Anti-Islam discrimination: through the experiences of Muslim women in the Netherlands

Freedom for me is being able to be who you are without this being brought into doubt because of, for example, your appearance, beliefs or ideas. And also give each other the respect even though you don't agree on something. Freedom in my eyes is harmony!

Freedom for me means that I don't have to defend myself against people's prejudices about my religion and that I don't have to be afraid that this has a negative effect on finding a job or with other institutions in the Netherlands.

Freedom for me is the choice to do what I want within the legal framework.

Freedom for me is more than rules and laws. There can be freedom and religion, and a ban on discrimination, as long as there is an atmosphere where I don't feel free to behave and express myself as I want, or be who I am at all without having to hide it, I don't feel free. This can already be influenced by something as small as being looked at sideways, because of the choices I make in life. In addition, I believe that we can never be free until all women are free. All systems of oppression are interconnected and that is why we need to have an intersectional approach to situations of oppression. As Martin Luther King Jr said: "no one is free untill we are all free".

Freedom for me means: that I can do what I want. That I have the ability to act at my will. That I can live my life the way I want. That I can shape my own identity & that I can express my true opinion. Unfortunately, all these ideals are difficult to achieve / pursue for a Muslim woman in today's society, in which mostly Western ideals matter. If you want to dress in a certain way (veil/robe), or act (pray) or express (according to the Qur'an/Sunnah) you will be looked down upon, you will be put away and you will have fewer opportunities in society. Apparently that freedom is only available for certain groups and that is a pity. Yet in my life I try with that bit of freedom that I do have, to stand up for minority groups and to give them a voice. If we all use a piece of our freedom to work for good, we create mass and a movement can arise to help the oppressed in society.

For me, freedom means having a bit of agency within a world characterized by all kinds of oppressive structures. Freedom for me is imagining or constructing an alternative world: holding on to the hope that another world is possible and that other ways of being and thinking are possible. A world in which the singularity of being and the individual is transcended: departing from 'I' to arrive at 'we'. Freedom for me is very concretely coming together with other women of color or people who have the same hopes as I do, with whom I can share my thoughts/wishes/dreams for an alternative world, with whom I can laugh or cry about things such as hatred of Islam, racism, sexism and can enjoy the smallest things. It is that possibility of being together, thinking together, healing together, dreaming together and creating from an alternative place, which for me is freedom.

(Image 1: made by me, see chapter 3, section 3)

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to answer or document experiences on the question: *how are multiple forms of gendered anti-Islam discrimination experienced by Muslim women with a refugee / migrant background in the Netherlands?* For this study 14 Muslim women in the Netherlands were interviewed with a life / oral histories method, and it showed that Muslim women experience intersectional discrimination, which is a combination of religion, gender and ethnicity, but the main factor of influence being religion, as the Islam is inherently linked with specific ethnicities. The participants reported experiencing multiple forms of discrimination, such as exclusion, rejection, sexual harassment, intrusive questions and more. The described experiences seemed to be rooted in the stereotyping and stigmas of Muslim women by the media and right wing politicians. The experienced anti-Islam discrimination violates Muslim women in their freedom to dress, express their identity, and autonomy.

Keywords: *intersectionality, Muslim women, gender, anti-Islam discrimination, Islamophobia*

1. INTRODUCTION

On may 30th 2021 Mounia, a mother, and a Muslim woman, was walking down the street with her 2 months old son in the stroller when she was suddenly followed and stabbed to death, by a complete stranger, for no reason (DeJaegher, 2021). In 2018 a Muslim woman was attacked and mutilated by two men. It was stated that the perpetrators made racist comments, and "took off her headscarf and tore her outer garments from her body" and "they mutilated her face, legs, stomach and torso" (Algemeen Dagblad, 2018). A Syrian girl with a refugee background was bullied and assaulted at school. Her headscarf was ripped off from her head at school, which led to her attempting to take her own life (Clarke-Billings, 2018). These horrific attacks on Muslim women are reported throughout West Europe and display a terrifying reality for Muslim women.

As can be seen from these terrible events is that, even though they took place throughout different locations in West Europe, they share one similar issue: Muslim women facing anti-Islam discrimination, with a large focus on the headscarf. Muslim women were stated to experience discrimination at work and at government services, because of their Islamic veils (Renout, 2020). In addition, the Burqa ban, a ban which focuses only on policing Muslim women in their clothes, led to more hate crimes and social exclusion in the Netherlands experienced by Muslim women (Muller, 2019; Perry, 2014). With France more recently proposing a Hijab ban which targets girls under the age of 18 and banning minors from wearing the Hijab, thus restricting their agency (Lang, 2021).

Most of the reports on anti-Islam discrimination, around 70%, are made by Muslim women (Renout, 2020). In the Netherlands over 400 reports on Islamophobia have been registered since 2015, according to the Meldpunt Islamofobie (2021). According to Renout many Muslims do not report discrimination or attacks (2020), therefore the numbers are higher in reality. These various reports paint a picture of the unsafe and violent / hostile environment in which Muslim women find themselves.

 This research is therefore of social value, because it can provide more insight on the experiences and impact of oppression faced by Muslim women with a refugee/migrant background from their perspectives. By studying this topic and providing more information this can lead to more understanding and equality for women in general, but specifically for Muslim women.

According to Casimiro, Hancock & Northcote, Muslim women as a topic is understudied in the West (2007). Therefore, this research is of academic value, not only because it studies contemporary issues, but also because it can contribute to filling the gap or

lack of information on this subject. In addition, the outcome of this research may contribute to further exploration of the topic for future research in academia.

Because of my own Islamic as well as refugee background, I know that within my own community a lot of experienced anti-Islam and anti-refugee/migrant discrimination is dealt with privately or silently, and mostly discussed within the community and not reported.

In order to raise more awareness to the anti-Islam discrimination faced by Muslim women, and to amplify their voices, perspectives and experiences the research questions that stands central in this paper is: *how are multiple forms of gendered anti-Islam discrimination experienced by Muslim women with a refugee / migrant background in the Netherlands?* In addition, there are two sub-questions that will be explored on intersecting categories that are of importance to this study, because of the intersectionality of Muslim women, which are gender and visibility with regards to anti-Islam discrimination, which are the following:

1. What difference is there in experience of oppression between Muslim women who wear a Hijab, Niqab, Burqa and Chador and Muslim women who do not? *(visibility)*
2. How do women with an Islamic background experience oppression in comparison to men? *(gender)*

Other intersecting categories that are not explicitly mentioned in the questions, but are explored in this paper are ethnicity and legal status in the experiences of the women with regards to anti-Islam discrimination. For example, Muslim women are said to experience high levels of discrimination in the labor field, i.e. by being turned down based on their religion, their names or ethnicity. In job interviews, by asking invasive questions such as if they experience domestic violence at home (Seta, 2016). But also the media and the citizens framing and stereotyping Muslim women as oppressed, exotic, and unintelligent (Bendixson, 2013; Ghumman & Ryan, 2013). This is why "multiple forms" of anti-Islam discrimination are further explored in this paper.

I write this with urge, because the safety of Muslim women in their everyday lives is put to risk by anti-Islam discrimination that occurs in several domains of life, such as the bans proposed by states in the West, the media, right-wing politicians, and citizens of the West that believe in this anti-Islam ideology.

This paper will start with a theoretical framework, followed up by the methods applied, an analysis of the data obtained, and lastly, the conclusion and recommendations.

