

THE DISCRIMINATION OF MULTICULTURALISM ON MUSLIM WOMEN DRESS CODE (HIJAB): A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

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Abstract: *The challenges and discrimination facing the Hijab in the contemporary world of Muslim women are definitely worrisome. This paper aims to make a conceptual exertion relating to the challenges and discrimination facing the Hijab in the contemporary multicultural society. The concepts of the Hijab and multiculturalism were discussed. We also looked at the social, economic, psychological, and cultural concepts as designed in the study's conceptual framework. The paper explained the objectives of the Hijab from the Islamic point of view, covering obligation, religiosity, purity, modesty, and holiness. The study concludes that ignorance and lack of purity, modesty, and religiosity were among the major challenges responsible for the negligence of practising the commandment of wearing a Hijab by some Muslim women. In addition to that, lack of consciousness of Almighty Allah by many Muslim women, liberalism, western civilization, fashioning the Hijab, modern Media, and several others are some of the major challenges facing the Hijab in the Muslim world.*

Keywords : *Multiculturalism, Hijab, Muslim Women, Dress Code, Discrimination*



A. Introduction

Islam is a universal religion that encompasses every aspects of life, be it religious, social, political, moral and economic. Therefore, the idea of Hijab is one of the aspects dealing with the social life of Muslim women. According to Alim wearing Hijab is a religious obligation for every Muslim woman, which is evidently identified in the Glorious Qur'an. Hijab is a religious dress that is considered as a wide veil intended to cover the *Aurat* of a woman.¹ This means that Hijab is originally a divine message from the Almighty Allah as a blessing to women in guarding their modesty, chastity, and form of religiosity. To understand the origin of Hijab in the Glorious Qur'an, it is of great importance to note that Almighty Allah has commanded the Prophet to direct his wives, his daughters and wives of the believers to veil themselves. With this, Allah says:

O Prophet! Tell your wives, your daughters, and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veil) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way). That will be better, that they should be known (as free respectable women) so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Off forgiving, Most Merciful.²

In another verse, Almighty Allah says:

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (like palms of hands or one eye or both eyes for necessity to see the way, or outer dress like veil, gloves head-cover, apron, etc.), and draw their veils all over *Juyubihinna* (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.)...³

The above two verses are the two verses that directly talk about Islamic Hijab. Therefore, the rational wisdom behind the Hijab is for the Muslim women to cover themselves from those who are foreigners to them and save the Muslim men from seeing what *Shari'ah* forbade them to see. As clearly seen from the second verse, only some parts are allowed to be seen like palms of their hands and faces for them to see the way. This indicates that the permissibly for necessity only otherwise, the *Shari'ah* is forbidden anything that exposes their body. With this it may say that any Hijab that is designed contrary to what *Shari'ah* recognised cannot be counted as the Islamic Hijab.

¹ Alim, "The Meaning of Religiosity for Women Users of Slang Hijab: A Phenomenological Study in UGM Yogyakarta," *Adved 2017: 3rd International Conference on Advances in Education and Social Science*, Vol. (2017): pp. 364-72.

² Qur'an, Surah al-ahzab 33:59.

³ Qur'an, Surah al-Nur 24:31.

It is agreed that Hijab was in existence long time before the coming of Islam in the seventh century in the Arabian Peninsula but practiced in different cultures. Nowadays, Hijab (veil, head covering) played a significant role in various religions, including Catholics and Orthodox Judaism.⁴

It was very unfortunate that despite the divine commandment to wear Hijab by Muslim women, many multicultural societies around the globe have become intolerable to the rights, obligation, and religious observance of Hijab especially in the western world. This is because; western world considered *Hijab*, *Shailas*, *Niqab*, and *Abayas* as symbols of oppression.⁵ However, several views contradict this western perception regarding these garments. For instance, Sheen, et al. (2018) considered hijab as an important cultural, social, and religious symbol for the identity of several female Muslims in the globe. Similarly, Hafez, (2015) considered Hijab from the cultural context as part of the women's right and women became a litmus test for modernity.⁶

The challenges of multiculturalism to Muslim states and Muslims especially those who happened to live in the western world is characterised by several numbers of factors. These factors include a diversity of cultures, ethno-religious differences, intolerance of certain group of people, which gave birth to Islamophobia that emanates from the west, especially with the episode of 11/9 attack that occurred in 2001 in the United States of America. The challenges and discrimination against the Muslim women for wearing hijab as their religious obligation in the last few decades have become a subject of discussion, talks, debates, and discrimination by numerous countries especially in European and American continents. This is in line with the view of that the matter of veiling has been a serious issue of debate in the western countries and has inference for religious liberty, cultural interaction, and inter-communal relations.⁷ Similarly, Ahmed & Roche put forth that debates about the Hijab practice mostly focus on legal aspects, and actual banning in several countries has received integral media attention particularly in the West.⁸

The detestation of Hijab and debates in the United States of America was affirmed in the words of Moore about the accommodation, legal grounds, judicial doctrine, and separation

⁴ Retrieved from www.facinghistory.org on August 13, 2019.

⁵ Sloan, L. (2011). "Women's Oppression or Choice? One American's View on Wearing the Hijab." *Affilia-Journal of Women and Social Work* 26(2): 218-221.

⁶ Hafez, S. Z. (2015). "The Hijab: A Personal Journey." *Religious Studies and Theology* 34(2): 185-200.

