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# Profile of Women Who Undergo Tattoo in Basrah

Hanaa Al hasan

hanaa.jaber@uobasrah.edu.iq

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ABSTRACT: In modern times, the process of tattooing has withdrawn a lot of attention Investigators and consultants in the field of tattooing premeditated its significance regarding different perspectives such as sociological speculative grounds besides social factors effects on gender, one's social identity, age group, sub-cultures regarding urban and ruler areas, occupational status. In this study, socio-cultural impacts and sociological implication perspectives of tattooing among young modern women in Basra were examined. The main purpose of this study is to find the root causes that influence young modern women to undergo tattoo embeddedness. Another purpose of this study is to find any social-cultural factors that are influencing or discouraging tattooing among young women and how these marks are helpful in communication as well as having a unique identity. This research was conducted in two parts reviewing literature review and conducting in-depth interviews. The inductive research approach was used for this purpose. The nonprobability technique was used for sample selection which was five young collegegoing women. From the results, it was concluded that tattoos are becoming a powerful tool for individual self-expression and presentation of who they are. Inscribing tattoos on the body represents a person as a figurative symbol. Love, freedom, imagination, and idealism are a form of a few self-expressions that women like to represent through their inscribing bodies.

### KEYWORDS: profile, women, tattoo, Basrah

### INTRODUCTION

Modern-day tattooing history belongs back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tattooing tradition starting flourished in England due to its popularity among the British Navy. The people who were often seen embodied with tattoos were sailors. The popularity of tattooing in the British Navy started after the visit of James Cook (Captain) to Polynesia in 1769. Tattoos on soldier bodies as well as regimental crests are

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considered a sign of identification and to reassure esprit de crop (Gilbert, 2000). Polynesian tattooing dominance was encouraged due to its discovery and modification ensured by James Cook. Despite the fact that this area had a communicative history of tattooing long before James Cook's discovery (Poli et al.,2000). This region was physically as well as culturally gifted to encourage multipart social development by using abundant natural sources that create nourishment rather diffidently. To create a socially stable and prominent identity many culturally dominant practices including tattooing were made during the additional time (Gilbert, 2000). Although literature comprises a number of shreds of evidence for the Polynesian techniques including designs, however, most of this evidence was tainted and spoiled by the folk tendencies of European travelers and pioneers (Poli et al.,2000).

In modern times, the process of tattooing has withdrawn a lot of attention Investigators and consultants in the field of tattooing premeditated its significance regarding different perspectives such as sociological speculative grounds besides social factors effects on gender, one's social identity, age group, sub-cultures regarding urban and ruler areas, occupational status, etc. tattooing has also be studied regarding different psychological theories. Most of these researches were performed on the grounds of both positive and negative speculations (Roberts, 2012; Ferreira, 2014). The participation of youth in tattooing has been growing with the perspective of engraving tattoos as well as carrying tattooing as a profession frequently. However, this participation by young individuals in tattooing directly depends upon the ethnic aspects and variation in social-demographical structure. So the studies should be conducted in accordance with the above-mentioned perspectives which directly influent the young audience in the field of tattooing and hence they are considered the main target audience in this profession.

With the passage of time, the popularity of tattooing increased rapidly so as far as the tattoo culture is being more accepted in society. The popularity of tattooing increased mainly due to sports representatives and celebrities bearing tattoos acting on television in addition to magazines. Different types of perspectives seemed to be applied in different areas for tattooed people some people thought of them as foolish, crude, objectionable, and unstable however some take them as progressive, unique, attractive, anticipated, self-assured, and fascinating (Armstrong et al., 2002). Despite the fact that tattooing gaining popularity in the modern world there is little information about the intentions of these body markers procurement (Tigemann & Godler 2016). Researchers had started taking interest in the motives behind tattooing and also working with different psychological perceptions that are concerned with specific tattooing behaviors at different places (Kertzman et al., 2019). Giving a

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closer look at tattooing might be quite helpful for the identification reasons for this tattooing behavior. Tattooing can be used as a means of the deep-seated way for communication purposes and most people used their own bodies to present their feelings beside their unique identity (Cipotelletta et al., 2010). Thus we can say that tattooing is a strong way of communication to show one's improved image and exceptional identity (Swami,2011; Tiggemann & Hopkins, 2011). The frequently mentioned purposes for tattooing which are mostly shared by college-going students are as follows self-expression (Forbes, 2011), personal distinctiveness (Armstrong et al., 2008), self-affirmation besides individuality creation (Strin, 2007), to show control and oneself mastery over the body (Caroll & Anderson, 2002), and associate identity (Karacaoglan, 2012). Nowadays tattooing started showing cultural rebellion besides self-definition as well as one's expression (Atkinson, 2004).