2. THEORY

2.1 Netherlands, Migration and Islam

To explore this topic, it is important to give a brief historic of migration and Islam in relation to the Netherlands. Muslims were first listed as citizens in 1879 and at the time it counted 49 people in the Netherlands as Muslims (Al Abdallah, 2019). From 1960, after World War II, the population of the Netherlands had increased with people with an Islamic background. It started with the guest workers from Morocco and Turkey that came to the Netherlands to work, followed by the families of the guest workers (Yukleyen, 2010). This was followed by refugees coming to the Netherlands in the 80's and 90's from countries such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and, more recently, Syria (Al Abdallah, 2019). The public idea that the integration of Muslims in the Netherlands, and a multicultural society, are not able to be successful, grew since the 1980s. Even though multiple studies conducted by i.e. Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau showed the opposite (Tjoonk, 2020).

The start of the "problemisation of Islam" in West Europe, according to Zemni, is linked to the idea of a "failed multicultural society", which is reflected in the statement that: "gradually, but forcefully, the idea of a failure of integration – presumably caused by Islam's rejection of, or resistance to, modernity – emerged" (2011, p. 37). Thus labeling Islam as a religion that does not fit with the values of the West, but also framing Muslims as the community to blame for the failure.

However, after 9/11 the discrimination and hate crimes faced by Muslims increased, especially for the Muslim women (Perry, 2014). At the same time, the idea arose that the government should pursue a policy that would counter migration and the so-called "terrorism" that would accompany it from Islamic countries, which meant that terrorism was framed as innate to Islam (Tjoonk, 2020).

Furthermore, the fear of replacement also arose, as the Muslim population has a higher birth rate, which thus triggers the fear that "Muslim populations will "replace" the white/Christian populations that are considered to be "native" to Europe". The focus would be put upon the Muslim women, as they carry the children, and images would be made depicting Muslim women pregnant and their pregnant stomach would be a bomb (Bracke & Hernández Aguilar, 2020, p. 681). This indicates that (sowing of) fear is an important factor of anti-Islam attitudes and discrimination. But also shows how Muslim women were symbolized as threat to society.

Because problems that are faced by Muslims are framed as a part of their culture and religion, anti-Islam practices and attitudes are normalized (Zemni, 2011). As mentioned before, Muslim women are more often victims of hate crimes than men (Renout, 2020), and experiencing discrimination is stated to be harmful and affect the mental health of victims, as it has been reported that Muslim women avoid going out in the dark and even attempting to change their names, to names more common in the West. In relation to their mental health, feelings of losing trust, hope and a sense of belonging were common after experiencing anti-Islam discrimination (Ziersch, Due & Walsh, 2020).

Thus, the impact of anti-Islam discrimination leads to Muslim women using different strategies out of fear and in order to protect themselves from i.e. hate crimes. However, the issues faced by Muslim women due to the framing and labeling are not central in the debate with the rise of the right-wing populism, as the focus lies on the different issues faced by the country and these being sold (framed) as one big problem and the blame is put on the Muslims (Tjoonk, 2020). These anti-Islam attitudes and discrimination manifest themselves in different forms, such as labeling, framing and hate crimes, and are exercised from different domains, such as the state, the media and society, and impact Muslim women in different (harmful) ways.

2.3 Labeling, Framing & Stigma

In order to understand the anti-Islam attitudes and discrimination I want to look at labeling and framing, as it shapes the public idea, opinion and attitudes towards Muslim women in the Netherlands. According to Zemni, the media and state play a role in framing the Islam, as well as Muslims, as a threat and a political problem. Again stating that the Islam and its values do not fit or align with the values of the west (2011). The labeling and framing of Muslims as a threat, as violent, as not fitting in, causes the non-Muslim population to support public policies that are harmful for Muslims, which according to Saleem, et. al. expands nationally to internationally (2017).

Bracke & Fadil state that "framing the presence of ethnic minorities in terms of the 'diversity challenge' thus becomes a way not only to label these minorities as 'different' - and thus exclude them from national ideas - but also to develop a certain understanding of the national self" (2012, p. 42). This is reflected in a study conducted by Saleem, et. al., which shows that the non-Muslim population supports i.e. the Burqa ban, the military attacking of Islamic countries, such as bombing, but also the Muslim population would be more stereotyped, and thus seen, as being more aggressive than the rest (2017).

In addition to Muslim women being stereotyped as evil, barbaric, terrorists and uncivilized, which are stereotypes that Muslim men and women face (Ghumman & Ryan, 2018), according to Abu-Laghod, Muslim women are framed as oppressed by, and in need of saving from their religion, culture and men (2020). The Islamic veil is seen as oppressive and Muslim women wearing an Islamic veil are therefore seen as being forced to wear it. Muslim women are also stigmatized as unintelligent and not capable of thinking for themselves, but also hypersexualized as they can be stereotyped as exotic, mysterious, and linked to harems and belly dancers (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013; Hasan, 2017; Seta, 2016).

These stigmas i.e. result into microaggressions, such as Muslim women being asked on the subway if they can read by a stranger (Bendixson, 2013; Limbong, 2019). Muslim women are also asked questions about their marriages, families, pregnancies etc. by recruiters in interviews for jobs, which is similar to women in general. However, Muslim women are asked questions regarding domestic violence, such as, "does your husband beat you", and questions on fasting during Ramadan, and also if they are willing to shake hands with colleagues i.e. (Seta, 2016).

This, however, is rooted in a sense of superiority and cultural relativism (Abu-Lughod, 2020). Hass supports this by stating that the Islamic way of dressing is seen as a way of dressing that goes against the "norms and values" of the "archetypal Dutch identity", meaning it doesn't fit the white Dutch perception of how women should dress, and therefore the non-Muslim population of the Netherlands labels and criticizes it as oppressive (Hass, 2020).

According to Navaro, Muslim women are framed in Western mass media as victims within their own community or culture, and simultaneously pose as a threat for the Western culture / society (2010). The news reported on Muslim women in the West are also mostly focused on themes such as forced marriages, honor killings and female genital mutilation, which is linked with the Islam and women's rights violations (Seta, 2016). Again, framing the Islam and the headscarf as harmful for women and blocking emancipation for women, while using Muslim women as a signifier for women's rights violations, thus making women that wear a headscarf more visible.

2.4 Visibility and the Islamic Veil

Visibility is an important theme when analyzing discrimination faced by Muslim women. It is said that wearing religious attire, thus any form of the Islamic veil, makes Muslim women more visible to distinguish and identify as a Muslim (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013). For example, a study conducted by Bendixson (2013) showed that Muslim women in Germany reported to

experience verbal abuse frequently, such as being called "Taliban" and asked intrusive questions on if they were forced to wear the headscarf or if it's hot under their headscarf. However, some Muslim women were also spit on and physically attacked i.e. by clothes or headscarves being torn off (Bendixson, 2013; Ghummah & Ryan, 2013). The Islamic veil (or headscarf) is stigmatized as submissive and conservative. These stigmas are thus projected onto Muslim women that wear any form of the Islamic veil (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013).

According to Seta, a study conducted in the Netherlands showed that students with a migrant and Islamic background had reported that they experienced discrimination whilst applying for an internship. And furthermore, Muslim women students had reported on being rejected by internships, because of their headscarf. In another situation in the Netherlands a Muslim woman her contract was terminated, because she started wearing a headscarf, which her employer did not agree with (Seta, 2016).