⁷ Gabriel & Hannan, (2011)

⁸ S. T. Ahmed and T. B. Roche, "The Hijab and Niqab: Omani Women's Reflections on Law and Practice," *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Vol. 39, no. 1 (2018): pp. 50-66.

of state and the church of veiling of Muslim women as a religious identity in United States public institutions.⁹ In addition to that Koura highpoints the factors that led to the intersecting the discrimination against the women rights to exercise their rights and show their identity in the United States. He attributed the matter to media influence on the perception of Muslim culture, the rise of Islamophobia, and several barriers for wearing Hijab, especially in the workplace in the USA.¹⁰

Hence, in the last few decades, the threats faced by Muslim women in wearing Hijab saw an essential challenge globally. The position taken by several western countries is a clear testimony for the psychological, social, cultural, and religious difficulty experienced by Muslim women in these nations. For instance, Zempt and Chakraborty consider Muslim women that lived in the United Kingdom as the actual possible victims of Islamophobia reflects upon the lived experiences of veiled Muslim women living in the UK as the actual and potential victims of Islamophobia. The authors noted that the effect of such victimisation is not absolutely restricted to the global *Ummah*; rather, the harm spreads to society as a whole by exacerbating the divergence, which already exists between ‘us’ and ‘them’.¹¹ These discriminations spread, particularly in Europe and America.

The most disturbing discrimination is the banning of hijab by the French government in 2004.¹² However, it has to be acknowledged that there is the existence of the Hijab ban in the Turkish universities since the 1960s.¹³ Fredette after considering the social and political judgement of France against the unfamiliar culture of wearing Hijab. He considered the judgement as reflexive cultural judgement and denial of freedom, which saw the French inability to avoid ethnocentrism.¹⁴

From that period onward many countries with the minority Muslims or multicultural in nature started to show discrimination against the Muslim women that are wearing Hijab as their religious obligation. For example, the authoritarian government in Singapore show concern of wearing Hijab by the minority Muslims.¹⁵ During this period, Muslim women in the USA are

⁹ Cathleen M Moore (2007)

¹⁰ F. Koura, “Navigating Islam: The Hijab and the American Workplace,” *Societies*, Vol. 8, no. 4 (2018): pp.

¹¹ Irene Zempt and Neil Chakaraborti (2015)

¹² R. Carle, “Hijab and the Limits of French Secular Republicanism,” *Society*, Vol. 41, no. 6 (2004): pp. 63-8.

¹³ S. Bayram, “Reporting Hijab in Turkey: Shifts in the Pro- and Anti-Ban Discourses,” *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 4 (2009): pp. 511-38.

¹⁴ J. Fredette, “Examining the French Hijab and Burqa Bans through Reflexive Cultural Judgment,” *New Political Science*, Vol. 37, no. 1 (2015): pp. 48-70.

¹⁵ W. J. Abdullah, “Managing Minorities in Competitive Authoritarian States: Multiracialism and the Hijab Issue in Singapore,” *Indonesia and the Malay World*, Vol. 44, no. 129 (2016): pp. Iii-Iii.

living fear with their Hijab.¹⁶ The situation in Turkey split between pro and anti-Hijab, which steer the secular state with the profound history of Islam, because of women who resort to maintaining their religious obligation.¹⁷ Similarly, many countries in the West engage in such Hijab controversies, such nations include Australia and Germany for their inability to tolerate the Muslim culture of Hijab.¹⁸ Thus, this issue of Hijab controversies and discrimination emanates from the USA;¹⁹ strengthens by the so-called French debates;²⁰ and spread to

countries like Belgium;²¹ Ireland;²² Britain;²³ Bosnia;²⁴ Scandinavia and Netherland;²⁵ and hosts of others.

Today, several countries engaged in legal and media debates, and controversies covers areas of human rights, migration policies, schools, sports, and places of work around the globe. This is especially in the western nations with the majority of the non-Muslim population, such as USA, UK, France, and Germany over the Muslim immigrants. In Asia, although several countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have the majority population of Muslims, this does not mean that everything is well with the Hijab. Even in the Middle-East, some Muslim women wear Hijab for fashion rather than religious obligation, this matter is the same in many Muslim dominated communities worldwide. In Africa, such manners of controversies, debates, media coverage, banning, and discriminations like West emerges especially in communities with the multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multicultural diversities like southern and some parts of Northern Nigeria.

¹⁶ Z. Alghafli et al., "Veiling in Fear or in Faith? Meanings of the Hijab to Practicing Muslim Wives and Husbands in USA," *Marriage and Family Review*, Vol. 53, no. 7 (2017): pp. 696-716.

¹⁷ S. Bayram, "Reporting Hijab in Turkey: Shifts in the Pro- and Anti-Ban Discourses," *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 4 (2009): pp. 511-38.

¹⁸ H. M. Benbow, "'False Tolerance' or False Feminism? Hijab Controversies in Australia and Germany," *Overland*, Vol., no. 181 (2005): pp. 10-5.

¹⁹ R. A. Droogsma, "Redefining Hijab: American Muslim Women's Standpoints on Veiling," *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, Vol. 35, no. 3 (2007): pp. 294-319; N. R. Eaton, "Hijab, Religiosity, and Psychological Wellbeing of Muslim Women in the United States," *Journal of Muslim Mental Health*, Vol. 9, no. 2 (2015): pp. 25-40.

²⁰ C. M. Cusack, "Hijab and the Republic: Uncovering the French Headscarf Debate," *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 35, no. 1 (2011): pp. 113-4.

²¹ G. Coene and C. Longman, "Gendering the Diversification of Diversity - the Belgian Hijab (in) Question," *Ethnicities*, Vol. 8, no. 3 (2008): pp. 302-21.

²² M. Enright, "Girl Interrupted: Citizenship and the Irish Hijab Debate," *Social & Legal Studies*, Vol. 20, no. 4 (2011): pp. 463-80.

²³ M. Franks, "Crossing the Borders of Whiteness? White Muslim Women Who Wear the Hijab in Britain Today," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 23, no. 5 (2000): pp. 917-29.

²⁴ J. Funk, "Public Expressions of Bosnian Muslim Religiosity and Lived Faith: The Cases of Friday Prayer and Hijab," *Revival of Islam in the Balkans: From Identity to Religiosity*, Vol. (2015): pp. 204-21.

