

Muslim women
choose to wear the
hijab theology religion



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- Decision

Literature on this subject is abundant as research has been conducted globally on the subject of the hijab as to the grounds why adult females should and should not have on the hijab. The research conducted was made possible through the usage of studies, interviews, questionnaires and observations. Katherine Bullock in particular, a Canadian community militant, writer and lecturer did extended research on the subject of the hijab and published her findings in the signifier of a book called *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil* which challenges “ Historical and Modern Stereotypes ” A . A She has besides published articles on Muslim adult females and the media, and Islam and political theory.

Purposes of the research

The aims of the survey are to analyze if the dominant negative Western perceptual experience affects the grounds why the Muslim community is divided on the topic of hijab.

This research addresses the concern for a dialogue that could inform westernised societies about the personal grounds why some female Muslim pupils wear hijab and why others do not. I want my research to be meaningful, relevant to local communities and to open my head and that of others by being taught through research and personal interviews about the topic.

Scope and restrictions

The pool of participants is limited to the Muslim pupils at TSiBA Education.

The information set is meaningful, but non representative of the huge scope of Muslims in different contexts. It will nevertheless demo a diverseness of positions within a common divinity and religion.

Plan of development

Methodology

2. 1 Engagement

The mark group for the research is 20 South African Muslim adult females between the ages of 18 and 40. This age group is the mark of this survey because they are the current coevals of TSiBA pupils and are sing modern South Africa in a clip when it seems there is an of all time increasing inflow of Western civilization. The age group is besides likely to include married adult females who might be inclined to believe otherwise about the hijab as their matrimony might hold changed the manner each looks at the hijab.

2. 2 Methods of informations aggregation

Two sets of informations will be employed: 1) open-ended e-mail questionnaires with 20 Moslem pupils about the hijab 2) Conduct interviews and observations on the campaigners if farther informations is required. The first informations aggregation method I chose was a simple questionnaire. The research draws on qualitative informations from questionnaires and interviews with 20 Muslim female pupils of changing ages within the TSiBA community.

After many different bill of exchanges of the questionnaire I went to the Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA) Education to administer the concluding version. My questionnaire included the sentiments of both immature adult females who wear the hijab and those that do non. I did non inquire for names in any subdivision of the study to guarantee the namelessness of all my human topics. In the terminal I collected 20 studies in entire. After garnering the questionnaire, I analyzed the consequences manually.

As my 2nd method of informations aggregation, I conducted interviews, each holding an approximative continuance of between 30 proceedings. I used a recording device on all my interviews.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Keywords: Islam, Muslim, hijab, head covering, female, pupils, TSIBA Education, grounds, dominant negative Western perceptual experience.

The argument sing the erosion of spiritual attires in public, specifically coverings worn by Muslim adult females has increased over the past few old ages ensuing in a batch of contention among those who agree with the pattern and those who do non (iqraonline. net) . The Gallic, along with the West expected that the hijab would go through off into history as Westernization and secularisation took root. However, in the Muslim universe, particularly among the younger coevals, a great moving ridge of returning to hijab was distributing through assorted states. This current

revival is an look of Islamic resurgence (Khaula Nakata, A View Through Hijab, 1994, pg 2) .

Hijab is seen all over the universe, particularly in topographic points with a high concentration of practising Muslims. The hijab has been the focal point of frequently ferocious media arguments and has come to symbolize the clang of civilizations supported by links between Islamic “ extremism ” and twenty-first century terrorist act. While in several Islamic provinces such as Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and Iran, the full covering, known as the burka, has been mandatory. A hostile response against Muslim civilization has seen such traditional vesture banned, along with the much more common hijab, in the involvements of secularism. In this context, Muslim adult females are portrayed by the Western media either as veiled victims in demand of release because of a deficiency of free pick in foreign lands, or a menace to the Western societies in which they reside because of their pick to follow the hijab which is a traditional Islamic frock.