In relation to stigmatization of Muslim women, the Burqa ban was enacted in 2019 in the Netherlands (OSJI, 2018), under the public guise of 'saving Muslim women from oppression'. However, it takes away the freedom of choice and the right to shape and express the identity of the Muslim women (Hass, 2020). Therefore, oppressing Muslim women, whilst claiming to counter just that. And to connect to that, according to the Stichting Meld Islamofobie, the ban has led to Muslim women being attacked more since the ban, both verbally and physically, in places where the law does not apply, such as in playgrounds and in shops. Which shows that the citizens, so to speak, take matters into their own hands, and thus harming Muslim women (Stichting Meld Islamofobie, 2021). The failure to protect Muslim women from (or even justifying) experiencing discrimination based on religion is due to the stigmatization (by the media, politics and society) of the Islamic veil as it being oppressive and therefore not in line with gender equality (Bendixson, 2013).

The experiencing of anti-Islam discrimination has led to some Muslim women not wearing a form of the Islamic veil, due to fear, thus the experience of anti-Islam discrimination also interferes and hinders Muslim women to express the right to their identity (Ziersch, Due & Walsh, 2020; Hass, 2020).

The Islamic veil is seen as "one of the chief symbols of what is perceived as a growing visibility of Islam in the public sphere" (Bracke & Nabil, 2012, p. 48), making the Muslim women the target of racists / right-wing perpetrators. This suggests that Muslim women with any form of the Islamic veil are more visible / easier recognized as Muslim, and therefore more subject to anti-Islam attitudes and discrimination.

It is important to note that Muslim women have intersecting categories on which the discrimination is based on, which are gender, religion, ethnicity (Lodi, 2021). Therefore Muslim women face discrimination of a combination of these intersecting categories, which non-Muslim women and Muslim men do not experience (Bendixson, 2013). This makes it important to look at the experiences of discrimination based on the combination of intersecting categories, faced by Muslim women, because more insight is needed on this. Therefore, in this paper, and specifically in the analysis part, the focus will be on these intersecting categories.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Strategy

For this research, I will look at how anti-Islam and anti-refugee / migrant discrimination is experienced by the women of the Muslim community in the Netherlands. As a result, a qualitative research method has been chosen. This method fits in best with this because it ensures that the subject can be analyzed from *feelings, experiences and opinions / thoughts* on the discrimination faced by the women of the Muslim community. According to Bryman the focus of qualitative research lies on words, and understanding the social world through the eyes of the participants (2016), which is exactly what this research aims to do.

3.2 Sample

The sample choice of this research was a combination of the generic purposive sample, because the participants were chosen based on certain sociodemographic characteristics such as: religion, gender and legal status and the snowball sample, meaning that participants where asked if they know other Muslim women, who would like to participate (Bryman, 2016). Due to my own network and background, the group was easily and quickly reached, as the sampling process did not start until after Ramadan 2021, but nonetheless was successful in such a short time. Thus 5 participants were from my direct environment. In addition, I found a number of women via LinkedIn, Nida and Al Nisa, who wanted to participate. In total 14 Muslim women have participated from throughout the Netherlands. Important is to note that the women that participated have experienced anti-Islam discrimination in their own way and therefore, the analysis is not focused on "proving" that it does occur in the Netherlands, but *how* it occurs and *experienced* by the women.

3.3 Data Gathering

To gather data a combination of methods will be applied to this research. The interview method for this research was life / oral history which asked the participants to "look back in detail across his or her entire life course" (Bryman, 2016, p. 485). This method was chosen, because it is important for this research to document the topic from the perspective of the participants. In addition, it aims to generate data on the everyday life of women with regard to anti-Islam and anti-migrant discrimination and how they experience it. It is therefore possible to document the " inner experience of individuals, how they interpret, understand, and define the world around them" (Bryman, 2016, p. 485). This therefore fit perfectly, because the aim was to document how they interpret, understand and define the oppression rooted in anti-

Islam faced in Dutch society. It also allowed them to decide for themselves what was an significant experience for them to share (Ssali, Theobald & Hawkins, 2015). Therefore, there were no questions developed prior, except for one: "can you share your experience with anti-Islam discrimination". And from that question on and the shared experiences, questions were asked spontaneously.

Lastly, another method used is a survey, with one open question, which was sent out as a google form. The participants could anonymously answer the question: "what does freedom mean to you as a Muslim woman in the Dutch society" (appendix). The answers of the participants have been transformed into the cover of this paper (see image 1). This question was inspired by the conversations with the participants, because Muslim women and the Islam are framed as oppressive. Therefore, it was of importance to give the women the opportunity within this paper, to control the narrative of what freedom means for them.

The interviews were one on one, and the majority of the interviews were online (see *3.4 Setting*). The interviews were voice recorded, which is preferred over making notes during the interviews, because there is a risk of missing out on certain valuable information and it can also be distracting for the participant and the researcher (Bryman, 2016). Voice recording made it possible to analyze the interviews afterwards and transcribe them. Thus, the recordings of this research were transcribed and analyzed with Atlas.Ti. The codes were developed with an open coding strategy, see code tree for codes (appendix I).

3.4 Setting

The overall setting of these interviews took place in the Netherlands. Due to the current climate, it was not (completely) possible to conduct face to face interviews. Only three interviews took place face to face and the remaining 11 were online. The reason being that of the current climate of COVID-19, therefore the participants had the option of choosing which they prefer (online or offline). The online interviews were conducted via Zoom, with only three via FaceTime.

3.5 Ethical Aspects

To ensure that the privacy of the participants is fulfilled the Erasmus University has provided an informed consent form, which was handed out to the participants. With this consent form the anonymity of the participants is ensured. The topic of this research can be deemed as heavy and speaking on experiences can even be traumatic for participants, therefore for each conversation, a certain signal was agreed upon with the participants. With this signal the

participants could indicate that they wanted a break, or that they can no longer talk about something, or that certain trauma is being triggered. For this research it was mostly important that participants feel safe and the aim was therefore to respect their feelings and privacy.

4. ANALYSIS

In this chapter the experiences provided by the Muslim women that have participated in this study with regards to anti-Islam discrimination will be analyzed. This chapter is divided into sub headings, inspired by the theoretical framework and coding of the transcripts. Central to this are the intersectional categories and discrimination faced by Muslim women, as mentioned by the participants themselves in which they (explicitly) mentioned gender, ethnicity and/or religion. However, it is important to note that there is no clear distinction between these intersecting categories, as they also are intertwined with one another and also reinforce one another (Appendix I). Therefore, the intersecting categories gender, ethnicity, and religion are mentioned in sub headings, however their relations will be discussed throughout this chapter.

4.1 Religion and..

.. its stigmas

According to Muslim women experience being stigmatized, excluded and rejected based on their religion (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013; Seta, 2016). P8 shares that she remembers being rejected because of her headscarf for job/internship opportunities, she describes: *"I can remember well that I was once rejected for an internship because of my headscarf"* and continues to explain that:

> *"they literally said: "you are more than welcome here. You are a nice spontaneous lady", but if you want to get started here then you have to take off your headscarf".*

In addition, P12 shares a similar situation with regards to a job interview, in which:

> *"I was invited and they really said: oh, we didn't expect you to wear a headscarf. And that you are really asked: is it really necessary? Can't you take it off in the workplace? That I think no, this belongs with me. This is my identity".*

These quotes resonate with what Seta found in their research on Muslim women being rejected or excluded within the labor market, which is a common form of discrimination within the West and the Netherlands (2016). But it also shows a form of ignorance, because they expect the women to take off their headscarf for work, as if they are not aware of what it means to wear a headscarf to the women. Like P12 who explains that it belongs with her and

it being part of her identity. P5 who works as a nurse, experienced rejection: *"the client said that he did not want to be taken care of by me, because of my headscarf"*. The client rejecting P5 from doing her work, thus taking care of him, shows a very clear anti-Islam attitude, as he pointed out her headscarf for being the reason. This resonates with what Vickers shared in their research on a client declining service from a women wearing a headscarf (2017).