²⁵ S. Halrynjo and M. Jonker, "Naming and Framing of Intersectionality in Hijab Cases - Does It Matter? An Analysis of Discrimination Cases in Scandinavia and the Netherlands," *Gender Work and Organization*, Vol. 23, no. 3 (2016): pp. 278-95.

Nigeria is one of the nations in Africa with a diverse population of ethnicity, traditions, cultural background, and religion. In terms of the religious diversity, multi-ethnicity, and multicultural activities Taraba state, Nigeria is well known in its religious crisis, tribalism, and intolerance to other cultures and traditional activities. Thus, this nature of the community affected the social, economic, educational, and psychological well-being of the Muslim women wearing Hijab in the community, especially in the areas of Christian dominated populations such as Wukari, Zing, Karim-Lamido, Takum, Gembu, etc.

Consequently, it's well-known that the threats of multiculturalism on Hijab in Taraba state, Nigeria, covers both religious, social, educational, economic, and psychological point of view. The main objectives of this study are to explore the social and cultural threats of multiculturalism on the Muslim women dress code (Hijab) in Taraba State, Nigeria, and to investigate the discrimination facing Muslim women in schools, and workplace in multicultural Taraba State, Nigeria.

B. Methodology

This study aims to thoroughly investigate the challenges encountered by Muslim women regarding the *Hijab* within today's diverse societies. The approach involves three main components: Firstly, it includes a thorough review of existing literature on *Hijab* and Multiculturalism to establish a foundational understanding. Secondly, it examines the core dimensions of *Hijab*—social, economic, psychological, and cultural—within the context of contemporary multicultural settings and explores its Islamic perspective concerning obligations, religiosity, modesty, and piety. The study then delves into identifying challenges faced by Muslim women in adhering to Hijab practice. It analyses factors such as ignorance, inadequate religious observance, and various societal influences like lack of religious consciousness, liberal ideologies, Western influence, commercialization of Hijab, and media portrayal. Finally, the study concludes by summarizing the findings and proposing potential interventions. Recommendations focus on education, cultural awareness, religious understanding, and media representation.

C. Result and Discussion

Concept of Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is referring to society with multicultural ideologies, multi-religious, and multi-ethnicity. Inability to tolerate this cultural diversity, diverse traditions, and religious culture that is growing due to a wide range of migration, conversion, and heritage. A society with this kind of combination may likely be experiencing a lot of challenges that would not

allow peace to be maintained. From whatever angle one takes, one may discover that discrimination in such multicultural societies would hinder the progress of people, particularly lack of compromise among members of the society.

The Concept of Hijab: A Definition from the Religious Perspectives

Having seen how the importance of Hijab is? It is of great importance to know the meaning of the term from the religious perspective and how some renown scholars defined it, despite the discrimination that arises in most of the Muslim minority societies. Therefore, in Islam, the term Hijab is an Arabic word which originally derived from the Arabic word '*Hajaba*', meaning to conceal, or hide. According to the Islamic terminology, the term Hijab is a head covering worn used by the faith Muslim women as a symbol of modesty and religious devotion. Also, Hijab before answering its name, must be long enough to drape over the shoulders and upper back and flow down past the elbows.²⁶ Evidence to this definition is the Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH), which clearly stated that, "Allah does not accept the prayer of a woman of child-bearing age unless (she covers herself) with a Khimar".²⁷ In Christianity, it is observed that Hijab takes different meanings and functions, relevant verses from the bible indicate that in ancient times, the veil was adopted only in exceptional cases, and as an article of ornamental dress.²⁸ The veil is also used by betrothed maidens in the presence of their future husbands, especially at the time of the wedding.²⁹ lastly, in the Jews tradition, it appears that among the Jews of the New Testament Agee, it has been customarily used for the women to cover their heads (not necessarily their faces) when engaged in public worship.³⁰

The above definition depicts the meaning of Hijab in Islam and Christianity as well as in the Jews tradition. From this definition, it is understood that Hijab has a solid ground not only in the Islamic religion. This shows that for a Muslim woman to be insulted or criticised for wearing Hijab, to some extent might be unkind attitude. On the other hand, understanding how scholars define the term hijab will add great consideration to this study. hence, it is important to know the meaning of the term from views of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. therefore, according to Listyani, Sadewo, & Legowo, Hijab is a symbol of liberation from

²⁶ Amy Kasza, "Hijab: Definition and Relation to Islam", retrieved on September 10, 2019 from <https://study.com>.

²⁷ Abu Dawud, al-Salat, Hadith 546.

²⁸ See Song of Solomon 4:1; Song of Solomon 4: 3; 6:7.

²⁹ Genesis 24:65.

³⁰ Retrieved from www.biblestudytools.com, on September 06, 2019.

beauty standards now is not separated from the attributes of beauty.³¹ Similarly, Bouvier, opines that Hijab is a fashion in a multimodal world that express modesty, Muslim tradition, freedom, confidence, religious identity, and modernity.³² Grine & Saeed expresses the view that Hijab is a religious obligation rather than fashion motivation.³³ Likewise, Lavoie offers that wearing a Hijab by a Muslim woman displays a priority that a woman gives to religious obligation, religious identity, civic identity, and religious duty rather than a public priority.³⁴ Moreover, Alim focuses his views on religiosity, the author believes that wearing Hijab is a representation of religiosity that involves ideological, experimental, ritual, knowledge, and practices. This means that Hijab is completely attached to social life.³⁵ However, Oba informs that the Islamic principles place importance on modesty, chastity, and respect for nudity, which is referred to as Hijab.³⁶ Furseth opines that hijab is used as a symbol to draw boundaries between different groups of Muslim women that are related to inclusion and exclusion in the Muslim community. However, hijab is a symbol of community and gender boundaries.³⁷ With these definition, it might be said that Hijab is a symbol of demarcation which differentiates a faithful Muslim woman from a non-faithful one. It has to be noted that Hijab is usually identified as the symbol of Muslim identity. A woman who covers her head is making a statement that she is a member of the Muslim community and follows particular code of moral conduct.³⁸ Therefore, hijab may be considered as an Islamic trademark of dress, hence marketers can develop this as brands for targeting a specific segment of the market.³⁹

³¹ R. H. Listyani, F. X. S. Sadewo, and M. Legowo, "The Social Body of Muslim Women an Analysis of Hijab and Beauty," *Proceedings of the 2nd Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Conference: Establishing Identities through Language, Culture, and Education (Soshec 2018)*, Vol. 222(2018): pp. 307-11.