Muslim adult females are about systematically portrayed as laden and veiled, a terrorist menace or alien, sexualised existences. This is in line with Said ‘ s theory of Orientalism (Said, 1978) , which argues that the Muslim universe and its dwellers are considered rearward, barbarian and foreigners to Western society. This portraiture of Muslims is noteworthy in the media in footings of the coverage of Muslim adult females. Most representations of Muslim adult females involve them have oning traditional Islamic vesture such as the hijab, and their function in the media is by and large limited to commentary on issues such as the head covering.

Western Influences

Dominant negative Western perceptual experience

The Western media and women's rightists frequently portray the hijab as a symbol of subjugation and bondage of adult females. ([http://www. al-islam. org](http://www.al-islam.org)) . Many women's rightists, both Western and Islamic argue that the hijab is a symbol of gender subjugation and that the Islamic gauze of adult females is an oppressive pattern. Fadel Amara, an Islamic women's rightist and a Muslim female member of Gallic authorities says " The burka is a prison, a straitjacket. It is non spiritual. It is the insignia of a totalitarian Political undertaking for sexual inequality. " (King, " Islam, Women and Terrorism, " 299.)

Feminists argue that public presence and visiblenss is of import to Western adult females. It represents their battle for economic independency, sexual bureau and political engagement. In the West, famous person is the extremum of cultural legitimacy. The hijab is a challenge to the position of liberated visiblenss and freedom of self-expression unfettered by " the male regard " . ([www. theage. com](http://www.theage.com))

After a century of battle for freedom of look that included flinging the bandeau, some Western states have called for censoring the hijab in schools. They have developed, it would look, a instead limited position of what public visiblenss might intend to different adult females. France ' s 2004 jurisprudence, known popularly as the ' law on the headscarf ' , reveals the trouble of esteeming conflicting thoughts between diverse communities, particularly when one community, in this instance the Muslims of France, is a

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minority. Harmonizing to this jurisprudence, female pupils are banned from wearing the hijab every bit good as all other openly spiritual symbols in public schools. France prohibits adult females from wearing the hijab in public schools because many women's rightists and lawmakers argue that veiling adult females serves as a suppressing force, a force that silences adult females. Alia Al-Saji provides in her article "The Racialization of Muslim Veils: A Philosophic Analysis" many women's rightists see the headscarf "As a symbol of Islamic gender subjugation that should be banned from public schools, a infinite where gender equality is presumed (or desired)." Supporters of the jurisprudence believe it fights gender subjugation and gives equality to adult females in the school system.

Katherine Bullock sheds visible radiation on the differences in judgement over hijab by holding identified subjects from her research on the adult females and Islam field. She divides these subjects into the descriptions of those who are for and those who are against the hijab.

Harmonizing to Katherine Bullock, critics of the head covering rely on secular broad premises about society and human nature and hence the head covering is supposed to be and described as a symbol of subjugation because it:

Screens up (fells), in the sense of smothering, muliebrity

Is seemingly linked to the essentialized male and female difference (which is taken to intend that by nature, male is superior, female is inferior);

Is linked to a peculiar position of adult female ' s topographic point

(subjugated in the place) ;

Is linked to an oppressive (patriarchal) impression of morality and female pureness (because of Islam ' s

Emphasis on celibacy, matrimony, and disapprobation of pre- and extra-marital sexual dealings) ;

Can be imposed ; and

Is linked to a bundle of subjugations adult females in Islam face, such as privacy, polygamy, easy male divorce, unequal heritage rights.

3. 2. 2 Media attitudes to describing Islam and hijab

While the media can non be held entirely responsible for the building of national individuality nor blamed for social attitudes towards minority civilizations and faiths, they play a important function by supplying “ the lens through which world is perceived ” (Bullock & A ; Jafri, 2000) . While the Western media sees itself as a democratic establishment, it is frequently held accountable for legalizing and distributing racism and prejudice against spiritual communities such as Muslims (Bullock & A ; Jafri, 2000) . The media portrays Muslims as “ slippery, sleazy, sexual and untrusty ” , as uniformly violent, as oppressors of adult females, and as members of a planetary confederacy (Bullock & A ; Jafri, 2000) .