In today's academic world tattooing was studied and understood with a perspective related to the social philosophies of the physique and then relating it with the historical perspective of tattoo formation. Tattooing nowadays seems to follow the path of many diverse sub-movements, these movements not only acted for the re-introduction of tattooing in European but also worked for its growth and recognition in American culture. These sub-movements also worked to establish a relationship between tattooing in divergent cultures, its renaissance, growth, and acceptance as a distinctive form of art. From the study of present-day literature, it has been confirmed that tattooing is extensively premeditated from historical to social perspectives in the European and western worlds. Abundant pieces of evidence have been found regarding tattoos' historical development with respect to social and traditional stimuli. Conversely to the western world, no clear pieces of evidence of literature regarding the historical development of tattooing can be found in the eastern world with only a limited exception (Jain, 2016).

Tattooing regarding Islamic views may seem to be an old topic but it's unique when it comes to Muslim countries and Muslims bearing tattoos. This topic is old enough to regard the question of Halal and Haram as it's a long answered question by Muslim theologians that tattooing is haram in Islam. With the passage of time with respect to Muslim practices, new questions have been arising regarding tattooing practices and tattoo embeddedness. The Sunni sect of Muslims which has numerous followers around the world considered tattooing a totally forbidden act and subjected it as a sin. While another Islamic sect known as the Shia sect considered tattooing still as a questionable issue. Temporary tattooing especially one made with Henna is considered permissible in all predominantly Muslim nations (Nasir, 2016).

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### Aims and objectives of the study

In this study, socio-cultural impacts and sociological implication perspectives of tattooing among young modern women in Basra were examined. The main purpose of this study is to find the root causes that influence young modern women to undergo tattoo embeddedness. Another purpose of this study is to find any social-cultural factors that are influencing or discouraging tattooing among young women and how these marks are helpful in communication as well as having a unique identity.

• Young women's inscribing tattoos on their bodies are influenced by which factors?

• Exploring the connection type between the tattoo artist and the young audience undergoing the tattooing process.

## METHODOLOGY

### **Research Philosophy**

In the present research we don't have any plans for the testing of subjected hypotheses nor do we have plans for testing a theoretical model. However, the main purpose of this research was only to attain research objectives besides research questions. More specifically finding the factors that influence or deter modern women from tattooing. Secondly, to find their communication behavior and to find the corresponding meaning from their body markers. For this purpose, the prevailing literature about self-identity and tattoos of young college-going women in Basrah. Mainly the study was divided into two phases literature review and empirical study through conducted reviews.

### **Research Approach**

Inductive and deductive are the two main approaches for research purposes (Veil & Sanders, 1989; Collins & Hussey, 2009). In this study, we use the inductive research method which usually starts with some observations and discoveries and then uses them to make some sort of generalizations as well as theories (Brymann & Bell, 2011). Under the inductive approach, this study was performed by overviewing the literature review and conducting in-depth interviews for answering the research questions besides approaching the research objectives.

### **Research Method**

For a research application in social science study either qualitative or quantitative or both methods can be used by a researcher. The selection for the research method either single or mixed purely depends upon the data requirements (Veil & Sanders, 1989; Creswell, 2009). In the present study only qualitative data was required so for this purpose only a qualitative approach was put into application. Qualitative data for

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the empirical part of the research was collected through in-depth interviews of the selected samples.

### **Data Collection**

In the present research, for reaching the research goals the data was collected in primary as well as secondary forms (Veil & Sanders, 1989; Sekaranand & Bougie, 2016). For the secondary data collection, the literature review was revised and upon its speculations, the primary data was collected. For primary data, collection interviews were conducted by using a semi-structured interview instrument. The interviews were collected mainly for young college-going students and women undergoing marriage age, gathered at the tattoo studios in Basrah. The interviews were also conducted with the tattooing professionals.

#### Sample collection

Two techniques such as probability and non-probability can be used for a sample selection in the case of a field study for social sciences exploration. If the target population to be selected is definite then the probability technique was used for sample collection and if the target is indefinite then the non-probability technique is more accurate (Veil & Sanders, 1989). In the present research, the non-probability technique was for the sample selection due to the in-definite target population selection. Five college-going women were selected as samples.