³² G. Bouvier, "Discourse in Clothing: The Social Semiotics of Modesty and Chic in Hijab Fashion," *Gender and Language*, Vol. 10, no. 3 (2016): pp. 364-85.

³³ F. Grine and M. Saeed, "Is Hijab a Fashion Statement? A Study of Malaysian Muslim Women," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 8, no. 3 (2017): pp. 430-43.

³⁴ B. Lavoie, "Appropriating Secularism Despite the Social Turmoil: The Presence of an "Optimistic Critical" Posture among Muslim Women Wearing the Hijab in Quebec," *Studies in Religion-Sciences Religiosity*, Vol. 47, no. 1 (2018): pp. 25-44.

³⁵ S. Alim, "The Meaning of Religiosity for Women Users of Slang Hijab: A Phenomenological Study in UGM Yogyakarta," *Adved 2017: 3rd International Conference on Advances in Education and Social Science*, Vol. (2017): pp. 364-72.

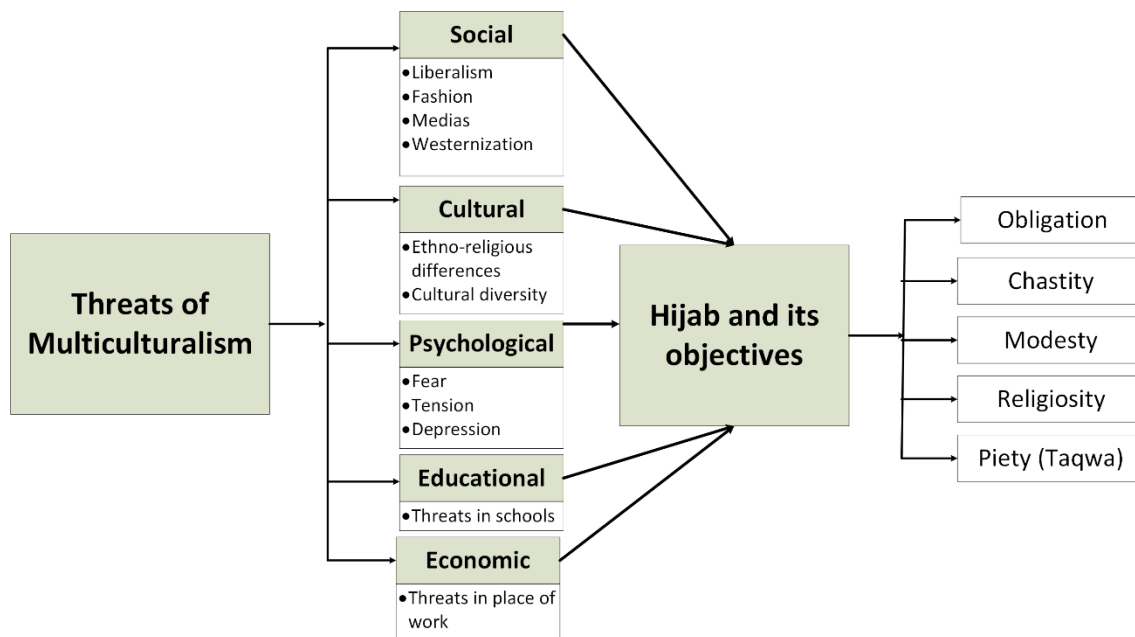
³⁶

³⁷ I. Furseth, "The Hijab: Boundary Work and Identity Negotiations among Immigrant Muslim Women in the Los Angeles Area," *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 52, no. 4 (2011): pp. 365-85.

³⁸ Cedomir Nestrovic, *Marketing in an Islamic Environment* (France: Centre for European Management and Marketing, 2007), np.

³⁹ Paul Temporal, *Islamic Branding and Marketing Creating a Global Islamic Business* (John Willey and Sons, INC).

Proposed Conceptual Framework of the Study



The above diagram displays the main ingredients whereupon the present study is built. That is to say the clear picture on how the study is designed and intended to figure out the issue of discrimination in Multicultural societies. The diagram is also designed to explain the positions of each concept in the study. This can be done in order to identify the objectives of Hijab in Muslim societies particularly in a minority Muslim society where discrimination is obvious particularly on those who are practicing the teachings of their religions. One of the most significant importance of understanding the concept in this study is to analyse the position of Islam and other religion and why discrimination exists. It has to be noted that nowadays, a lot of challenges have confronted practicing Muslim women in their attempt to maintain their modesty and dignity. Such challenges were as a result of deviation by some Muslim women through adaptation of others religious system like in Christianity and western ideology. In view of these challenges, the discussion would be elaborated in the following heading and subheadings as clearly portrayed in the conceptual diagram.

Social

By the term social, it means anything relating to society or organisation. Therefore, the main target of this discussion is to highlight on the factors responsible for the discrimination of wearing hijab by Muslim women in their respective societies, particularly in minority Muslim society where others consider the practice of wearing Hijab as religious compulsion. This idea changes the mind of thousand Muslim women that are wearing Hijab, which to some extent thinks that it deprives their rights. This led them copy the western lifestyle by adopting

Hijab as a fashion not religious obligation. Hence, the following discussion addresses the issue in a wider sense under the factors responsible for the such challenges.