In addition, to women being excluded and rejected in the workplace, due to their religion, which is made visible by wearing the headscarf, which is rooted in the stigma of not belonging, there are also experiences that stigmatize other forms of religious practices. P14 shares an experience at her work, in which she and her colleague asked the kitchen staff if the meat was halal:

" my colleague and I got the answer that we should just eat what everyone else eats and not complain. We indicated not to complain, but to have asked the question so that we know whether we should leave the meat or just eat it".

By stating that they should "eat what everyone else eats and not complain" it shows that practices that are linked to Islam, such as eating halal meat, are deemed as not in line with what "everyone else eats". Hence, this is a clear anti-Islam attitude, because in the Netherlands, there are people who can have allergies i.e. or are vegan and these people are not labeled as not in line with what "everyone else eats".

In addition, to being stigmatized as "not belonging" in the West, Muslims are also stigmatized as evil and terrorists, due to terrorism being framed as inherit to Islam in the West (Tjoonk, 2020). These stigmas are also experienced by the participants. P3 who works in home care as a nurse, shared an experience with a Dutch Christian client, as she states:

"She asked me what my faith was and I told her I was Islamic. Then she asked me if I was practicing. To which I answered yes. The client then said with an angry tone that "what the Muslims are doing to Christians in Nigeria is horrific and that we should leave them alone". I became confused and hurt by that comment. I indicated that I am not from Nigeria and don't know the situation there".

In this situation, P3 is made responsible for something that is not only out of her hands, but also is not occurring in the Netherlands. P9 shares a similar experience: *"some of my coworkers said: oh my god, how bad! And other colleagues said: yes, see what is happening now, all kinds of attacks in the world. That's your people"*. In both situations described by P3 and P9 you can see how the framing of Muslims as terrorists manifests in Dutch society, as

people take over this view, and basically harass Muslims by blaming and questioning them for attacks that happen throughout the world. Which P8 also shares, as she states that she noticed that:

"Of course you always have people looking at you, especially when something has happened in the world. I once had someone cycle by and spit, luckily it didn't hit me and then he said something and cycled on again"

So blaming Muslim women for terrorist attacks in the world does not stop at verbal accusations, as can be seen in this example. For P8, that translates to being spat at her in the street, which is a common way of attacking Muslim women (Bendixson, 2013). The difference with P8's situation in comparison to P3 and P9 is that they had to disclose that they were Muslim's, before they were accused. P8, however, was walking down the street, and she was recognized due to her visibility, because she wears the headscarf, and P3 and P9 don't.

In this section it is shown how stigmas on the Islam and its practices impact Muslim women in the working place and in their everyday lives, such as exclusion and rejection.

.. its visibility

As seen in the experiences mentioned in "Religion and its stigmas" by P5, P8 and P12 they experienced discrimination, in the workplace, with a heavy focus on their headscarf. Visibility was a topic that was discussed in all the conversations with the participants. All the participants mentioned that there is a difference with visibility and invisibility when it comes to anti-Islam discrimination. Therefore, analyzing both separately is of importance. The participants that wear a headscarf shared some experiences that directly involved their choice to do so. For example, P6 shared that she:

"started wearing a headscarf somewhere between 7th grade and 8th grade. And then I suddenly noticed that how I was seen, yes, that was very different. So, I got from fellow students, but also from parents: "why do you wear a headscarf? You always had such beautiful hair". So I realized then, huh ok wait, so wearing a headscarf makes me extra visible to people".

In this shared experience, P6 states that she noticed a very clear change and how people questioned her choice of wearing a headscarf, but also how this made her conscious of her new visibility by wearing a headscarf. P6 proceeds by saying that it led to exclusion in

elementary school after she decided to wear a headscarf, as she states that: *"suddenly all kinds of play dates were cancelled"*, which shows that parents were excluding her from playing with her peers. P7 shares a similar experience: *"at the start of my new appointment at work, I was asked: may I know why you wear a headscarf? I told them this is feminism to me"*. Muslim women being questioned on wearing a headscarf is something that occurs frequently, according to Ghumman & Ryan (2013), but is also reflected in the experiences of the participants of this study.

   Another framing that reoccurs in the conversations with the participants is the framing of headscarf as oppressive. Muslim women that wear a form of the Islamic veil are questioned if they have to do so because of men (i.e. husband, father or brother) (Bendixon, 2013). This happened to P8, as she was asked:

> *"Why do you wear a headscarf, why doesn't she wear it and who does. And are you married off? And when you say no. Then it's like, oh really, oh how modern"*.

If the answers/behaviors/looks do not fit the stereotype of a Muslim woman, then often it is framed as modern, because it still seems to be looked at something that is not common within the Islam. Similarly, P7 shares:

> *"I worked in a legal department with only men. And the men always said to me: "oh, look the feminist". And one day to the next I started to wear a headscarf at the office and then suddenly it was: "hey, are you getting married?" Or: "did your father make you wear it"*.

Wearing the headscarf is linked to violating women's rights and male dominance, which is seen in P7's situation. As prior to wearing the headscarf she is seen as a feminist, and when deciding to wear a headscarf her colleague's immediately see her as oppressed and not as a feminist anymore (Bendixson, 2013). In P7's situation it shows that the headscarf is seen as a symbol of male dominance. As seen in the previous experiences mentioned by the participants, the work environments also seem to be significant in relation to experienced anti-Islam discrimination. Similarly, P6 said: *"what I've noticed a lot from the incidents over the past year has been with me especially with white people who somehow, can't see that feminism and Islam go together"*. These examples show how non-Muslim white people are not able to see that a Muslim women can be a feminist and that Islam and feminism can go together. The Islam is framed by the West as a religion that violates women's rights and is not

in line with gender equality (Bendixson, 2013). In these statements it is clearly reflected in their experiences with non-Muslim citizens of the Netherlands.

The stigma of the headscarf is also reflected in the statement by P9 about her sister's experience at her working place:

"she decided to wear a headscarf and so she came in and people were shocked and didn't understand. And she also had a colleague with whom she always walked to the metro together and who then stopped walking with her, who really distanced himself from her. He indicated that he thought "it was so radical of you and you really disappointed me that you started wearing a headscarf".

These "shocked" responses on the choice of wearing a headscarf are also mentioned by P13, as she shares that:

"A colleague of mine started wearing a headscarf and then yes, at the office all kinds of shocked faces and a colleague who even started to cry for her".

Both situation shows the reactions of non-Muslim colleagues that seem to take the decision of the women very personal and respond out of order. The situation described by P13 and the colleague crying, shows how the headscarf is seen as something terrible for women, as if her life was over. Whilst in the situation described by P9 the colleague said to find it radical and disappointing, which shows an anti-Islam attitude and distancing himself from her, because she did not longer fit with the archetypal Dutch perception of how women should dress (Hass, 2020).

