

## Do Psychological Motives, Social Factors and Religion Effect oncollege Female Students' Clothes Choice?

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**Abstract:** The present study aims to examine to what extent the psychological and social motives of 233 Muslim and Christian college female students are associated with social factors. A second focus of the study is to explore clothes choice motives and factors ranks for both Muslims and Christians. Finally, the study reveals differences in motivates and factors for both Muslim and Christian college female. Using survey questionnaires, the researchers investigate the influences of the following: motivates (psychological and social) and social factors (societal traditions, media, religious, political and economic factors) on clothes choice. In addition, the effect of sample religion (Muslims and Christians) on clothes choice. Results indicate that there is significant correlation between both psychological and social motives and political factors and between psychological motives and media factors for Muslim college female students. There is significant correlation between social motives and societal traditions for Christian college female students. Findings reveal that different religion factor doesn't affect cloth choice for both Muslim and Christian college female students. Finally, results show significant difference between Muslim and Christian college female students in all dimensions of the questionnaire except political factors.

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**Key Words:** psychological motives, social motives, societal factors, religion, clothes choice, Muslim college female students, Christian college female students.

### 1. Introduction

In the history of fashion and costumes, there is always a reason why cloth is worn (**Ojo&Bidemi, 2008; Okeh, 2009**). Clothing is also worn for identification through uniforms emblems and badges, ceremonial garments and according to dress codes. Modesty, which follows society's code of decency, is another reason people wear clothes. Finally, clothing is often worn to raise status or to bring a person recognition, prestige, and social acceptance (**Clothes and Fashion, part1**). Consumers build their own identity concept through psychological developments and social interaction. Unpopular choice counter-conformity: consumers willingly risk their social disapproval to establish their uniqueness by selecting products that deviate from group norms. So, clothing is a tool for expressing the identity and coping with the social medium (**Ozipek et al., 2012**). College students are more fashion-oriented and purchase more 'fast fashion' clothing than other consumer groups. It has been estimated that college students spend about \$6 billion annually on clothing and footwear in the US which accounts for about 10% of their total purchases (**Joung & Park-Poaps, 2013**).

Dressing Up delves into psychological, social, and religious motives of individuals towards dress and clothing choice in a society of its own. Some specialists mention criteria in terms of external factors (such as price, brand name and store image) and

internal factors (such as style color, fabric, care, fit and quality). Others use different classifications and proposed that style, quality and price having top priority and brand and country of origin being less important (**Ozipek et al., 2012**). On the other hand, others emphasize a wide range of social and psychological factors that influence consumer buying behavior and helping behavior and further research that explores this range of factors is required in order to gain a good understanding of how to maximize the success of social entrepreneurship initiatives (**Hibbert et al., 2005**).

Human beings wear clothing to satisfy their social need for modesty. Modesty is the covering of a person's body according to the code of decency of that person's society. Standards of modesty differ among various cultures and situations, and they change over time. A person's status is his or her position or rank compared with that of others. Good or high status is usually associated with recognition, prestige, and social acceptance. Clothing is sometimes used to gain a higher rank in society along with achievement and peer approval. Thus, many people are willing to pay more for garments with designer labels or popular logos (**Clothes and Fashion, part1**).

Paying attention to the reasons of buying and shopping motives is one of the key dimensions of consumer behavior which is used in marketing planning. Consumer motivation plays an important

role in explaining their behaviors. Motives are “forces instigating behavior to satisfy internal need states.. This indicates that motivational forces have a key influencing role in the modeling of shopping behavior, which is assumed to be goal-directed behavior (**Azizi & Shariffar, 2011**). According to Solomon and Rabolt (as cited in **Joung & Park-Poaps, 2013**) motivation refers to ‘the processes that lead people to behave as they do’. Motivation is a process that starts with a physiological deficiency or need that activates a behavior or a drive that is aimed at a goal incentive. Also motivation is a series of energizing forces that originate both within and beyond an individual’s self. Motivation is a complex phenomenon which is influenced by individual, cultural, ethnic and historical factors (**Luthan, 1998 as cited in Alibakhshi et al., 2010**).