Liberalism

The main issues here are that some Muslim women understand that by liberalism they can do whatever they supposed to do, thinking that since their societies is a liberal society, they are free to practice their religion based on their desires, since they have total individual freedom. To them, no one can intimidate them or change their attitude in the names of religion. That is why liberal society has contributed a lot in the discrimination of wearing Hijab Muslim women. Instead of the liberal society protects every body's religion, it guides them to deviate from the mainstream of the religion. This is because for those who are fully practicing their religion, they were being maltreating and segregating in their societies. This led them feel somehow thinking that their actions supposed to be changed. Only those who stick firm cannot be disturbed.

It is discovered that a number of academics who ascribed to liberal secular framework in the names of protecting religion including Islam. Abdullahi Al-Na'im advocates for Muslim to embrace a secular state with regard to public role of the *Shari'a* in order to provide cohesion between Islam, the state, and society.⁴⁰ Al-Na'im insists that the secular state enables the authentic observance of Islamic religious principles and regulates the role of Islam in the public life of the community in that it would not attempt to impose the *Shari'a*. An-Naim distinguishes between the state, on one hand, and political principles that he argues citizens can support from their respective religions or philosophies, on the other principles such as popular sovereignty and democratic governance. He also differentiates between a secular state and secularization as a society, in that the separation of Islam and the state does not mean there should be a total relegation of Islam to the private life. Rather, introducing policy and legislation as motivated by religious principles and values can happen, but only as they agree with what he calls "civic reason" (which he compares and contrasts with Rawlsian public reason). His proposed framework is a model that integrates constitutionalism, human rights, and citizenship in order to protect the equal status and well-being of all people. In essence, An-Naim summarizes a position that stands to contradict those of Hallaq and Massad: that secularism and a liberal democratic order is conducive to the Islamic ethos and necessary for free practice of Islam in a modern pluralist setting. In fact, An-Naim believes secularism often necessitates religion in

⁴⁰ Butheina Hamdah, *Liberalism and the Impact on Religious Identity: Hijab Culture in the American Muslim Context* (Master's Thesis: Submitted to University of Toledo, 2017), 19.

order to provide moral guidance on questions it cannot resolve, and communities need to express moral implications of their viewpoint in which he justifies how the overlap can be found both within philosophical liberal theory as well as in Islamic legal theory.

Fashion

By fashion, it is discovered in this study as one of the major factors responsible for the discrimination of Muslim women particularly those who are wearing hijab as an obedience to the teachings of their religion. Therefore, fashion in this study stands as the way Islamic Hijab was changed and styled contrary to the real teachings of Islam. In another way, controlling for religiosity, women who wore the hijab had more positive body image, lower internalization of media messages about beauty standards, and placed less importance on appearance than women who did not wear the hijab. Among women who wore the hijab, hijab use significantly predicted weight discrepancy and body appreciation over and above religiosity.⁴¹

A study examines the world of cyber Islamic commerce and the marketing of new forms of hijab through tracing the connections between the British Muslim entrepreneurs, Wahid Rahman who runs a website called HijabShop.com and the Dutch designer Cindy van den Bremen, designer of a new form of sports head covering known as Capsters. It considers the lifestyles of these two individuals, their diverse philosophies and their personal involvement in the promotion of Islamic fashion for women and how cyberspace has provided them with an opportunity for a business partnership. The study explores some of the representational challenges inherent in the reframing of hijab as fashion, showing how those involved in this niche market navigate complex tensions between different Muslim interpretations of the relationship between beauty and modesty, fashion and faith.⁴²

The above suggests that nowadays, even among Muslim intellectuals some went further to redesign Hijab, which led some women consider Hijab as a fashion dress not a religious obligation. This indicates the reason why the Muslim women that are wearing hijab were discriminated on the basis of the idea of those who reframed the Hijab and give it different shape, which Islam does not recognize.

⁴¹ Swami, V., et al., "Is the hijab protective? An investigation of body image and related constructs among British Muslim women." *British Journal of Psychology* 105(3): 2014, 352-363.

⁴² Tarlo, E. "HIJAB ONLINE The Fashioning of Cyber Islamic Commerce." *Interventions-International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 12(2), 2010, 209-225.

Media

A study indicates that religious conflict arises in the society because of a discrimination by a majority group against a minority.⁴³ Hence, in Nigeria as a multicultural society, media played a negative role in airing unrealistic or reliable information which at times causes a religious conflict. For example, with regards to the subject matter of the discussion, one article reveals a controversy surrounding women wearing head covers in public institutions in Nigeria in which the article exposes much about the attitude of the Nigerian media, particularly in institutions located in the "Lagos-Ibadan" axis, when representing Islam and Muslims in the country. The findings indicate that Nigeria's media response to issues that affect Muslims receive less-than-favourable coverage within mainstream media. This ultimately has implications on how Islam and Muslims are construed within society. The study argues that Muslims must work to neutralize pejorative media narratives on Islam through increasing exposure in mass media and working towards eliminating biased representations of Islam and its values.⁴⁴

Therefore, one thing more clear in contemporary society is the powerful disaster that social media is airing as can see in the above discussion. The media used to discriminate the minority group that are practicing their religion in peace and harmony, which such attitude might leads others to maltreat the minority in the society. Since they would be considered as valueless because of the information used to get through media. This dangerous attitude of media causes a lot of discrimination to the extent that Muslim women that are wearing Hijab were considered uncivilised. Therefore, the goal of hijab cannot be achieved as a religious obligation because of media discrimination. This led others to think otherwise about the compulsion of veiling in Islam. Hence, it is understood in this study that media is one of the major factors influence some Muslim women to disrespect religious instruction by adopting others lifestyle for fear of discrimination. But Muslim women should bear in their mind that wearing Hijab is not only a religious but social necessity.⁴⁵ Therefore, the young ladies will be nurtured to wear the Hijab when they grow up. For those who are given negative impression on Hijab in media, should know that the influence of fashion industry can also be seen through their media activities. Therefore, media should be positively used.