Macmaster and Lewis place the displacement in the European media ' s portraiture of veiled adult females from alien to a danger to society

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(Macmaster & A ; Lewis, 1998, p. 121) . They point out the apposition of representations of Muslim adult females as at the same time oppressed and endangering, while Kolhatkar highlights the word picture of Muslim adult females as “ amorphous blue-clad signifiers of Afghan adult females ” (Kolhatkar, 2002, p. 34) .

The designation of Muslim adult females in the media by the usage of traditional Islamic frock has been noted by Begum, who argues that “ images of Islamic frock are progressively used in the media as a ocular stenography for unsafe extremism, and a^| Muslims all over Europe are enduring from the effects of such associations ” (Begum, 2005, p. 1) . In France, a genteelness land of media and political argument about the hijab, has had a polarizing affect on the Muslim community and a dissentious impact on society and feminism. (Begum, 2005, p. 1)

The media ‘ s portraiture of these adult females went from sinister symbols of Islamic extremism to weather heroines of the republic overnight (Ezekiel, 2005) . But since so, the Gallic media have reported on the suspension of a Muslim metre reader who wore a hijab under her chapeau, the forbiddance of a manner show of veiled adult females, the bar of hijab-wearing female parents from volunteering in schools ; the refusal of service to a pupil have oning a hijab by a university cafeteria and the forbiddance of a informant to a civil service marrying from subscribing the certification because her hijab prevented her from being officially identified

Harmonizing to Ezekiel, sexism and racism intersect in this argument. On one side of the feminist argument about the hijab, there are those who

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demand head coverings be banned from Gallic streets as they encourage the torment of unveiled adult females. But at the other terminal of the spectrum, feminists recommending a Muslim adult female ' s right to take to have on or non to have on a hijab have aligned themselves with fundamentalist Islamic leaders, reasoning that it ' s a Muslim adult female ' s duty to have on a hijab and demanding the prohibition be overturned.

The writers argue that because of the media ' s cultural arrested development on Muslim adult females ' s frock as a symbol of subjugation, Muslim adult females frequently have to concentrate on that facet of their individuality every bit good, even if they would instead discourse something else. They suggest that even responsible news media about Muslim adult females tends to bump them to the function of a reactionist beginning in the hijab argument. " In amount, it is clear that Muslim adult females are preponderantly presented to the Canadian public as foreign, ' exotic ' , oppressed, or endangering ' others ' instead than as one ' s ' unexotic ' , unthreatening following door neighbors. " ([www. reportingdiversity. org.](http://www.reportingdiversity.org))

Clearly, the hijab narrative remains newsworthy in Western states, and Muslim adult females ' s individualities are inextricably linked to the headscarf as a consequence.

3. 2. 2. 1 The statement of subjugation

Although it is true that many adult females do take to have on the Hijab, it is non the instance for all adult females. In many Middle Eastern and North African states adult females are forced and are persecuted and abused for disobedience with the hijab. This Hirshmann, " Western Feminism, Eastern <https://assignbuster.com/muslim-women-choose-to-wear-the-hijab-theology-religion/>

Veiling, and a Question of Free Agency, " was late demonstrated in Pakistan, where an extremist killed a adult females ' s militant and authorities curate, because she refused to have on the Hijab. King provinces, " From Afghanistan to Algeria to Sudan, Pakistan and Iran- adult females are consistently brutalized and caught in a deathly crossfire between the layman and fundamentalist forces. "

Some Islamic women's rightists argue that although the statement in the Quran about adult females covering themselves was non meant to suppress adult females, the reading of those poetries by Islamic societies does in fact oppress adult females. Although it can be argued that the hijab is a symbol of the subjugation that occurs against adult females in Islam, many Islamic adult females do n't hold. It is true that under some Islamist regulation, specifically in some North African states, Afghanistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia adult females are oppressed and forced to have on the hijab, but in an international context, this is the exclusion to the regulation sing adult females ' s patterns of have oning the veil¹¹.

