planning for hijab promotion in the society.

##### *6. Propagation and Revival of Religious Educations in Schools*

The role of education in internalization of beliefs is very important. Since governmental and semi-governmental schools are controlled by government, ministries of education, science, and Islamic guidance must be under attention specifically in directional plans. It is necessary that educational texts' contexts to be examined. Different generations have different conceptions and analyses. Therefore, new generation needs update knowledge more than last one.

Since education ministry is the most important governmental organization in directional affairs, we must pay more attention to it. Education ministry can organize its directional activities in following attempts: Examination and revision of text books, and insertion of efaf and hijab in suitable texts by an attractive and subtle method.

##### *7. Enjoining the Right and Forbidding the Wrong*

Enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong has a unique place and priority among religious necessities. In a comparison between enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong and other religious necessities -

even Jihad for God- Imam Ali by a fine and excellent interpretation said:

All good deeds and jihad in the way of God in comparison with enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong are like a puff on a vast and wavy sea" (Nahj Al-Balaghah, 429, 374).

Children and adolescents have a fresh and white soul and nature, so they have more potential for education. Therefore education must begin from childhood and educator (family) must attempt to educate these divine trusts programmatically. If this happened then they will reach high degrees. Imam Khomeini said: "purify your children, educate them according to Islam" (Sahifeh Noor, vol. 6, 283).

If this religious enjoining and forbidding to be executed in a society bravely and widely, and ostentatious women always to be enjoined to do right things according to Islam, then much of bad hijab cases will be eliminated. Definitely it is necessary that polite and friendly language to be used when it is to speak of right, because education isn't possible in humiliation.

##### *8. Providing a Cultural Environment in Favor of Modesty, Efaf and Hijab*

For a proper hijab and dressing manner at first we must revive the modesty manner, then a planning for efaf becomes a possible thing and after it we can try to protect privacy limits and finally the most visible thing, namely hijab may be considered. Modesty is an internal matter totally which will be apparent from external symbols. When a deep work is done and society's members were educated according to modesty, then we don't need much time to revive hijab; therefore time for nurturing modesty is more time than that of efaf and at next step that of hijab.

##### *9. Family's Role in Spreading of Hijab Culture*

It is proved by psychologists that child's personality and identity at its first stages is formed in family environment and child is like a waxy substance that is possible to form it. To prepare children and adolescents for religious tasks, to explain religious necessities and the acts which must be avoided and are forbidden by God, are among reasonable ways for religious education of children and adolescents. To hold task festivals for new mature boys and girls, also hijab festival for girls is a sweet memory for them and will remain in their mind for a long time.

## **CONCLUSION**

Islamic Hijab for women is one of Islamic necessities undoubtedly, as it is appeared in many verses of holy Quran. On the other hand, it is a controversial issue in yesterday and today world.

Especially that human rights advocates referring to equality rights for women and men and in defense of women's rights maintained that hijab is a hindrance for women and it is against freedom. Therefore, this issue turns into a sensitive problem. But Islamic dressing is as a external and internal protector against aliens which gives moral and family security and makes a strong tie between apparent hijab and internal prevention and - most importantly- social security (Soltani Ranani, 64, 2004). As we can see now, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, women are present in all fields from legislation to education, hospitals, and organizations; and they can work while observe Islamic code for dressing. And Islamic hijab isn't a hindrance on their way and it doesn't violate their legitimate rights and freedom. Therefore, we hope after application of above methods for internalization of hijab we will have a society with truth hijab.

### SUGGESTIONS

- Orientation of sexual instinct among the youth and preventing stimulants from entering society and their dissemination;
- Establishment of proper entertainment centers appropriate for an Islamic society in which cultural growth may occurred and are under supervision directly and indirectly;
- To resolve economic difficulties for citizens because such difficulties are main cause of immoralities in much cases;
- Providing a proper competitive environment in fields of sport, science, art; and development of international relations in such fields aiming to concentrate youth's aimless forces;

-Introduction of a comprehensive exemplar for hijab and Islamic dressing and providing easy accessibility to such cloths.

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