Motivation refers to the processes that cause people to behave as they do. It occurs when a need (something that is lacking) is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy. Basic needs can be satisfied in many different ways. The choice of the consumer may be influenced by the unique set of personal experiences and values of the culture. The particular form of consumption used to satisfy a need is called a “want”. Wants are manifestations for needs. Maslow’s needs are listed below beginning from the bottom of the pyramid: Physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness needs, ego needs and self-actualization needs. Clothing can satisfy needs in every level of Maslow Hierarchy, with different contents: physiological needs (clothing covering the body and protects us from the elements), safety needs (clothing sold in the United States must pass flammability standards so that it won’t burst into flames when close to an ignition source; one should feel relatively safe in our clothing), belongingness needs. Social (fashion is something to share with and be seen in by others, ego needs—esteem (wearing the latest fashion or an art to wear piece makes us feel good about ourselves and gives us a sense of status among our peers) and self-actualization: “My clothes are an expression of total me”. For different people, it must be considered that needs may be different according to the type of clothing (**Ozipek et al., 2012**).

In addition, **Griskevicius and Kenrick (2013)** argue that, as a group-living species, humans not only desire to affiliate they also seek to gain status in their groups to be respected by others. As for personal motives, they are related to the person’s state and moods; and social motives are associated with others and community. Social motives as social experiences outside the home communication with others have a similar interest, peer group attraction status and authority and pleasure of bargaining (**Azizi & Shariffar, 2011**). People build their own identity

concept through psychological developments and social interaction. Unpopular choice counter-conformity: consumers willingly risk their social disapproval to establish their uniqueness by selecting products that deviate from group norms. So, clothing is a tool for expressing the identity and coping with the social medium (**Ozipek et al., 2012**).

Social and emotional rewards identified include public recognition, self-esteem, the satisfaction of expressing gratitude for one’s own wellbeing, relief from feelings of guilt and obligation, the anticipation of reciprocation and simply feeling good about oneself (**Hibbert et al., 2005**). Self-esteem is related with the positive perception of the person himself/ herself. People with low self-esteem, do not expect themselves to be successful and beware of shame, mistakes and refusals. People with self-esteem trust themselves and believe in their success, take more risks and are more reluctant to be the focus of interest. Self-esteem is also related with the others acceptance. He argued that managing visual appearance through cultural symbols like fashion can help to establish people self-esteem. When people feel better, they care more about their appearance or when their self-esteem is decreased, they do not care about their appearance or may be more obsessive (**Ozipek et al., 2012**).

Because being cheap is generally associated with lower status, increased concern about status might lead people to be less concerned about price. Numerous consumer goods and services are designed to fulfill people’s mate acquisition need. People everywhere have the same evolutionary needs, and these fundamental needs have a profound influence on people’s preferences and behavior (**Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013**). The motivation factors of this target segment and their expectations from the clothing should be analyzed through consumer surveys. Quality is such an important factor and it is at the second level after price for the consumers (**Ozipek et al., 2012**).

Brand and brand image are the important factors that have effects on consumers in clothing industry. Branding in clothing may have a specific importance for cloth is much more personal than anything used by the person. This symbol may have effects on the society visually and auditory and can lead the consumers to a specific type of behavior but will always be different from fashion. The consumer affinity to brand is generally led by the trust for the quality and the price, also being up to date. But, quality, trust and price do not have a priority in fashion (**Ozipek et al., 2012**).

As for religion; **Kayser (2009)** believed that the Bible makes clear that there was not a uniform dress code. He didn’t believe the Bible sets a specific dress code for worship. Instead it gives us guidelines for how we can honor the Lord in any culture. Analyzing

veiling-fashion as it plays out across economic, political and cultural fields is to enter into a new understanding of the role of Islam in the global arena today. In short, veiling-fashion remains controversial because it combines two systems that are seemingly incompatible: veiling, with its powerful set of religious cultural and political references, and fashion, an unmoored system of self-referential change associated with capitalism, modernity and a particular kind of consumer subject. Different social, political and religious meanings are attached to different styles of veiling-fashion and their presentation (**Gökarıksel & Secor, 2009**).

Of the social factors, media was a better predictor of dress and appearance than family and peers. The influence of media on dress and appearance was greater than that of referents including friends and family. This provides insight as to how effective media are to its users. Shopping enjoyment was another important predictor of dress and appearance, although the sample was somewhat ambivalent in regard to activities related to enjoyment shopping. The large majority of the sample really enjoyed shopping before making a purchase and enjoyed visiting stores before making a purchase (**Dixon, 2007**).

In regard to the psychological factors, all of the variables contributed to the influence of dress and appearance, with fashion leadership having the greatest influence. Researchers have recommended additional studies concerning the relationships between values (psychological and social) and fashion, fashion leadership, and consumer behavior. It is also important to study cultural groups to obtain specific information about different consumer groups (**Dixon, 2007**).