P7 describes when she started noticing how she was viewed with a headscarf outside in the Netherlands, when the Burkini ban was announced in France, as she states that:

I noticed that when I walked on the beach and just dressed, so not even a burkini, you would be looked at weirdly like, hey, a headscarf doesn't belong here".

The framing of the headscarf as something that does not belong here, as P7 states, is done a lot by the Western media according to Bendixson (2013), but the stigma is taken over in different domains of life, such as work, but also in school, as p6 shares an experience with classmates:

"In another year we were with three girls and they said all the time: "just take off your headscarf, we are in the Netherlands, what do you think?" and "why do you wear a headscarf in class? It really shouldn't be possible. You are also the only one, why don't you just behave, you have to take it off".

In the experience shared by P6 it can be seen that the classmates would take on this role of deciding what does belong in the Netherlands, and what does not, and she is seen as "not behaving" according to the archetypal Dutch view of how women should dress (Hass, 2020).

In these experiences on visibility, the stigma of the headscarf and the Islam as a violation to women's rights is shown, but also how it impacts the everyday lives of Muslim women wearing a headscarf, such as in the working place.

..not wearing a headscarf

As seen prior, wearing the headscarf increases visibility, but women that do not wear a headscarf are not necessarily invisible, they are also questioned on the topic and even stigmatized as well. P1 shares that she does cover and dress modestly, however she does not wear a headscarf. She shares experience with a colleague:

"I came to work in the summer and I don't wear a headscarf, but I am covered with my clothes. And in the summer I also wear long sleeves and pants. So I came to work and a colleague asked me, "Aren't you hot?" So I asked why and then she said "well, you're all covered and I really feel sorry for you all and for the headscarf too".

This displays the framing of Muslim women as women that are sad and need saving as she mentions "I really feel sorry for you" (Abu-Laghod, 2020; Navaro, 2010).

In other situations, Muslim women who do not wear a headscarf, and explicitly mention that they are Muslim or act out something that is linked to the Islam (i.e. fasting, Friday prayers etc.) non-Muslim people respond shocked. This is reflected in these two quotes:

"I once said to my colleagues on Friday at work: "I'm going to the mosque, so, I have two hours off". So my colleague said: to the mosque?! So I said, yes, to the mosque, I'm a Muslim after all and I like to pray. Oh, huh, but why are you doing that? You don't wear a headscarf". (P9)

"You are a modern Muslima, or you know. They do not expect you to be a Muslima and of course it is not always mentioned. But for example in Ramadan. And then they say: "I did not expect it" and then

you see that they have a standard image of what a Muslim woman should look like and that is with a headscarf". (P13)

The framing of the headscarf as oppressive and backwards, and religious practices are linked to the headscarf are shown in these situations. P13 is called a "modern Muslima", because she does not wear a headscarf and therefore, fits with the archetypal Dutch identity, to an extent, of how women should dress (Hass, 2020).

Some women also express being afraid of disclosing information on their religion, due to the negative impact it has had in their experiences. As P3 shares:

"at my last job interview I was asked about my religion and I tried to talk over it a bit and try to keep it to myself as long as possible, because I was afraid of not being hired because of it. Because I don't wear a hijab, you can't necessarily see that I am Muslim, unless I mention it".

For P2 the aftermath of 9/11 and the impact it had on the Muslim community also made her scared to tell her job about her religion:

"just after 9/11 I assumed it was better not to tell what my religion is, because there was suddenly a very big Muslim hatred. And I know from one of my Muslim colleagues, and colleagues knew she was Muslim, that she once found an A4 with: "Muslim terrorist" from colleagues, "go back to your house" in her inbox. I didn't want to not be accepted based on my religion and was always very careful".

The situations provided by P2 and P3 show the tactics they used to prevent from being discriminated against, because of their religion (Ziersch, Due & Walsh, 2020; Hass, 2020). However, simultaneously, their tactics involved hiding their identity, which essentially limits their right to identity expression.

P11 was asked at her daughter's primary school: *"why don't you wear a headscarf"* and was *"constantly compared to other Muslim women"* by the other parents and teachers. To which she adds:

"I feel like I have to constantly defend myself and stay alert to those kinds of questions, for that kind of behavior. I had to constantly watch that I didn't behave like a "Turk" in their eyes".

This statement from P11 shows that the questions the parents and teachers asked her and the comparisons they made, which can stem from media that they consume, and the stereotypes that are shown on how Muslim women look. However, another layer is added in how she experienced this, as she states that in order to protect herself from these questions she also tried to not show her ethnic identity as much, and, thus, was also limited in freedom of identity expression.

These experiences involving women not wearing a headscarf, show that Muslim women are still stigmatized and questioned, however more so as being "modern Muslima's". They also experience fear of being discriminated, which results into limitation of expressing their religious identity.

4.2 Ethnicity and ..

As can be seen in the experience mentioned by P11 in the previous section, Muslim women also experience discrimination based on ethnicity. Sometimes it is very distinguishable from discrimination based on religion, however, sometimes it is a bit harder as they go hand in hand. Due to the fact that certain ethnicities are linked to the Islam, Islamic culture or from a Islamic country. For this reason, the choice has been made to devote this section to experiences from the participants that are explicitly related to ethnicity.

.. Microaggressions

Experiences involving ethnicity were shared by multiple participants. P7 shares an experience in which being "foreign" was explicitly mentioned:

"On the first day of my bachelor's study, I heard from my Somali friends that they heard a Dutch group whispering: "we are at the most elite university in the Netherlands and yet we find allochtonen[1] here". Thus, we were the outcasts of the class anyway".

In this statement it is clearly shown that the Dutch group viewed it from the sense of belonging / not belonging (Percy, 2014). As they did not expect the presence of people with a migrant background, at what they perceived "the most elite" university, but that also meant that P7 and friends were excluded in the class. Another experience which involves ethnicity is shared by P4, who works with children, as she states:

---

[1] Allochtoon refers to a Netherlands resident who has at least one non-Dutch parent of non-Western descent (van Leeuwen, 2016).

"After 20 years of working together, my colleagues still mispronounce and write my name wrong. And not only my colleagues, but also the parents. Sometimes it's a completely different name. That does hurt me. But they do expect me to pronounce every name right, and to write everything right, or else they'll complain about it".

The experience described by P4 can be analyzed in two ways. First and foremost, it can be seen as microaggression. The colleagues and parents do not really bother in pronouncing her name right, but also give her a new name, but at the same time expect from her the opposite. Which can also be analyzed through the idea of belonging and not belonging, as P4's name, which is not a Western name, does not belong in Dutch society (Perry, 2014) and therefore is mispronounced or even changed, because they feel more comfortable with doing so. Another situation in which emphasis is placed on not belonging, is provided by P2, who works as a teacher:

"The school didn't do anything about this. Occasionally I have experienced it when the students did not like me and what I said, they said: go back to your country".

The phrase "go back to your country" is a commonly used phrase by people that are anti-refugee/migrant. But in the situation of P2 it shows that her employer, thus the school, did not protect her. These experiences shared by P2, P4 and P7 also resonate with Bracke & Fadil (2012) on how ethnic minorities are framed as different, and the framing of the "national self" vs the others.

.. Stigma

Stigmas also play a huge role in discrimination based on ethnicity. P6 shares that: *"even if it's not about religion, it's about ethnicity".* She then proceeds with an example:

"There was a seat next to a white man on the subway and he was already smiling at me. And then he said: "why are you on your phone? I'd rather chat with you. You look so nice, you are such a nice beautiful girl. And your clothes combined so nicely". So I thought he's going to start talking about religion in a bit. Then he said to me: what is your origin? So I said: I'm Moroccan. Then he said, No way. You are kidding me. I hate cunt Moroccans".