Salma Yaqoob, a Muslim adult female who chooses to have on the hijab explains the head covering is non merely an suppressing force in Islamic states that require the head covering, but besides in Western states that ban the head covering. Yaqoob adamantly contends that by conflicting Torahs that restricts adult females ' s pick on whether or non to have on the head covering, they are besides being oppressed. " I am opposed to the Saudi and Persian authoritiess ' infliction of the head covering and that of the Taliban antecedently. But this is besides why I oppose the prohibition on have oning the hijab. In both instances the adult female herself is no longer free to do a <https://assignbuster.com/muslim-women-choose-to-wear-the-hijab-theology-religion/>

pick. In both instances her self-respect is violated. ” . Yaqoob explains that more adult females are presently banned from have oning the hijab, than are required to have on it.

The statement of release

It can be argued that instead than suppressing, the hijab is emancipating. The suppressing force behind the head covering is when members of the authorization, both Islamic and Western, take away a adult female ‘ s right to take. The head covering itself is merely a piece of fabric. We interpret the hijab harmonizing to our societal and spiritual buildings. Through the Western treatment and forbiddance of the hijab in public schools, the Muslim school miss of France lose their freedom to show their spirituality. This position on the head covering serves to continually disable and oppress adult females by ending their freedom of religious look.

France ‘ s 2004 jurisprudence on the headscarf disables Islamic females from have oning the head covering in topographic points of instruction. The coveted consequence of the 2004 jurisprudence is to contend gender subjugation and inequality in the public school system, but as a residuary consequence, it really diminishes adult females ‘ s freedoms instead than heightening them. The ‘ law on the headscarf ‘ supports the suppressing Western discourses about veiled adult females and efforts to Occidentalize Gallic Muslim schoolgirls.

Internal argument: Reasons for have oning and non have oning the hijab

The sentiments of Islamic adult females vary in their determination whether or non to have on the head covering. Some women's rightists, both Muslim and non-Muslim, support the head covering as a grade of bureau, cultural rank, and rebelliousness. Tayyab Bashart, a feminist bookman and Muslim who teaches in France, explains her beliefs, " A adult female in hijab, who is a functioning member of society, symbolizes an sceptered, independent adult female, instead than person who lacks self-government and is a marionette of society " (Tayyab, Basharat. " Hijab as an instrument of Taking Women off the Sexual activity Economy. ") . Moslem adult females see prohibitions on the head covering as making or perpetuating stereotypes that are going harder to contend. Hirshmann states that " Western society tends to oversimplify these cultural stereotypes without looking into the adult females whom they think are being degraded. "

Reasons for have oning the hijab in Islamic Tradition

The most basic argument over the hijab is over the demand of the hijab. This is an issue that is debated by many Muslim bookmans. First in order to understand why there is an issue it is of import to understand the power of the Quran. The Quran is the word of God brought by his last courier the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) . Islam is the entire entry to Allah (God the Father) and obeisance to Allah, as the Quran is God ' s word so it besides means entire entry and obeisance to Quran. The first issue with the demand of the hijab comes from whether the hijab is in the Quran or non. There are two sides to this statement ; there are those who say that the

hijab is a demand because it is in the Quran and those who say that it is non because it is non portion of the Quran. Amr Khaled ' s talks have greatly influenced the Muslim young person, particularly Muslim female young person on the subject of the hijab. He represents the school of idea that considers the hijab to be straight in the Quran and therefore a demand for Muslim adult females. In one of his talks about the hijab he says “ Some people argue that this hijab is non obligatory and that it was non mentioned in the Quran. ” These are the Qur’an ‘ s poetries that make the Hijab obligatory to Muslim adult females.

