

A Study of the Effects of Cultural Capital on Body Management among the Young of Gilan-e Gharb Township, Kermanshah, Iran

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Abstract: The present research, a descriptive and correlational study, aimed to delve into the effects of cultural capital on young boy's body management. The sampling method was multistage and 148 people were selected as the sample population through Cochran's sample size formula. Furthermore, to collect the required data, the cultural capital and body management questionnaires were used. To analyze the data, SPSS 19, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used. Finally, the results demonstrated that there was a significant positive relationship between cultural capital and body management.

Key words: Cultural capital, body management, the young, Gilan-e Gharb, Iran

INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of new eras, a great deal of importance is attached to different types of appearance and certain bodily actions. Fashion is under the influence of pressure groups, commercial advertisements, socioeconomic facilities and other factors that promote more mandatory criteria than individual differences (Gidenz, 2008).

Body management means altering the appearance of the body and with the advent of new ages, the appearance of bodily actions has been attached a special significance. Not only have bodies been of great significance from a biological angle, they have also been given a lot of attention as social and psychological products (Haghighi, 2007). So, body management means 'continuous monitoring and manipulation of the visible features of bodies. This concept has turned into a luxury index with the help of factors like weight control (through exercise, diet and pharmaceuticals), medical manipulation (nose jobs and plastic surgeries) and the importance of health care and beauty (daily bathing, hairdressing, makeup or shaving, wearing perfumes and cologne, nail makeup and wearing colored lenses for women) (Chavoshian, 2002).

In today's world, the body is considered one of the fields that can be manipulated by people voluntarily and the appearance and body management, a symbol of differentiation between people, makes others become familiar with kinds of identities. In short, it seems that body management and consumption habits are increasingly interpreted as foundations of identity in recent decades. Hence, Langman (2003) expresses that

people from different societies get dressed as they wish but the very same people deal with how they look physically according to their ages, gender and occupation requirements and other social status indexes.

According to Bourdieu, body management aims at the acquisition of dignity, distinction and status and in his analysis of the body, the commodification of bodies is pointed up in modern societies, appearing in the form of physical capitals. In his view, this physical capital depends on the development of the body, carrying values in social fields. Also, body as a comprehensive form of physical capital, incorporates social status and distinct symbolic forms. In fact, changing the physical capital means translation and interpretation of physical presence in terms of various forms of capital (economic, social and cultural) in the fields of work, leisure and so on (Shiling, 1993). On the other hand, considering bodies as cultural capitals, Bourdieu associated people's identities with social values in accordance with size, shape and physical appearance and in his view, some symbolic social norms are carried by bodies (Lopez and Jan, 2002), the social orders are considered the orders of bodies and bodies are symbolically and physically influenced by the social requirements (Shoeide and Olivoyeh, 2006). Given the fact that body management is regarded as one of the indexes and components of lifestyles (Chavoshian, 2002; Fazeli, 2003; Zokaei, 2007), it can be declared that lifestyles are influenced by the cultural capital through one's sensibilities and tastes and the manner of body management as one of the components of lifestyles are influenced, too. He believes that the physical capital (appearance and physical characteristics) is related to economic, social and cultural capitals (Zokaei, 2007). In

addition as mentioned earlier, he considers the physical capital as one of the subsidiary types of cultural capital. The physical capital production refers to the social formation of bodies through sports, leisure and other activities, having roots in people's habits.

The culture of body must be considered a perspective by which the cultural developments and trends are evaluated. Moreover, in the wake of human being's increasing control over their bodies and organs; experts and professionals on cultural and social affairs have been trying to find the effective factors in body management and one of the factors that has been agreed in this regard in today's world is the extent of people's cultural capital in cultural and social fields (Bourdieu, 2013; Shilling, 1991, 1993; Zokaee, 2007; Fazeli, 2003; Chavoshian, 2002) which affects one's body management in such a way that can have different bodily appearances based on the extents of cultural capital. In practice, the cultural capital has caused people's bodily appearances to change into issues with cultural values. So with the above-mentioned stuff in mind, the present work aimed to delve into the effects of cultural capital on body management among young boys from Gilan-e Gharb, Kermanshah, Iran.

A lot of studies have been conducted in this regard, including Ebrahimi and Behnooie (2011), Ebrahimi and Ziapour (2011, 2012), Ziapour and Bagherian (2013), Abbas *et al.* (2012) and Ghaderi and Rezaie (2014). In a study performed by the results demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between cultural capital and body management that forms a dimension of lifestyle. The results of a study conducted by Ahmadi (2007) showed that cultural capital had significant effects on body management and the results of studies conducted by Ebrahimi and Behnooie (2011) demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between cultural capital, the young's economic status and body management.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was a survey and to collect the required data, a questionnaire consisting of cultural capital, body management and background information was used. The statistical population included all young boys aged 15-29 years old based in Gilan-e Gharb, Kermanshah, Iran, totaling 3361 boys based on the census conducted by the statistical center of Iran in 2006. Moreover, a sample of 128 boys was chosen by Cochran's sample size formula which was increased to 148 boys with the aim of increasing the reliability of the study. As for the sampling method, since no statistical population lists were on hand, selecting possible samples was not conducted by simple or systematic random

sampling methods. So, the best method was multistage. According to the statistics announced by Gilan-e Gharb Municipality, the number of blocks with households was 315 across Gilan-e Gharb Township of which 26 blocks were chosen through simple random sampling. Furthermore, to assess the validity of the questionnaires, the face validity was used. In addition, to assess the validity of both questionnaires, they were distributed to 30 boys living in Gilan-e Gharb as a pilot study. Moreover, the reliability coefficients of cultural capital and body management questionnaires were 0.75 and 0.77, respectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study demonstrated that 17.6, 51.4 and 31.1% of the respondents were in 15-19, 20-24 and 25-29 age groups, respectively. In terms of the marital status, 78.4% were single and 21.6% were married. In addition, in terms of education, 13.5% were in junior high school, 20.3% in senior high school, 24.3% had diplomas, 16.2% had associate degrees, 24% with bachelor's degrees and 1.4% held master's degrees. Furthermore, 18.2% of the respondents were based in the countryside and 81.8 were based in the city.