This situation shows, that in this case, it wasn't necessarily about her religion, as she is visibly a Muslim woman, due to her headscarf, however, it was more so on being Moroccan.

Moroccans are also heavily stereotyped by the media and right wing populism as a problem for Dutch society and linked with criminality (Tjoonk, 2020).

Within the dating scene P10 shares an experience with a man who said to her: *"Huh are you Turkish? Then shouldn't you be trapped in a cage in your parents' basement"*. This statement carries the layer of ethnicity as it clearly indicates that the man was stereotyping her culture as oppressive, which is the case with cultures that are linked with Islam, however the gender layer is also very visible, because it is specifically said to her in that way, because she is a woman.

These experiences show that sometimes Muslim women experience discrimination based on combination of religion and ethnicity, as they can go hand in hand, however, sometimes the discrimination can only involve their ethnicity. Similar to religion, the discrimination involve stigmas and microaggressions.

4.3 Gender and ..

As can be seen in the prior sections, which discussed religion and ethnicity, gender was mentioned throughout, as the participants shared their experiences with i.e. stigmas, such as being oppressed, because they are Muslim women or because of their visibility with wearing a headscarf, which only Muslim women wear and not men. For this reason, the choice has been made to devote this section to experiences that are explicitly related to gender and mentioned differences between Muslim men and women by the participants.

.. Autonomy

In 2019 the Burqa ban was enacted, which is deemed as an attack on Muslim women. P3 shares an experience in which she was walking with her friend outside who wears a Niqab, however, P3 does not wear any form of the Islamic veil. P3 states that:

"We were walking, and this was before the Burqa ban, and we were crossing over the tram rails and the tram was further away and the person driving the tram suddenly started driving really fast, and he looked very aggressive as he wanted to drive into us".

With the same friend, P3 also experienced *"adult men walking up very aggressively and screaming that she had to take off her burqa and cursing and saying how do we know that you are not hiding a bomb underneath that"*. According to Bracke & Hernandez Aguilar (2020), there are images in the media that depict Muslim women with their pregnant stomach as a

bomb, under their garment, which could also be a reason why people would link her garment to a bomb. However, Muslims are also framed as terrorists by the media and a threat to national security, which even led to the Burqa ban (OSJI, 2018; Zemni, 2011). However, in these situations described by P3, the only real danger, was the Islam hatred and aggressiveness shown by the non-Muslims towards them.

The fear of being alone outside and avoiding it can be shared with women in general (Ziersch, Due & Walsh, 2020). P6 was traveling home from work in the evening. A man was constantly watching and following her and sat next to her in the train and:

"he just started talking about what I do and how that was interesting for a Muslim woman. And I remember being stressed the whole train ride, because I thought I just don't know what this man is going to do to me because it was half past eleven and you just don't know, yes, that fear that you don't know what's going to happen and he'd been drinking too and he had beer with him and he just kept drinking. And that is the stress that I experience. Can I be alone on the street or can I walk alone here, where do I sit, can that person be trusted, can I start a conversation or where is this going".

However, in this example, we can see a clear layer added to this experience, which is provided in the sentence "that is interesting for a Muslim woman", which resonates with Bendixson (2013), example of a Muslim woman framed as unintelligent by a stranger on the subway. Saying "that is interesting for a Muslim woman", seems like a backhanded compliment, which is rooted in some stereotype . The layer of religion is added with gender in this experience of harassment, showing the intersectionality of Muslim women. P6 shows that this impacts her decision making in where and when she can feel the safety to move freely. A similar situation is described by P7 who is a board member of a mosque and mentions that:

"We had periods when women did not come to the women's lecture, because the women's lecture was at 7 o'clock in the evening and the women were afraid to go out on the street in the evenings. So, yes, it also affects the freedom of movement of women".

Both situations show how Muslim women are restricted in their freedom of movement. The women use certain strategies such as who they can or cannot talk to, where they can or cannot walk, for fear of behavior that stems from Islam hatred (Ziersch, Due & Walsh, 2020; Hass, 2020).

In relation to the Burqa ban P7 shares her take on the position Muslim women have in the Netherlands:

"You also see the laws that discriminate the most, they focus the most on the ladies, such as the Niqab ban. It limits us in our dress right and in our right to autonomy. And that's the scary thing about it. It's not just that the government doesn't do anything about discrimination, but so essentially targets the women first".

In her statement she reflects on the role the Dutch government has played in violating the dress right and right to autonomy of Muslim women, but really approaches it from a gender perspective. As she states that it "targets the women first", which would make it a gender issue. However this is not seen as such, because simultaneously, the Islam and headscarf are seen as a violation towards women. Therefore, according to Bendixson, (2013) failing to include this in gender issues, failing to protect Muslim women and justifying the discriminatory laws. According to P9:

"Just as we think it's normal for someone to be able to walk down the street in a bikini, so should someone be able to walk down the street covered. one does not exclude the other. Why should it be determined when and what you can wear. A woman is attacked, regardless of her being a Muslim".

Similarly to P7, P9 stresses the importance of seeing it as a gender issue and from a gender perspective, rather than framing it as a religious issue. This was reflected in all the interviews with the participants and was deemed as very important.

.. Stigma

Asking women intrusive questions on marriage, children etc. is very common. However, with Muslim women there is a difference (Seta, 2016). In this experience with her colleagues shared by P4, she states:

"They asked me if my daughters are allowed to marry whoever they want. I told them yes, they can do whatever they want. I know why they asked me this, it is because they think that everyone that comes from a Islamic background is married off or even forced to marry someone they don't want".

Questions asked on being married off or forced marriages, is very common for Muslim women (Seta, 2016), with regards to not only themselves, but in this case about P4's

daughters. P4 states that they link it to her Islamic background, which can stem from exposure to Western news media, that reports heavily on themes such as forced marriages in regard to Islam (Seta, 2016).

In addition to Muslim women being stigmatized as being oppressed, there are also stigmas that sexualize and Orientalize Muslim women. P6 shares a situation in which her male colleagues were sexually harassing her, as they said:

"We are so curious about your hair, can you send a picture? Or do you know what we are going to do? We are going to photoshop a picture of you with hair and a short skirt, because we are very curious about how you would look".

In the situation P6 shares, she is not stereotyped as oppressed, but rather sexualized as mysterious, which stems from the oriental perspective of Muslim women (Hasan, 2017). This is also shared by P10 who also experienced sexual harassment:

"I once had in high school that boys from my class said: oh your hair has become really long, now you can do your hair in front of your breasts. So I really just got Orientalized".

P10 explicitly mentioned that she was "Orientalized", as the perception of Muslim women with long hair covering their breasts is a widely known perception of harems, which is also linked specifically to Muslim women (Hasan, 2017).

This section on gender shows that Muslim women experience gender discrimination, such as a restriction on their autonomy, such as fear of going out at night, but it is in combination with discrimination based on religion, such as the Burqa ban. The sexual harassment experienced by Muslim women is also rooted in stigmas based on religion/ethnicity, i.e. being Orientalized.