⁴³ Jonathan Fox, "Religious Causes of Discrimination against Ethno-Religious Minorities", *International Studies Quarterly* (2000) 3, 423-450.

⁴⁴ Abubakre, F., "Media Influences on the Perceptions of the Usage of Hijab in Nigeria's Public Institutions and Surrounding Controversy in the Lagos-Ibadan Axis." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 38(4) 2018: 521-536.

⁴⁵ Muhammad Sigit Andhi Rahman and Aini Firdaus, "The Practice of Wearing Hijab in a Multicultural Mosque of America" *Journal of HUMANIORA* Vol. 9 No. 2 July 2018: 129-140.

Westernization

Understanding how Hijab works within multicultural society particularly in minority Muslim societies including western society is the major target of this discussion. But the cardinal aims of the above mentioned heading is to understand how Hijab was westernised by some Muslim women living in a western society and how they are discriminating as a result of their actions. In this study, westernization stands as the gradual assimilation of western culture or dress code by Muslim women in a fully practicing Islamic society. It is noted that nowadays, even within the western society some consider veil (Hijab) in a positive way while some otherwise. But in reality, Hijab played a significant role even in western society. To support this discussion, the role that *Hijabista* bloggers play in the Western market is growing and with it, the roles of Muslim women in all parts of the fashion world. By circulating an agenda that frames the veil as a modern, fashion garment, *hijabista* bloggers disrupt antithetical notions of veiling that arose in the post-9/11 era as a direct construct of the United States' "war on terror." These blogs showcase a 'reality' that is devoid of sexuality or religiosity (both of which often serve as alienators to society) and instead use branding and taste to display Muslim womanhood as 'natural' within the realm of fashion and consumerism.⁴⁶

The above indicates that *Hijabista* bloggers had played an important role in displaying the beauty of Islam in a Muslim minority society, where some consider hijab as an act of terrorism. Despite the fact that Hijab frames in a different shape, this does not negate displaying the natural womanhood. Therefore, westernization on the other hand might be considered influenced other Muslim women to disregard hijab and a religious obligation.

Culture

Culture in its literal and linguistically means the knowledge and characteristics of a particular group of people, comprising religion, language, custom, art, cuisine, social and habits etc. from this definition, it may be understood that a group of people that comes from different background may likely live misunderstanding, particularly, the minority among them. Nowadays, minority societies in most cases become the property of majority societies, in the sense the majority would be the mechanism of discrimination against the minority one. It is discovered that a state that is based on democracies discriminate against ethno religious

⁴⁶ Kelsey Wanninger, *The Veiled Identity: Hijabistas, Instagram and Branding In The Online Islamic Fashion Industry* (M.A Thesis: Georgia State University, USA), 17.

minorities (Wearing Hijab Muslim women) more than they do against other minorities. The nature of liberal democracy may provide an explanation for this phenomenon.⁴⁷

Psychological

It is indicated that psychology is one of the factors responsible for unnecessary discrimination of Muslim women in a society. Though, a study reveals that wellbeing of Muslim women will be associated with Hijab in a minority society. This is because Muslim women that are wearing hijab can be easily identified, as such it will be discriminated in one way. But on the other hand, it can be stand as a security. Evidence suggests that the visible identity of Muslim women may expose them to various modes of discrimination, harassment, and victimization.⁴⁸ Therefore, the outcomes of wearing hijab in a negative perspectives caused Muslim women in a minority society to disregard the religiosity of hijab. Hence, one of the objective of the hijab in Islam is missing.

With the above discussion, the idea of hijab needs to be considered from both the negative and positive perspectives. Because in a positive way, hijab served as a mechanism for women protection from sexual harassment or any discrimination even in a majority or minority society and otherwise in a negative perspective. It may be concluded that fear, tension, and depression are the major ingredient of psychological problem that negate Muslim women to respect the religiosity of hijab in Islam. The reason it said so is a Muslim woman with practicing hijab in a minority society can feel somehow with her appearance, because she may in one way or the other expose to discriminated. Hence, the tension and depression that she will feel may hasten to appear indecent or in an improper way.

Educational

The discussion here focusses on highlighting the how practicing hijab women exposes to discrimination educationally. It has to be noted that the cardinal aims of the heading is to understand that nowadays Muslim women that are wearing hijab are always subject to discrimination in a school where Muslim are minority. This was happening not only in western society but even in non-western society. To understand this, the cases of banning hijab aroused in different countries in the globe, though the Human right in many countries objected in which, the courts turn down the banning law. And the Muslim ladies were allowed to continue wearing

⁴⁷Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler, "Regime Types and Discrimination against Ethnoreligious Minorities: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the Autocracy Democracy Continuum", *POLITICAL STUDIES*: 2003 VOL 51, 469–489.

⁴⁸Qurat-ul-ain Gulamhussein, "Hijab, Religiosity, and Psychological Wellbeing of Muslim Women in the United States", *Journal of Muslim Mental Health*, ISSN1556–4908 Volume 9, Issue 2, 2015 <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/jmmh.10381607.0009.202>.

hijab. This kind of crises were the major factor hinders the Muslim women to practice hijab, particularly in some places that they are the minority. For example, the case of banning hijab in school was onetime happened in Nigeria, despite the fact that Nigeria is predominantly Muslim, in which Muslims and relevant organisations and Islamic agencies objected publicly which finally led the government intervened and the courts overturns the ruling of banning hijab.

From the above, it is understood that with such kind of discrimination that Muslim ladies faced in schools, leads some parents to allow their children go without hijab. It might be said that this to them is to minimise any unnecessary discrimination to them. But in reality the objective of hijab that wants to be maintained is destroyed.