“ O Prophet! Tell your married womans and your girls and the adult females of the trusters to pull their cloaks (head coverings) all over their organic structures. That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable adult females) so as non to be annoyed. And - ALLAH - is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (33: 59) ” (Amr Khaled) . Here in this verse adult females are told to cover their organic structures so that they should be known as modest adult females and are non harassed.

The hijab, harmonizing to many Muslims, has multiple utilizations and significances. The hijab ‘ s symbolism is one of modestness and morality. Harmonizing to Islam, the hijab maps as a shield for a adult female against the lubricious regard of work forces. The hijab besides serves as a screen to continue the modestness and piousness of the adult female, as that is her chief function as stated in the Qur’an. Not merely is this her function in her religion, but in society every bit good. The Qur’an besides states that the adult female is the household ‘ s chief refinisher of honor, piousness, and modestness. Therefore, the hijab is an assistance in which the adult female

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can successfully transport out this map as demanded by Allah through the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Kulenovic 714-715) . Amr Khalad, a popular Islamic bookman, layperson, and extremely influential Muslim talker, has had a strong influence on Muslim young person in on the issue of the hijab, particularly in Jordan (Stratton 98) . Harmonizing to Amr Khalad ' s talk " Al-Hijab, " the hijab besides serves the intent of coercing work forces to non sexually objectify adult females but to see her as a vas of intelligence and high moral values. Khalad says that the hijab reinforces the fact that " Islama^| made the beauty of adult females of a higher value in work forces ' s eyes by supplying protection [in the signifier of hijab] to that beauty from uncontrolled lecherousnesss and desires, and alternatively telling work forces to esteem greater the interior beauty of her psyche. Therefore, the existent value of adult females is associated with the grade of her abashment and her conformity by it " (Khalad " Al-Hijab) . This is the tradition Islamic rational for the hijab and why it is of import in Islam (Khalad " AlHijab ") .

A survey about hijab in the West besides provides another theory that I believe can besides be applied in South Africa because it is a state to a great extent influenced by the West. The thought of the hijab as a symbol of opposition is explored by Tarik Kulenovic but non needfully one that is purely political. Tarik Kulenovic ' s theory suggests that the hijab in the West is a affair of individuality, a physical symbol of a adult female ' s Muslim individuality. This symbol besides carries a message of religionism in a modernizing society which encourages a secular life manner and scorns tradition. Kulenovic asserts that " the modern individuality of Muslim adult

females, which includes the erosion of the head covering, is chiefly the individuality of opposition to the values than persons find foreign to them and as such imposed on them " (Kulenovic, page 717) . Therefore, in modern society, the hijab can be thought of as a agency of retaining a spiritual life manner while absorbing to the demands of the modern universe. Another ground adult females choose to have on the hijab is that they find that the hijab serves as an authorising factor. Yaqoob states her personal grounds why she wears the head covering, " For me, the erosion of the hijab denotes that as a adult female I expect to be treated as an equal in footings of my mind and personality and my visual aspect is relevant merely to the grade that I want it to be, when I want it to be. "

Katherine Bullock addresses dominant western premises by turn outing through her research that the grounds some adult females wear the hijab are that the hijab:

1. Does non surround muliebrity ;
2. Brings to mind the ' different-but-equal ' school of idea, but does non set frontward essentalized male-female difference ;
3. Is linked to a position that does non restrict adult females to the place, but neither does it see the function of stay-at-home-mother and housewife oppressive ;
4. Is linked to a position of morality that is oppressive merely if one considers the prohibition of sexual dealings outside matrimony incorrect ;

5. Is portion of Islamic jurisprudence, though a jurisprudence that ought to be implemented in a really wise and women-friendly mode, and
6. Can and should be treated individually from other issues of adult females ' s rights in Islam.