.. Differences

Muslim women experience the same stereotypes as men, such as terrorist, but in addition, the women are also stigmatized as oppressed i.e. (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013). The women that participated in this study were asked what difference they see in the discrimination faced by Muslim men and women. All the participants shared a similar view, which is captured best in these two quotes:

"So in terms of security and aggression, the Muslim men are more discriminated against. In terms of oppression, Muslim women are more oppressed, because Muslim women are an easier prey according to the racists. They just see the women like yes you are already oppressed anyway I'm going to take it up a notch, a little extra. So the Muslim woman can just be abused in the street. A Muslim woman can be physically attacked just like that, but a Muslim man much less so". (p7)

"I don't think they experience discrimination because of being male". (p9)

P7 shares that Muslim men are framed as aggressive, whilst Muslim women are framed as oppressed, which would make the women easier targets, which resonates with studies conducted by Ghumman & Ryan (2018) and Navaro (2010). P9 makes a clear distinction by pointing out that Muslim women also face discrimination based on being women, whilst men don't. Both quotes display the intersectionality of Muslim women, as gender and religion are huge factors in the experienced discrimination by Muslim women.

5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Women's bodies have always been controlled by the patriarchy, but in the West a heavy focus is put on controlling Muslim women and their freedom to dress, their freedom to autonomy and their freedom to express their identity. The focus of this paper was to document how Muslim women in the Netherlands experience multiple forms of anti-Islam discrimination. Because Muslim women have intersecting categories, such as gender, ethnicity, and religion, that influence the discrimination faced in their everyday lives (Lodi, 2021). Therefore, it is not merely being Muslim, but also being a woman, and having a different ethnic background, which the women that participated in the study, pointed out in their experiences. Even though being Muslim was the biggest factor of influence, in which the media, state, and non-Muslim population targets them on, it is these layers of gender and ethnicity that also play a key role, and without taken this into account, and thus, analyzing it from an intersectional approach, would fail to showcase the reality of Muslim women in the Netherlands.

The Muslim women that have participated in this study reported on experiencing multiple forms of discrimination, which is commonly reported by Muslim women throughout the west. The participants mentioned being asked intrusive questions on forced marriages, the headscarf, being oppressed by men, Ramadan, going to the mosque etc. Which is also reported in other studies (Bendixson, 2013; Seta, 2016). In addition, other forms of discrimination are also reported, such as, being followed, being spat at, being cursed at, but also being blamed for attacks happening throughout the world. These anti-Islam attitudes seem to be related to the stereotypes and stigmas that media and right-wing politicians project onto the Islam and Muslims. It shows how this is manifested in the Dutch society.

There have also been situations where the participants have been sexually harassed, in which the remarks made, would indicate that in these situations stereotypes were also very present, such as being Orientalized, and seen as a mystery, which resulted into sexual harassment.

Visibility was one of the sub questions in this study and was explored together with the participants. Based on the experiences of the participants that wear a headscarf, it made them more visible as a Muslim, which made discrimination based on religion more evident, as the focus would lie a lot on (wearing of) the headscarf. These women were more so exposed to rejection and exclusion based on religion, such as in the workplace and school. Participants reported on experiencing a limitation on freedom of movement. Muslim women that do not wear a headscarf, also noted in their experiences that their ethnicity played a huge factor.

However, Muslim women that do not wear a headscarf did indicate that they would be stereotyped as "modern" and still asked questions on the headscarf or practicing of the religion. In addition, some participants also expressed fear of exclusion/rejection if they were to mention that they were Muslim. The participants also showed a limitation on expressing their religious (and sometimes ethnic) identity.

Lastly, Muslim women see a difference in the experience of discrimination, as discrimination experienced by men, was said to be more so being stigmatized as aggressive. Whilst for women the focus was more on being a woman, physical attacks and being stigmatized as oppressed and therefore easier targets than Muslim men.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In such a short time, a lot of information has been collected and shown in this study that needs more attention. It also shows that it would be beneficial for this topic to explore it over a longer period of time. It is therefore recommended that this topic should be picked up by bigger institutions in the Netherlands that can provide the funds, time, and tools for a large-scale study of the topic.

As Muslim women make out a large proportion of the Dutch population and the Dutch women, their rights should not be violated and their daily lives should not be in risk of experiencing anti-Islam discrimination. This topic requires a lot of urge on researching it on larger scale, i.e. in focus groups around the Netherlands, so that the government (and non-Muslim population) can get a clear (and representative) picture of the reality of the discrimination faced by Muslim women.

Again, I urge this to be further explored, in some form of state level or state cooperation study, so that certain women's rights violations that have been put in place, such as the Burqa ban, are revisited/revoked. As well as putting some form of sanctions in place for the stereotyping of Muslim women by media, and right-wing politicians, due to the dangerous impact it has on Muslim women.

Lastly, (large) institutions in the Netherlands, that are committed to women's rights, should include the Muslim women more and highlight their rights being violated, and this should be approached from a gender perspective, as Muslim women are also Dutch women, and therefore, must not be ignored or justified, but included.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others. *American Anthropologist, 104*(3), 783–790

Al Abdallah. (2019). *"De eerste moslims in Nederland"*. Net in Nederland. Retrieved from: https://www.netinnederland.nl/informatie/nieuws/2019/de-eerste-moslims-in-Nederland.html

Algemeen Dagblad [Buitenland Redactie]. (2018). "*Jonge Moslima 19 Aangevallen en Verminkt"*. Algemeen Dagblad. Retrieved from: https://www.ad.nl/buitenland/jonge-moslima-19-aangevallen-en-verminkt~a31eabd4/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F

Bracke & Hernandez Aguilar. (2020). They love death as we love life: The Muslim Question and the biopolitics of replacement. *The British Journal of Sociology, 71*.
DOI: 10.1111/1468-4446.12742.

Bracke & Fadil. (2012). Is the Headscarf Oppressive or Emancipatory? Field Notes from the 'Multicultural Debate'. *Religion and Gender, 2.* DOI: 10.18352/rg.40.

Bendixson. (2013). *Religious Identity of Young Muslim Women in Berlin: an ethnographic study*. BRILL.

Bryman. (2016). *Social Research Methods, 5*. London: Oxford University Press.

Casimiro, Hancock & Northcote. (2007). Isolation and Insecurity: Resettlement Issues Among Muslim Refugee Women in Perth, Western Australia. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 42*, 55-69. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1839-4655.2007.tb00039.x

Clarke-Billings. (2018). *"'Waterboarded' Syrian refugee's sister attempted suicide after headscarf attack"*. Mirror. Retrieved from: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/waterboarded-syrian-refugees-sister-attempted-13658472

Ghumman & Ryan. (2013). Not welcome here: Discrimination towards women who wear the Muslim headscarf. *Human Relations, 66*(5), 671–698.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726712469540

Hasan. (2017). We need to talk about the sexualization of Muslim women. *Qarawiyyin Project*. Retrieved from: https://www.google.nl/amp/s/qarawiyyinproject.co/2017/07/27/we-need-to-talk-about-the-sexualisation-of-muslim-women/amp/

Hass, B. (2020). The Burka Ban: Islamic Dress, Freedom and Choice in The Netherlands in Light of the 2019 Burka Ban Law. *Religions, 11*(2), 93.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11020093

Limbong. (2019). *Microagressions Are A Big Deal: How To Talk Them Out And When To Walk Away.* NPR. Retrieved from: https://www.npr.org/2020/06/08/872371063/microaggressions-are-a-big-deal-how-to-talk-them-out-and-when-to-walk-away?t=1624027570531

Lodi. (2021). *Muslim Feminists Are Not Here For Your Misconceptions About Their Faith.* Refinery29. Retrieved from: https://www.google.nl/amp/s/www.refinery29.com/amp/en-gb/muslim-feminism-womens-rights

Navaro. (2010). Islamophobia and Sexism: Muslim Women in the Western Mass Media. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Selfknowledge*, 8(2).