Studies have reported influences of family and peers on decision making of young consumers. **Joung and Park-Poaps(2013)** argue that young children learn consumer behavior in terms of skills, knowledge and attitudes from their parents and friends. These results assert that clothing in any culture is a means of communication. This assertion, point to the fact that clothing conveys messages when members of a society who share a given culture have learned to associate types of clothing given customary usage. Through this customary association, certain types of clothes become symbols of mood, social role, socio-economic status or political class (**Hibbert, 2008**).

## 2. Material and Methods

The descriptive survey method is used in this study. The sample of the current study consisted of female students from Damietta University population located in Damietta. Questionnaires are distributed randomly. The questionnaires were paper and pencil type and administered by the researchers. The

questionnaires were administered and collected immediately.

Thus, the total subjects that participated in this study were 233 female college students. The sample was consisted of 200 Muslim female college students and 33 Christian female college students.

The aim of the questionnaires was to measure the effect of these factors on clothes choice among the target population. The researchers designed the questionnaires based on effective motivation, social factors and religion impact on clothes choice. The questionnaire consists of 7 main groups: psychological motives, social motives, and societal traditions, and media, religious, political and economic factors. Likert-type scale was used to elicit needed information from the participants. Demographic information is collected. Validated scales were reviewed from previous studies.

A 7-item, 3 point scale derived from the literature reviewed on dress and appearance was used. Each item is measured on a 3-point scale with 1= disagree, 2=neutral and 3= agree. **Scoring:** Each respondent was rated numerically from 1-3 on each item. A respondent who respond "disagree" option to a negative item obtained a high score (3) just as she does when she respond disagree" to a positive statement which attracts a score of 1. A response of "disagree" to a positive statement attracts to the same scoring process as above.

## Data Analysis:

The purpose of statistical analysis is to investigate the effective motives and factors influencing college female students' choice of clothes. To find out the correlation between psychological and social motivates on one side and societal factors on other side and their effects on clothes choice, Chi Square is applied. SSPS is used to analyze the data. T-test is used to determine the relationship between independent variables, psychological motives, social motives, social factors and religious factors and dependent variables college female students' choice of clothes. It is also used to clarify the differences between Muslim college female students and Christian college female students in clothes choice.

## 3. Results:

Chi-square of psychological and social motives with social factors of Muslim college female students in table (1) display that there is no significant correlation between psychological motives and social motivation, societal traditions, religious factor and economic factor. There is significant correlation between psychological motives and media factor; Chi-square 28.91,  $p \leq 0.01$ , psychological motives with political factor Chi-square 20.22,  $p \leq 0.01$ . There is no significant correlation between social motives and (societal traditions, religious factor, media factor and

economic factor, however, there is significant relation square 12.45,  $p \leq 0.05$ .  
between social motives and political factor Chi-

**Table (1) Chi-square of psychological and social motives with social factors of Muslim college female students:**

		Social motives	Societal traditions	Religious factor	Media factor	Political factor	Economic factor
<b>Psychological motives</b>	Chi-square Sig N 200	9.29	4.22	4.31	28.97 0.01	20.22 0.01	7.31
<b>Social motives</b>	Chi-square Sig N	-----	1.93	5.05	10.24	12.45 0.05	2.34

Chi-square of psychological and social motives with social factors of Christian college female students in table (2) displays that; there is no significant correlation between psychological motives and (social motives, societal traditions, religious factor, political factor, media factor and economic factor). There is no significant correlation between social motives and (religion factor, media factor and economic factor), but there is significant correlation between social motives and societal traditions, Chi-square 12.91,  $p \leq 0.05$ .

**Table (2) Chi-square of psychological and social motives with social factors of Christian college female students:**

		social motives	societal traditions	Religious factor	Media factor	Political factor	Economic factor
<b>Psychological motives</b>	Chi-square Sig N 33	0.97	3.54	1.10	7.38	1.89	1.84
<b>Social motives</b>	Chi-square Sig N	-----	12.91 0.05	3.16	6.96	1.05	2.94

Table(3) shows that the most affective factor of clothes choice for both Muslim and Christian college female students are religious factors, as it is ranking first one of all factors; 89% for Muslim college female students and 52% for Christian college female students. Second rank is psychological motives 76% for Muslim college female students. Concerning Christian college female students' psychological motives ranked 52% equally as religious factors. Accordingly, societal traditions come in the third rank for Muslim college female students 69% and 33% for Christian college female students. Political factors come in the next rank for Muslim college female students 24.5% and 15% for Christian college female students in the same rank with media factors which come in the fifth rank in the case of Muslim college female students. As for Muslim girls economic factors come in the sixth rank 7%, whereas come in the same rank of social motives 3% Christian college female students. Social motives rank last one in the case of Muslim college female students.