Economic

As a matter of economic fact, it is discovered that women used to face challenges in their businesses. At time, they were discriminated just for wearing Hijab. This leads some people particularly in western societies disregard business centres where Hijab practicing women are there. Nowadays, one of the major challenges that is confronting the contemporary Muslim society is the idea that if someone wants to operate a business centre whether he likes it or not must appoint a lady that can wear indecent dress. This suddenly calls the attention of thousand people with weaken faith to gather around such places as a result of what attracts their minds.

It is agreed by the majority of Muslim women that Hijab is a necessary component of Islamic prayer as earlier seen relevant evidences in the previous discussion. However, the incorporation of Hijab in public services as well as public life continues to be an area of contention. Some considered it as the major factor that negates Muslim women to be employed in public services while other consider it as the matter of identification where Muslim ladies can be identified with their Islamic attire and they would be employed without any discrimination. The second idea seems not to be hundred percent okay, but it can be acceptable in the majority Muslim countries. For example, a research indicates that Muslim women in the US who wear hijab (hijabis) have lower expectations of receiving job offers than Muslim women who do not wear hijab (non-hijabis), especially with jobs requiring high levels of public contact⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Pasha-Zaidi Nausheen, Masson Tiffany, Penington M. Nan, "Can I get a job if I wear Hijab? An exploratory study of the perceptions of South Asian Muslim Women in the US and the UAE, *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology*, 2014 January, Volume 3 Number 1, 13-24, pg.3.

With the above discussion, it might be said that the idea of hijab varies from majority Muslim countries to some minority Muslim countries. Nevertheless, in some majority Muslim countries at times, the idea changes. For example, the Saudi Arabian law requires the use of the hijab for all women while the United Arab Emirates (UAE) prides itself on being a tolerant and open-minded society that does not force women to abide by strict interpretations of Islamic mandates for dress.⁵⁰ This indicates that civilisation sometimes changes the attitude of people as well the laws of a country.

Hijab and its Objectives in Islam

The above mentioned items were the major issues that cause women discrimination in various societies or aspects. This indicates the reason why Muslim women are yet to understand the objectives of wearing hijab in Islam. Though, some understood but they are so scared for losing some opportunities and privileges, while others are because of monopoly among others. Therefore, this study targets to highlight the impediments of hijab in multi-cultural societies and the reasons why women are discriminating. Hence, it should be noted that what comes here is an attempt to outline the objectives of hijab in Islam as proposed in the framework of the study.

Respect of Human Dignity

Prior to outline the significant objectives of the Hijab, it is of great importance to say something about human dignity in general. Almighty Allah created and honoured humankind and raised up as well as placed them over and above all creatures. The clearest affirmation of human dignity in Islam is found in the Qur'anic verse where Almighty Allah asserts that:

And indeed We have honoured the children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and we have provided them with *Al-tayyibat* (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference.⁵¹

The question rises here is why women are subject to discrimination? Perhaps, it might be said that their dignities as a human being are not respected in most societies whether in the minority or majority Muslim societies. But the actual fact is that, ignorance on not knowing the right and privileges that Almighty Allah gave to humankind was the basic reason. Secondly, deviation from the laws said. Thirdly, the women themselves have their own problem in the society. At times, you can see a woman wearing a provocative dress to the extent that she attracts thousand men to come to them in order to discharge their emotional feeling. This is one

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra 17: 70.

of the major problems attacking the present society. Considering the above verse, Allah says He raised the human being over and above any creations. Though, other do not respect this honour. That is why a society cannot live in peace and prosperity unless follow the right teachings and guidance of the Sharia. In view of the above verse, it may say that the objective of the Hijab in this society is disregarded and the reason why may be attributed to different aspects. However, for those who used to discriminate women should know the following, in order for the objectives of Hijab to be maintained.

Obligation

Hijab in Islam should not be taken as a fashion, but rather as an obligation. This is because covering *aura* (private part) is compulsory in Islam. Therefore, a woman is compulsory to cover herself as clearly seen in many places in the Glorious Qur'an. This indicates that wearing Hijab is in obedience with the commandment of Allah the Most High. Most of the Muslim scholars have unanimously agreed that Hijab has never been a controversial issue, because of the available evidences in the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, the obligation of Hijab among Muslim scholars is conclusive. Hence, it is of great importance to make a distinction between *Hijab* and *Niqab* therefore, *Hijab* is the headdress which covers the head and neck, while the *Niqab* covers the face only.

The Glorious Qur'an clearly stated what women supposed to cover in front of those whom are not their Muharram. To appreciate the role of Qur'an concerning the obligation of Hijab, it must refer to Surah al-Nur where Almighty Allah says:

O Prophet! tell the believing women to restrain their gaze (the forbidden look) and to guard themselves from sinning (fornication or adultery) and not to display excessive jewellery and make up (to prevent seduction) except what is normally revealed and to draw (extend) their *khumurst* (*Hijabs*) over their chests. They should not reveal their beauty (removing their head scarves because hair is part of the beauty) to anyone but their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers (father in law), or their sons, or their husbands' sons (step sons), or their brothers, or their brothers' sons (nephews), or their sisters' sons (nephews), or other women of acquaintance, or their slaves, or the subservient male (mentally handicapped) servants who are not attracted to women, or children (not pubescent) who have no awareness of the hidden aspects of women. They should [also] not stomp their feet in order to seduce and draw men's attention to their hidden ornaments (anklet). O believers repent to Allah so that you may succeed.⁵²

The above verse clearly suggests what a Muslim woman is covered and what is uncovered in front of her Muharram. This indicates that there are certain categories of people

⁵² Qur'an Surah al-Nur 24:31.

whom Islam compels Muslim women to cover themselves before them and there are those whom some Muslim women can uncover in front of them because of the reasons stated in the verse. In another place, verse 59 of Surah al-Ahzab states that:

O Prophet Enjoin your wives, your daughters, and the wives of believers to draw their [*jalabeeb*] cloaks (outer garment) over them [when they go out]. That is more proper, so that they may be distinguished and not be harassed. Surely, God is the most forgiving and merciful.⁵³

From the above verse, it is understood that Almighty Allah directly commands the Prophet to instruct his wives to cover themselves. This clearly indicates that the injunction is not limited to them but rather to the entire Muslim women. Therefore, in as much as a woman attains the age of puberty she must be covered herself, otherwise she violates the teaching of the Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet. With this, the obligation of Hijab in the light of the Glorious Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet is quite clear.

