

Essay on people with hejab participate less in sports

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



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Culture is deep rooted in the civilization of any nation, which can be seen from this picture that shows a woman with her traditional outfit wearing burka, robe and scarf sitting in a chair near a pool where a young girl in her bikini is sitting beside the pool. In fact, the word nation is used to refer to a group of people who share a common language, culture, history, ethnicity and descent. In the picture, there is a very young girl of 25 years Saudi Arabia in her traditional outfit. Hence, in this regard, culture happens to be the soul of any nation and provides nations, the reason to make them stand united in hours of need. Culture can be seen as a man made part of the environment. It refers to the accumulation of personal experiences, being experienced by the individuals of a nation. These experiences are then transformed from one generation to another, thus, forming social traditions. Culture includes everything from norms, beliefs and values to family life, marriage, inheritance, language, political system, economic system and dress code, etc.

Dress code forms an integral part of any culture. Culture propels dress code or alternatively, it can also be said that dress code propels culture. This is mainly because of the fact that the dress code of any nation signifies the culture of that nation as the dress code carries a practical as well as symbolic value.

Among the Muslim world, the term Hijab, holds a prominent position. The word is a symbolism of integrity, descent and beliefs, having theological connotations and is a carrier of a whole civilization. Hijab is a word that finds its origin in Arabic language. A dress code is worn by Muslims all across the

globe. Hijab is a piece of cloth that is worn by Muslim women in public to cover their head, hence forth, depicting a way of life. It can range from just head covering, hijab, to covering whole of the body, abaya. Mistakenly, it is often assumed that hijab is knitted with Islam, religion followed by Muslims. However, it is interesting to note that hijab is more related to the cultural settings rather than being a religious obligation. Countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and Syria have made it compulsory to wear hijab as a part of their official dress code whereas, countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Malaysia have no such restrictions, rather it is left to the will of the individuals to adopt or abandon it. On the contrary, there are countries like Turkey and Tunisia that have made legislation that restricts the use of hijab in public gatherings including schools, universities and government buildings. Hence, this provides a reasonable base for the argument that hijab is more culturally inscribed than being a religiously mandatory.

Wearing hijab offers its own pros and cons. This small piece of cloth has been an area that is much debated in recent times in every single corner of this planet. It will not be wrong to say that this dress code has managed to grab attention and has been a source of creating fuss and disturbance for no obvious reasons. The word hijab is having multiple connotations and among the many dimensions, there is an established fact that people who wear hijab participate less in sports.

Sports involve physical activity, usually settled in a competitive environment, aiming at improving the physical capabilities and skills through organized participation while being a source of entertainment for spectators. Today's world witness a large number and variety of games, ranging from a two

participant games to those that involve hundreds of participants, that are either competing in teams or in individual capacity. Each sport have its own certain requirements, may it be the rules of the game or the particular dress code, as in uniform. Perhaps, one of the main reasons for the low hijab participators in sports, is the fact that dress code enjoys an utmost important space in the world of sports, as each sport tends to have a certain prerequisite in terms of the dress code. For example, soccer players are required to wear shirt, shorts, tennis players have to wear shorts and skirts, and it is the case with basketball players and a large number of other sporting events. Hence, it is not difficult to assess that for the hijab wearers it is very difficult to participate in these events because of the strict rules and regulations in terms of the dress code. The world have seen the practical example of such an incident, marking the birth of controversies over hijab in sports, when the Iranian and Jordan women were banned by International Football Federation Association (FIFA), to participate in the 2012 Olympics event at London, simply because their hijab was not in line with the dress code of the event.

Researchers have been a little successful in compiling the statistics that show the physical activity participation by different ethnic groups. It is an interesting fact to pen down that according to the Active People Survey 2007, the percentage of Muslim women that do enough exercise each day to keep themselves fit is only 12. 2%. This low percentage vividly indicates the attitudes and behaviors of the Muslim women towards participation in sports. A research conducted with Muslim women, in sporting environment, demonstrates that the Muslim women were not ready to take part in

different sporting events, neither at school nor at national level. Because of the fact that they considered the sporting apparel inappropriate with their traditional beliefs and culture and hence, they are not ready to forego their hijab for sports, hence, triggering low participation in sports.

It is an interesting fact to know that regardless of the misconceptions revolving around the religious beliefs of Muslim women, it is almost now an established fact that the low participation of hijab wearing Muslim women in sports is attributed to ethnic considerations rather than religious fundamentalism. In an attempt to prove this idea, a study was conducted that focused on the relationship of young Arabic Muslim women with sports. Almost 80% of the respondents were agreeing to the fact that hijab is having an impact on sports participation. The study highlighted the fact that the low participation is because of ethnic, dress code and family restrictions. Burka, a more rigid form of hijab, is a hooded cloak that women use to cover their bodies from head to feet. This burka creates problems for sporting women as it limits the movement, peripheral vision and the choice of physical activity. Similarly, talking about hijab, many of the Arabic origin respondents were of the view that how can they play with this wide and lengthy cloth covering their head and neck and without it, the action would not be considered ethical as the society as well as the family settings require them to wear hijab to show their femininity. Therefore, considering these issues, they remain far less motivated to participate in sports and try to find other activities of interest for themselves, which may not be as fruitful as sports but are enough to engage them.

The afore said mentioned deliberations help in manifesting that the attitudes

and moods of the hijab wearing women, are intrinsically deep rooted with the ways these activities are delivered. Being the residents of the modern world, perspectives are changing across the globe. The recent Olympic Event 2012 witnessed this angle when the two athletes from Saudi Arabia were allowed to take part in the contest while wearing hijabs, although the decision was accompanied by a much-debated controversy. Therefore, these motivated steps can be encouraged in their true sense if the service providers, understanding the need of the hour, establish flexible sporting environment, thus, instrumenting the participation of women, henceforth promoting gender equality.