#### Data Analysis

With the help of data analyzing tools, qualitative analysis was performed for answering the research question as well as to analyze the maximum research issues relating to the research objectives.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

In the literature review philosophies and ideas are defined and intellectualized in relation to the present study to represent the different factors affecting the process of tattooing as a performer or inscriber.

#### Tattoo: Characterization and Conceptualization

Innate social and cultural stimuli affect body modification through tattooing. Atkinson (2002) a renowned sociologist discussed tattooing at different levels such as performance, concept, and symbolization which are interdependent upon the factors related to the social culture of a society. Having a tattoo might or might not British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences 3 (2), 31-44, 2022 Print ISSN: 2517-276X Online ISSN: 2517-2778

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be affected by society's beliefs. If a society believes in the acceptance of tattooing the next question arises which symbols are acceptable and which are not. Family, associates, friends, and even outsiders can influence the representation of a person through tattooing. Although tattoos represent an impressive association through their conceptualization to their prospective audience. So it's an important factor to understand the influences of social-cultural factors and their role in aiding or preventing the concepts of tattooing in modern basrian women.

Two main concepts most likely apply to tattooing one goes for the symbolization of one's beliefs through their tattoo. The other one is just for the symbolization process irrespective of their meanings. But in both concepts tattooing process is affected by a socio-culture factor (Jain, 2010). The participation of youth in the tattooing process is increasing both as a performer and inscribers. In this study, socio-cultural perspectives were used to examine the tattoos of women.

### Tattoo: Inspirations and Design

Although the practice of tattooing is increased in modern society it's still affected by demographic as well as psychographic factors. A group of individuals may have both positive and negative concepts regarding tattooing when it comes to personal as well as professional levels. For understanding the perceptions of friends, colleagues and consumers a number of studies were performed by using a questionnaire regarding tattoos. College students who just seek employment may find their potential at risk for having a tattoo. Having tattoos could be taken as a negative aspect for employers as well as colleagues and thus it can damage the insight of reliability as an employee or as an individual. These negative concepts can affect one's mind for having a tattoo (Armstrong et al., 2008; Dean, 2010). As students at colleges got employed in different sectors so it is important to acknowledge different perceptions in different working environments about having tattoos on workers (Dean, 2010). Perceptions for having a tattoo in different working environments are mainly the same for both men and women but to some extent, women are more persuaded for having a tattoo on their body. Women's bodies are deemed to be more tattooed in different cultures as the concept of body modification is somehow associated with beauty (Resenhoeft et al., 2008; Miller et al., 2009; Dean, 2010). The negative influence regarding tattoos is most likely to lie in people's perceptions in most societies irrespective of the workplace even tattooing is becoming more and more popular art for body modification and selfidentity.

A noticeable difference of opinion occurs between the students having tattoos and the ones without a tattoo placement. The difference of opinion also occurs between the students employed in some art sector as compared to the students undergoing some British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences 3 (2), 31-44, 2022 Print ISSN: 2517-276X Online ISSN: 2517-2778 Website: https://bjmas.org/index.php/bjmas/index

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other professions such as doctors. The main difference in mental perceptions comes regarding their affairs with colleagues as well as employers at the workplace. This difference in mental perceptions leads to concerns regarding sentiments of one having tattoos, employment, tattoo placement, and general sentiments (Jain, 2010).

### Social implications of tattoo

Acknowledgment of the body as a social model makes a clearer understanding of the modern-day perspective of tattoos. In modern culture, the human body is carved through the inspirations that affect human relations as well as communication (Synnott, 2002). As far as the social framework the inscribing of the body is significantly related to the perspective of self as well as the identity of a person. De Vignemont (2011) proves this perspective by doing an analysis of the relationship between body physique and body internal-self. Body external experiences were affected by the five senses while the internal experiences were depending upon the compatibility with body sensations to explicit an individual. Self-expression, self-identity, and transformation are the three roles gratified by tattoos explicitly (Sullivan, 2009). To differentiate between these three roles for study purposes find to be a tricky task. In present-day social theory, tattoos are constructed not only as a means of self-identity but also as a means of communication for that identity. Information affluence was constructed in a social framework through which communication was conducted (Vail & Sanders, 1989).

Peoples use tattooing as means of self-expression such as who they are, what they thought about themselves, their relations in social worlds, their relations with close people, and their means of living through hard times. Tattooing might be helpful in sending messages to individuals as well as groups of people. In the present-day theory, they might be helpful for showing oneself affirming in an open environment. In this study, important perceptions regarding women tattooing and their social experiences were discussed.

