

The Mental Effects of Turkey's Headscarf Ban in Schools: Stressors and Coping

Fatma Tuba Aydin

Psychotherapy Science, Sigmund Freud Private University, 1020, Vienna, Austria
Telephone: +90 555 686 60 60, E-mail: ftaydin@gmail.com

KEYWORDS Coping. Education. Grounded Theory. Hijab Controversy

ABSTRACT This qualitative study aimed to investigate the mental effects of the headscarf ban on students in Turkey. Verbatim transcripts of semi-structured interviews with eighteen female students, subjected to the ban and two key informants, cognitive behavioral therapists, provided data. A grounded theory analysis yielded three main categories, that is, stressors that emerge in the lives of students are anticipation of the ban, high stake decision-making, financial difficulties and social pressure, maturation, increase in self-esteem and learning new coping strategies are positive, psychosomatic symptoms, identity crises, and negative self-image are the adverse consequences of stressors, students employ problem-solving, emotion-focused, religious and social coping strategies to reduce the level of stress. The perception of the headscarf ban as a challenge and employment of emotional, social and religious coping strategies are more reliable predictors of successful coping rather than problem-focused strategies of removing the headscarf or leaving school.