4. 2 Reasons for non have oning the hijab in the Islamic Tradition

In the Qur'anic this poetry although it says to pull the cloak all over their organic structures, it does non specifically say the hair. In add-on, it does non stipulate in what manner, to what extent, and in what mode adult females should cover themselves. There are many modern alternate positions to this thought that the hijab is mandatory because it is in the Quran. For illustration, Dr. Reza Aslan, an internationally acclaimed author and bookman of faiths, the laminitis of AslanMedia. com and besides one of the taking bookmans in the alternate position, considers the hijab non an obligatory facet of being a Muslim adult female. Reza claims, " Although long seen as the most typical emblem of Islam, the head covering is, surprisingly, non enjoined upon Muslim adult females anyplace in the Quran " (Aslan) . Alternatively he claims that the head covering was in Arab civilization before the reaching of Islam, through contact with Syria and Iran, where the head covering was the mark of the upper category adult females. Harmonizing to Lelia Ahmed and those who fall in the 2nd school of idea like Reza, the lone topographic points that the hijab is applied to adult females is when it is turn toing the married womans of Prophet Muhammad. Thus the head covering was merely associated with the Prophetss married womans and his girls non all adult females of Islam. This school of idea does non deny that modestness

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was expected of all trusters. Women should “ ‘ guard their private parts... and drape a screen over their chests ” ‘ when in the presence of unusual work forces (Surah 24: 31-32) ” (Aslan) . Here specific parts of the organic structure are named that adult females should guard and cover including the private parts and the chest but the hair is non mentioned. Therefore those in this school of idea like Leila Ahmed and Reza Alsan do non believe that the hijab is compulsory for Muslim adult females because it is non mentioned in the Quran.

Harmonizing to Bullock, critics of the head covering rely on secular broad premises about society and human nature and hence the head covering is supposed to be and described as a symbol of subjugation because it:

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Emphasis on celibacy, matrimony, and disapprobation of pre- and extra-marital sexual dealings) ;

Can be imposed ; and

Is linked to a bundle of subjugations adult females in Islam face, such as privacy, polygamy, easy male divorce, unequal heritage rights, and so on.

4. 3 Spirituality

Some adult females have a deep spiritual and spiritual connexion to the head covering and steadfastly differ with the position of it as a mark of subjugation. Many Muslim adult females feel uncomfortable without having it because the hijab is deeply-rooted in their personal values and spiritual tradition. A chief ground adult females choose to have on the hijab, is as look of spirituality. Bashart states in his book that “ Muslim adult females carry with them their sacred private infinite into the public infinite by usage of the Hijab. ” (Basharat, “ Hijab as an Instrument of Taking Women off the Sex Economy ”) . In this position of the hijab, the head covering is non merely an article of vesture ; or a symbol of subjugation it is a tool of spirituality for adult females.

Fadwa El Guindi, writer of *The Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance*, says “ veiling forms and veiling behaviors are... . about sacred privateness, holiness and the rhythmic interweaving of forms of worldly and sacred life, associating adult females as the defenders of household sanctuaries and the kingdom of the sacred in this universe ”

Decision

This research investigates the grounds why the Muslim community is divided on the topic of the head covering and if the dominant negative perceptual experience of hijab (as the hijab being oppressive) has affected, if at all, the

erosion of hijab in TSiBA Education. In the effort to reply this inquiry, the research has presented two hypotheses.

First, the divide on the pattern of the hijab exists within the Muslim community because there are different readings of the poetries of the Qur'an where Allah commands females to cover their hair.

Second, that the dominant negative Western perceptual experience causes some Muslim adult females to fear having the hijab and to abandon it all together as having the hijab could ensue in more subjugation to females- as portrayed in Western media.

Third, Some Muslim adult females choose to have on the hijab for spirituality grounds despite changeless the force per unit areas of the West.