#### Tattooing and youth

In a life course, the youth is taken as a discrete period regarding numerous perspectives. According to Adams (2009) age, 18-25 is a phase of life that seems to be relatively independent of lawful expectations as well as social roles. Tattooing practices among youth are mainly due to emerging independence on their way to adulthood. The impact of inequality presence could seem to influence the proceedings with social factors. With youth facing more difficulties on their way to adulthood mainly in some specific regions of the world undergoing tattooing need to undergo preliminary research with respect to the socio-demographic aspirations. Circumstances of one's life also influence the involvement in the body modification

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process. It mostly happens in the case of women regarding their thoughts for inscribing the body to get in position in the male dominant groups or organizations. It also gives evidence of the popularity of tattooing among young women (Heywood et al., 2012; Laumann & Derick, 2006). Difference between the socio-demographic factors with respect to gender, religiosity, and sexuality also influences body modifications at this specific period of life.

### **Finding Analysis**

Data was analyzed by using thematic analysis methodology which is a method of critically analyzing and understanding the set in a form of group, category, theme or codes (Braun & amp; Clarke, 2012). This was most suitable for this review based study in order to get depth understanding of the frequency of Women who undergo of tattoo in Basrah.

### **Primary Findings**

Primary findings were generated using thematic analysis through coding, categorization and themes generation. Thematic analysis helped in assessing the core themes for the possible factors that are associated with women who undergo Tatto. Main themes generated in this regard are as follows.

Factors that influence young women undergoing tattooing are as follows

### Self-identity and expression

As time passes the culture of tattooing is becoming more progressed in different regions of the world including the Eastern region. Anciently, tattoos were used as a means for presenting the values of a society as far as its cultural traditions. Nowadays tattoos are becoming a powerful tool for individual self-expression and presentation of who they are. Inscribing tattoos on the body represents a person as a figurative symbol. Love, freedom, imagination, and idealism are a form of a few selfexpressions that women like to present through inscribing bodies. They may also represent one philosophy toward life. Imaginative women mostly have imaginary tattoos so as goes for the freedom-loving women.

Respondent1: "A sign of my personality"

Respondent 2: "The best of it is on the thighs, taking the form of a bright sun that covers the entire area of distortion of the burn".

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Repondent3:

In general perception, tattoos are only considered a cultural tradition and fashion but nowadays young women in Basrah take it more than just fashion and cultural representation.

Respondent 6: "The first with my right arm, yes, I engraved the letter of my first love, reminding me of the love of my life".

Respondent 8: "The first is for the eyebrows, yes, I got a better shape and I became younger. The second tattoo on the back, the best because it expresses an aesthetic condition and a beautiful rose drawing".

Tattoos are also becoming famous for the expression of love for young girls to their loved ones. Conferring to an aspirant, So tattoos for young college women are a source of imagination, philosophy, nature love, expressing life's good as well as bad movements, and freedom of expression.

Respondent 10: "The first tattoo of my favorite singer's face because I'm a big fan of it. The best of which is a picture of a lit candle because it broadcasts hope and renewal in my soul".

Respondent 13:

"The tattoo on my shoulder with the view of the heart of love because it is a special request from my husband"

Respondent 15: "The beginning of my puberty of falling in love with someone, so I tattooed the first letter of his name on my hand".

#### Self-confidence and empowerment

Empowerment as well as self-esteem can be signified by tattooing. Young college girls in Basrah find it as a tool for the representation of their self-esteem. According to them, they find themselves empowered in respect of confidence as well as status. Conferring to an aspirant,

Respondent 4: "I found tattooing the only solution for my eyebrows after being burned by fire and distorting the shape of the eyebrows. After tattooing it, it became more beautiful, younger and more vibrant". From another interviewee's point of view,

Respondent 8: "pieces, the best of which is on my right shoulder, a drawing of a shining sun because it is the beginning of optimism and the end of my sadness".

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Respondent 11: "Drawings, the best of which is on my chest because it symbolizes a beautiful blooming rose. She added aesthetics and spirit to my saddle, as if it were a story".

In today's world women having tattooed bodies specifically college-going girls look fascinated. The most decisive way to express oneself is through tattoos they can be cultural, fun-all, spiritual, and religious.

### Hiding burns and cracks of body

People have motives of making tattoos on body to hide scars, burns and cracks of body that is after giving birth. After having scar or burn in the body people feel low and depressed. So people in order to hide that burns made a tattoo on it.