**Table (3) clothes choice motives and factors ranks**

motives and factors	Muslims college female students n=(200)		Christian college female students n=(33)	
	%	Rank	%	Rank
<b>Psychological motives</b>	76%	2	52%	1
<b>Social motives</b>	2.5%	7	3%	4
<b>Societal traditions</b>	69%	3	33%	2
<b>Religious factors</b>	89%	1	52%	1
<b>Political factors</b>	24.5%	5	15%	3
<b>Media factors</b>	16.5%	4	15%	3
<b>Economic factors</b>	7%	6	3%	4

Table(4) shows the descriptive (means, SD, t-test and Sig.) for motives and social factors affect Muslim and Christian college female students' clothes choice. Table (4) indicates that there are significant differences of

psychological motives ( $2.75 \pm 0.456$  and  $2.515 \pm 0.507$ ,  $p \leq 0.008$ ). Social motives have the same significance ( $1.875 \pm 0.4$  and  $1.727 \pm 0.516$ ,  $p \leq 0.008$ ). Societal traditions are highly significant ( $2.655 \pm 0.545$  and  $2.242 \pm 0.613$ ,  $p \leq 0.000$ ). Religious factors are highly significant ( $2.875 \pm 0.360$  and  $2.484 \pm 0.565$ ,  $p \leq 0.000$ ). Media factors are relatively significant ( $1.860 \pm 0.672$  and  $1.606 \pm 0.747$ ,  $p \leq 0.049$ ). Political factors have no significance ( $2.115 \pm 0.602$  and  $1.939 \pm 0.609$ ,  $p \leq 0.123$ ). Economic factors are significant ( $1.925 \pm 0.458$  and  $1.697 \pm 0.529$ ,  $p \leq 0.010$ ).

**Table (4): "T" values for means differences significance of motivate and factors for Muslim and Christian college female students:**

Factor	Sample	M.	±SD	T.test	Sig.
Psychological motives	Muslim college female students N 200	2.7500	0.45666	2.694	0.008
	Christian college female students N 33	2.5152	0.50752		
Social motives	Muslim college female students N 200	1.8750	0.40022	1.880	0.008
	Christian college female students N 33	1.7273	0.51676		
Societal tradition	Muslim college female students N 200	2.6550	0.54540	3.954	0.000
	Christian college female students N 33	2.2424	0.61392		
Religion factor	Muslim college female students N 200	2.8750	0.36059	5.251	0.000
	Christian college female students N 33	2.4848	0.56575		
Media factors	Muslim college female students N 200	1.8600	0.67280	1.977	0.049
	Christian college female students N 33	1.6061	0.74747		
Political factors	Muslim college female students N 200	2.1150	0.60299	1.548	0.123
	Christian college female students N 33	1.9394	0.60927		
Economic factors	Muslim college female students N 200	1.9250	0.45872	2.587	0.010
	Christian college female students N 33	1.6970	0.52944		

Table (5): indicates high significance of overall questionnaire dimensions between Muslim college female students and Christian college female students ( $16.065 \pm 1.653$  and  $14.212 \pm 1.832$ ,  $p \leq 0.000$ ).

**Table (5): "T" value for means differences significance of overall questionnaire dimensions of the sample:**

	Sample	M.	±SD	T.test	Sig.
Overall questionnaire dimensions	Muslim college female students N 200	16.0650	1.65362	5.781	0.000
	Christian college female students N 33	14.2121	1.83299		

#### 4. Discussions

The sample consists of 233 (Muslim= 200; Christian= 33) college students enrolled at the University of Damietta. At the end of data collection, 233 participants complete the questionnaire. At first, the average and standard deviation of each question are measured. The data gained from SPSS and excel are presented in tables. For better and reliable result, the respondents are analyzed based on personal information. The majority of the participants are Muslims, as (85.83%) are Muslim college female students as shown in tables, demographic statics show that Muslims are more than 90% in Egyptian society.

Results showed that for Muslim college female students both psychological and social motives are positively associated with political factors, but only psychological motives are associated with media factor. According to Rob Frankel, as cited in (Montgomery, 2012) this generation is "way more tuned into media" simply because so much media is available to them. Therefore, young people are most likely to be observing celebrity behavior, and at a time in their life when they are still forming their values.