Chastity and Modesty

Chastity and modesty being the two objectives of veiling is of great importance to assert here that women were asked to cover themselves in public places and in private in front of those who are not their *Muharramah* (foreigners). Therefore, the goal of veiling in Islam is to maintain the chastity of women. Besides, other religions than Islam also encourage women veiling and asked their followers to respect it. Chastity is philosophy of the covering and covering is its guarantor "insurer". In this regard, Konfosios, the Chinese philosopher of the sixth century B.C, has said:

One who can be considered man of culture is that who is honest in his conduct and behaviours with chastity in heart, and that who is delegated to other foreign counties as an ambassador, would never bring about means of shame to his king.⁵⁴

Barroukh Espinozah says:

Even if we have knowledge of eternity of our souls, still we would have given priority and importance to abstemiousness and religion with all things I indicated in chapter four, that are relevant to magnanimity and dignity.⁵⁵

Similarly, Mahatma Gandhi asserted that:

Woman's true ornamentation being her character and her purity. The real ornamentation can never be in purity of heart and soul beautifying, not in loading the body with stones and metals.⁵⁶

⁵³ Qur'an, Surah al-Ahzab 33:59.

⁵⁴ Akhlaaq, Veil and Chastity, retrieved from www.al-islam.org on November 10, 2019.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Al-Mahatma Gandhi, p. 146.

From the above quotations, it is understood that all the divine religions made a great emphasis and recommendations and chastity and modesty as the Glorious Qur'an clearly made to the Muslims. Hence, the chastity of woman as one of the solid objectives of veiling could not be argued. It is generally agreed that women were created with the ability of shyness than men. Therefore, for better protection of their chastity and modesty, they should always respect themselves by wearing the *hijab*. Otherwise, a weaker man or a person with weak faith may attack them to satisfy his sexual emotional feeling. This is because, wearing hijab for women is compulsory till the Day of Judgement. Whoever disagrees on the obligations of hijab in Islam, it may say that he contradicts the commandments of Allah and that of his Messenger.

Religiosity and Piety

From the above two terms, it is possible to understand that Islam made wearing hijab as a religious symbols of Muslim women. Hence, religion is practicing to have piety for the attainment of spirituality. Therefore, from the Islamic perspectives, a woman as earlier seen must cover herself when comes to perform any acts of worship, particularly the payers. It is understood that wearing hijab is one of the most significant conditions for the acceptance of prayer for a Muslim woman in Islam. Therefore, in Islam everything there is why of it. That is why Almighty Allah commands Muslim women to veil themselves in order to get reward from Him and to be protected in their worldly life. A man or woman could not be pious unless have consciousness of Almighty Allah. This shows that consciousness of Almighty Allah generates from practicing what He (Almighty Allah) commands and forbids. Without piety, a man or woman could not worship Almighty Allah because devotion is the mechanism that supports man to understand the philosophy or wisdom behind any injunctions in the Qur'an and Hadith of the Prophet.

From the above discussion, it may be concluded that lacks of religiosity and piety was the reason why some Muslim women fail to understand the obligation of the Hijab. That is why some were considered it as a fashion design while others as a heritage inherited from their forefathers.

D. Conclusion

The above discussion had played an important role in displaying the clear picture of what causes the discrimination of multiculturalism on Muslim women dress. It is understood that discrimination occurs as a result of different perceptions of people who in most cases understand that once women respected their religious obligations are liable to discrimination and criticism as well as intimidation and assault in her respective society's. In addition, it is

clearly understood that not only the religion of Islam, but almost all other religions disregard what causes discrimination of Muslim women who are wearing Hijab. This is because all the religions agreed and supported the veiling. For example, Judaism, Christianity and Sikhism were all recommended women to veil themselves particularly when it is interpreted as heads cover.

However, the discussion shows that ignorance and lack of piety were among the major factors responsible for the negligence of practicing the commandment of wearing hijab by some Muslim women. It is clearly seen from the discussion that some Muslim women believed that to wear hijab, to them is an embarrassment or rather a downgrading themselves to the oldest civilization. From what is clearly discovered in the discussion, this was because of lack of consciousness of Almighty Allah. Hence, if a Muslim woman believes in whatever Almighty Allah commanded and His Messenger, she must incline and do it accordingly or to the best of her ability. This could not be possible unless she believes and understands the obligation of Hijab.

Finally, it is understood that all the concepts that are associated with what causes discrimination of women in a Multicultural society are clearly deliberated and highlighted. Thus, such concepts need to be understand and address for better understanding of the obligation of Hijab in Islam and other religions. It is further noted that women were protected under the religion of Islam beyond any other religion just because of their special position in Islam. Despite that, some ignore such protection and disregard the obligation and hence interpreted it as a violation of human rights. Therefore, wearing Hijab nowadays leads to discrimination in a minority Muslim societies and at times it may be said that even in some majority Muslim societies. With this, it may be concluded that Muslims women and the adherents of other religions note that no religion in the world call the discrimination of any minority in the society. Islamic religion in most cases grants full human rights to its adherents and discourage them to intimidate anybody from any other religions. Hence, let the people understand that living in peace and harmony is the only way out for the progress and acceleration as well as minimizing any subsequent misunderstanding among members of the societies.

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