Respondent 12: "The first is on my hands because I was burned and deformed, and it only disappeared with tattoos. The best of it is on the thighs, taking the form of a bright sun that covers the entire area of distortion of the burn"

Respondent 5: "Because I was annoyed by the deformities of my stomach, and I could not find a solution for it due to the large number of births and cracks".

So it is found in Basra most of the women made tattoos to hide their burning areas and birth cracks in Basra.

### Tattooing is Criticized, and Feeling of Regret

Globalization forces significantly criticized the people over a period of time. The profession of tattoo art getting through a lot of changes with the passage of time as it is gaining attention in young college going as well as marriage able women in Basrah. Tattoo culture influenced by tradition, religion and western culture are in massive demand but criticized by society factors as from an interview it was opinionated, and is mainly influenced by different cultures, religions, and western life flair".

Respondent 3: "They're surprised; yeah I'm ashamed of my craftsmanship".

Respondent 9: "At first, everyone laughs and laughs at me. I feel alienated, and then after years and the spread of tattoos among women, I became accepted by society".

Respondent 11: "They are surprised by the number of tattoos on my bod"

From another aspirant, "The culture of the world is rapidly changing and continuously evolving over the period of time. For the tattooing in Basrah tattoos as well as Mehendi worked as integral part and constantly influenced by western life attire as the young girls in todays world are becoming more and more conscious about fashion British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences 3 (2), 31-44, 2022 Print ISSN: 2517-276X Online ISSN: 2517-2778 Website: https://bjmas.org/index.php/bjmas/index Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK

and their looks. So the professionals having knowledge about latest technologies, fashion, movies, actors, sports stars and magazines have greater chances for a bright future".

### DISCUSSION

The findings of this observational study expose that by inscribing tattoos on their bodies with different symbols young women are trying to express their inner-self and their uniqueness. In other cases, they used tattooing to show their imagination, their thoughts about freedom, and their philosophy about life. In some other cases, they used these tattoos to reveal their love for nature as well as the good and bad times of their life. In Basrah, the women are undergoing tattooing to show their expression towards love and its choice. Every person might have their individual or common way of personality expression. Maroto's (2011) studies attract attention to the modern tattooing perspective that leads to the enhanced recognition of tattoos, the social dominance differences, the tattoo artists' professionals changing statuses, and to the progress of tattooing in non-traditional domains. Moreover, the author reveals that a tattoo artist must be knowledgeable enough to understand the thoughts of the client to express oneself either uniquely or in the group. Tattooing could be seen as gratifying three roles such as self-expression, creation of one identity, and selftransformation (Sullivan, 2009). It proved to be a tricky task to differentiate between these three parts even if one tries to differentiate. In the world of tattooing, the body works as a token to express the true identity oneself in a constantly transforming environment (Roberts, 2012).

From the findings of the present study, it was revealed that the stereotypical thinking of society is somehow changing regarding women. This change let the women feel more empowered as well as self-esteemed in today's world and so can be seen by the tattoos inscriptions on women's bodies. Tattoos can be a symbol of traditional culture as well as modernization. From research, sit was concluded that men are more likely to approach women having tattoos on their body as they thought them to be submitted in just the first attempt as compared to women who do not have any tattoos on their bodies. The appearances of tattoos can be varied geographically but some symbols are specified and have significant importance in some cultures (Lim et al., 2013).

The results of the studies also reveal the inspiration in young women for tattooing comes from both intrinsic cultures, beauty, western attire, and fashion (Jain, 2010). Findings also reveal the booming of the tattoo profession in Basrah specifically through the young women's passion for inscribing their bodies to show their innerself as well as their urge to look up to date according to fashion. To be a successful

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tattoo performer one must be up to date on different factors that influence the tattooing business.

### CONCLUSION

In today's world Tattoos symbolizes a mean of self-expression. This phrase is well suited for young college-going girls who are inscribing their bodies with tattoos. Selfexpression and uniqueness are the two main factors that influenced young women for tattooing. Young women also inscribe their bodies for showing the expression of love, freedom, and idealism. As time passes, cultural norms are changing and can be represented well in tattoo symbols. With time tattooing had been gone through a lot of transformations. Young women get tattooed on different parts of their bodies due to the popularity of tattoos as fashion and style among the young generations. The business of tattooing is explored in Basrah where the awareness of style beside technique are the key factors for its success.

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