Yet, a modest negative association is found between both psychological and social motives and (societal traditions, religious factor and economic factors). It would be expected positive correlation between psychological and social motives, on the one side, and societal traditions, religious factor, on the other side. This coincide the results of Jain *et al.* (2011) that both the groups of his study show higher mean scores for political value related to clothing behavior. Another striking observation is that both the groups place political value at a higher platform indicating the leadership qualities. As for Christian college female students; results indicate negative correlation between both psychological and social motives and all social factors except societal traditions which is positively correlated with social motives. This is the same result that state subjective norms, controversy perception (social acceptance) and fashion involvement were significant predictors of purchase intention (Naderi, 2013).

These findings, on the one hand, don't agree with that of Karamian (2007) which indicated that correlation between consumer's income and price preference is not equal to zero in case of all

respondents and women. This implies that, there is a positive association between income of women and price preference, it is ascertained that the consumers while taking decision are more affected by economy rather than emotional buying motives. On the other hand, in the case of other study the clothing behavior of students is economically governed and earlier the results of general values also show that students keep economic value at a higher platform (**Jain et al., 2011**). Fashion involvement is likely to be associated with differences in sensitivity to social surroundings in that those who are highly motivated to fit into a particular group will need to be aware of the fashion cues not just of that group but of other less desirable groups so that the 'wrong' cues may be avoided (**Auty & Elliot, 1998**).

By comparing statistical average it is clarified that factors which have high effects on clothes choice are as follow ; high average shows the great agreement on religious factors and low average implies that social motivates become lower. Table 3 reveals the order of motivations and factors that affect clothes choice. The findings of the current investigation provide the first empirical evidence that both Muslim and Christian college female students have the same ranking of motivations and factor that effect on clothes choice. This disagree with the findings that political and theoretical value is on the second and third place. These are followed by aesthetic, religious and social values In the Commerce group, the scores received for values related to clothing behavior show that political and economic values are more experienced (**Jain et al., 2011**). But the current study agrees with the same study regard to social factors which come in the last position with both Muslim and Christian college female students, as **Jain et al.(2011)** asserts that; next to these is aesthetic value Religious and theoretical value obtained almost same marks.

Somewhat surprisingly, that psychological motives come in the first rank for Christian college female students and in the second rank for Muslim college female students. This agree with results of **Naderi (2013)** which insures that heavy users of fashion clothing view fashion as a means of expressing social and personal identity. Psychological constructs are more strongly associated with usage than are levels of age, education and income. Ultimately, people choose clothing based on a variety of reasons - marketing, functional needs, their physical, social, and psychological reasons, and their own individual taste (**Kranich and McCarthy, 2011**).

As for table (4), there are significant differences of psychological and social motives between Muslim and Christian college female students. Dress and appearance are forms of non- verbal communication that consist of an individual's outward assemblage of

apparel on the body as well as all alterations and additions to the body(**Dixon, 2007**). People also choose clothes for social reasons, such as adhering to cultural norms, meeting expectations, and fitting into groups. And we base our clothing decisions on psychological factors, such as a desire to be attractive, feel powerful, or express our creativity (**Kranich and McCarthy, 2011**). Also there are strong significant differences of societal tradition and religion factors between Muslim and Christian college female students. **Belton & Clinton (2007)** see the relationship between consumers' perceptions of certain apparel items and human behavior can be explained through characteristics of society. Society largely impacts the way in which consumers behave towards evaluating, purchasing, and using products. Clothing is one of the most noticeable aspects of adolescent culture and is an important means by which individual adolescents express their identities. One manifestation of society's influence on adolescents is evident in the clothing they choose to wear.

There are relatively significant differences of both media factors and economic factors between Muslim and Christian college female students. This is the same as there is a positive significant relationship between attitude towards the behavior and purchase intention. In addition, subjective norms and other external variables (i.e. fashion involvement, personality trait and media usage) had no influence on purchase intention (**Naderi, 2013**). But political factors have no significance.

As the knowledge of the researchers there is no studies conducted for the religion factor for both Muslims and Christians in clothes choice. The major contribution of this study lies in the finding that both Muslim and Christian college students have the same rank of motives and factors that influence clothes choice. However, the motives and factors, positive or negative that may be associated with clothes choice certainly affect college female students' choice for their clothes.

#### **Authors' contributions**

AbdEllatif designed the questionnaire, acquired and performed the data analysis of Chi-square; Emara assisted with questionnaire items, performed the data analysis of T-test, interpreted the data, wrote and edited the manuscript, and have approved it for submission.

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#### **Research limitations**

Finally, some limitations of this study should be mentioned. The study sample was limited to the students living in Damietta governorate. Comparing the study sample to Egyptian population statistics,

they are relatively younger and better educated. Although this demographic data reflected the characteristics of the students, the results cannot be generalized to all Egyptian college female students.

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