The present study aimed to delve into the effects of cultural capital on body management among the young of Gilan-e Gharb Township, Kermanshah, Iran. As the main hypothesis of the research showed, there was a significant relationship between the cultural capital and body management at a confidence level of 99% This finding indicates that body and culture are two related issues and the culture and society in which one lives are embodied in one's body. Generally speaking, the body is likened to a culture in which the fundamental issues in that culture and society are expressed. In other words, the human body can at any time provide a deeper understanding of the culture and society in which it is embodied (Table 1).

Bourdieu's theory was confirmed by the existence of a significant linear relationship between cultural capital and body management in the present study. According to Bourdieu's theory, one's enjoyment of cultural capital indicates one's status in the social hierarchy and one's

Table 1: The correlation coefficients of the dimensions of cultural capital and body management

Cultural capital dimensions	Body management	
	r	Sig.
Embodied cultural capital	0.248	0.002
Objectified cultural capital	0.313	0.000
Institutionalized cultural capital	0.145	0.080
Total	0.317	0.000

Table 2: The simple linear regression model between the dimensions of cultural capital and boys' body management

Independent variables	The standard coefficients		R ²	R	The standard coefficients (Beta)		
	The regression coefficient (B)	SE			t-values	Sig.	
Embodied cultural capital	0.499	0.142	0.087	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000
Objectified cultural capital	0.155	0.037	0.110	0.332	0.332	0.332	0.000
Institutionalized cultural capital	0.315	0.219	0.118	0.014	0.118	0.118	0.152
Education	0.591	0.455	0.011	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.196
Socioeconomic status	3.121	1.790	0.021	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.083

levels of opportunities and values in his possession are obvious. Furthermore, the results by Featherstone (1987), Ebrahimi and Behnooie (2011), Ebrahimi and Ziapour (2011, 2012), Ziapour and Bagherian (2013), Abbas *et al.* (2012) and Fathi and Ekhlasi (2008) demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between the cultural capital and body management. So, it can be concluded that the results of previous studies and the content of Bourdieu's theory are applicable to the statistical population under study.

The results of the regression analysis showed that the objectified cultural capital had the most effects (0.332) on boy's body management compared with the variables of education, socioeconomic status and three dimensions of cultural capital. In other words, this result indicated that the boy's body management changed as much as 0.0332 units per any increased units of the objectified cultural capital. Then the boy's body management was affected by the embodied cultural capital (0.280), institutionalized cultural capital (0.118), socioeconomic status (0.145) and education (0.107) in descending order. Furthermore, the results of the present study were consistent with the results of studies conducted by Ebrahimi and Behnooie (2011) and Ghaderi and Rezaie (2014) and were inconsistent with the results of studies performed by Azadarmki and Chavoshian (2003) and Elmi and Bagheri (2013) in terms of the socioeconomic status. In addition, the results of studies conducted by Ebrahimi and Behnooie (2011) demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between cultural capital, the young's economic status and body management. Furthermore, the results of the present study were consistent with the results of studies conducted by Ghaderi and Rezaie (2014) in terms of the education variable.

On the one hand, the advent of individualistic patterns, behaviors and values, the importance of lifestyles for the young, the holistic presence of media and information technologies derived from the information age, the influence of globalized approaches, the variety of cosmetic products and on the other hand, young boy's skills and educational and collegiate experience provides the groundwork for the young's distinctive perspectives on adornment through the creation of fashions and body

postures in the Iranian society. So, nowadays, bodies are not looked upon as purely sensual and erotic phenomenon anymore and human beings are more in control of their bodies, namely socialized bodies. In other words, the sociability feature is proved through how to dress and make up, what kinds of diets and sports to adopt towards controlling one's weight and so on. In fact, in today's world, knowledge of the body has become a fundamental goal for all people, especially for the young. Therefore, bodies are formed and displayed in different desirable forms like machines. So, today's human bodies take different forms under a variety of social environments, i.e., our physical bodies have turned into social bodies in a way that all behaviors, attitudes and actions adopted towards our bodies are acquisitive and not natural. Given the fact that our bodies in today's world are responsible for communicating with others and showing our social characters in social environments, the idea that our bodies are influenced by our cultural standing is acceptable because according to Bourdieu, our bodies are affected by our cultural capital. So, according to the results of the present study based on this theoretical idea (the effects of the cultural capital on body management), it became clear that the cultural capital was considered as one of the factors influencing body management in today's world. In other words, the results of the present work confirmed Bourdieu's theoretical approach on the aforementioned assumption and the results of Table 2 indicated that the type and extent of the young's cultural capital and body management were strongly correlated and this relationship was statistically significant. In other words, there was an internal and external dialectic between the young's cultural capital and body management. This point was mentioned by Azadarmki and Chavoshian (2003), too.

CONCLUSION

Moreover, the results of the present work indicated that body management was of special importance among young boys. In sum, it was concluded that the young's daily lives have resulted in body oriented societies and relationships due to the importance of bodies.

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