Open Society Justice Initiative. [OSJI]. (2018). *Restrictions on Muslim Women's Dress in the 28 EU Member States.* Retrieved from: https://www.justiceinitiative.org/publications/restrictions-muslim-women-s-dress-28-eu-member-states

Perry, B. (2014). Gendered Islamophobia: Hate crime against Muslim women. *Social Identities, 20*(1), 74–89.

Renout. (2020). "*Drie keer zoveel geweld tegen moslims in Frankrijk vooral vrouwen slachtoffers*". Algemeen Dagblad. Retrieved from: https://www.ad.nl/buitenland/drie-keer-zoveel-geweld-tegen-moslims-in-frankrijk-vooral-vrouwen-slachtoffer~a7ac11a4/

Saleem, Prot, Anderson & Lemieux. (2017). Exposure to Muslims in Media and Support for Public Policies Harming Muslims. *Communication Research, 44*(6), 841–869. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650215619214

Seta. (2016). *Forgotten Women: the impact of Islamophobia on Muslim women*. European Network Against Racism.

Ssali, Theobald & Hawkins. (2015). "*Life histories: a research method to capture people's experiences of health systems in post-conflict countries".* Health Systems Global. Retrieved from: https://healthsystemsglobal.org/news/life-histories-a-research-method-to-capture-peoples-experiences-of-health-systems-in-post-conflict-countries/

Stichting Meldpunt Islamofobie. (2021). *"Meld Islamofobie*". Retrieved from: https://www.meldislamofobie.org

Tjoonk. (2020). "*Waarom vluchtelingen in de jaren negentig nog geen probleem waren*". Retrieved from: https://www.sg.uu.nl/artikelen/2020/03/waarom-vluchtelingen-de-de-jaren-negentig-nog-geen-probleem-waren

Van Leeuwen. (2016). Autochtoon vs Allochton & Expat vs Immigrant. *The Dutch Review*. Retrieved from: https://dutchreview.com/news/autochtoon-vs-allochtoon-expat-vs-immigrant/

Vickers. (2017). *Headscarves and the Court of Justice of the EU: Discrimination and Genuine Occupational Requirements.* Oxford. DOI: 10.1163/24056901-00303018

Zemni, S. (2011). The shaping of Islam and Islamophobia in Belgium. *Race & Class, 53*(1), 28–44. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396811406781

Ziersch, A., Due, C. & Walsh, M. (2020). Discrimination: a health hazard for people from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds resettled in Australia. *BMC Public Health 20*, 108. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-8068-3

Appendix I: CODE TREE
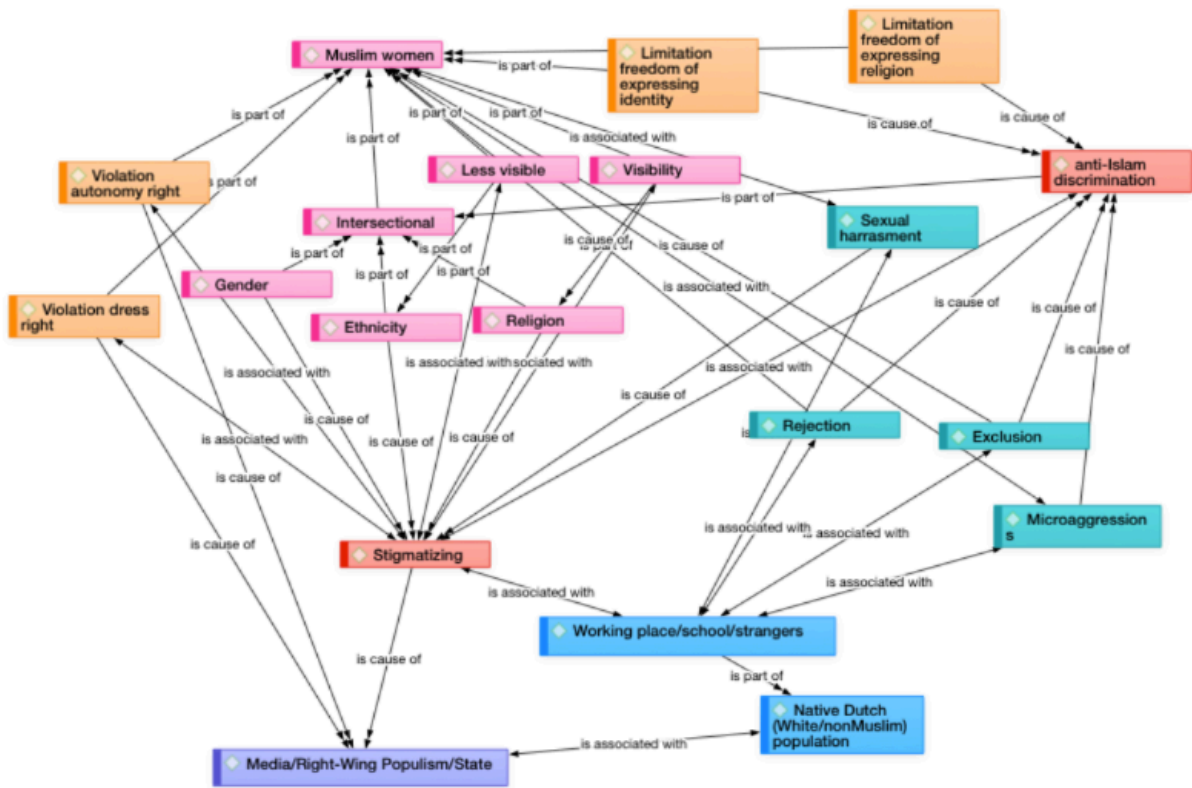
APPENDIX II: SURVEY QUESTION

Anti-Islam discriminatie in Nederland: ervaringen van Moslimvrouwen

Tijdens onze gesprek (interview) hebben we het gehad over vrijheid en hoe vrijheid wordt geframed (politiek/media) in Nederland als het gaat om de Islam en Moslimvrouwen. Nu zou ik nog graag willen meenemen in mijn scriptie wat vrijheid betekent voor jou.

Heel erg bedankt voor jouw deelname!

Wat betekent vrijheid voor jou als Moslimvrouw in deze samenleving (Nederland)? *

Tekst lang antwoord

ERASMUS UNIVERSITEIT ROTTERDAM

CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Master Thesis: Structures of Oppression

Name, email of student: Gresa Gashi 409450gg@eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor:

Start date and duration:

Is the research study conducted within DPAS   YES - NO

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1.   Does your research involve human participants.   YES - NO

         If 'NO': skip to part V.

         If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research?   YES - NO
         Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO) must first be submitted to an accredited medical research ethics committee or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CCMO).

2.   Does your research involve field observations without manipulations
         that will not involve identification of participants.   YES - NO

         If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3.   Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary
         data that has been anonymized by someone else).   YES - NO

         If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES - NO

2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES - NO

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES - NO

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? YES - NO
    Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).

5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? ` YES - NO

6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES - NO

7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES - NO

8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES - NO

9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? YES - NO

10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES - NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.
The ethnic and religious background of this study is of importance for the study because it is related to the topic.   In addition, some sharing experiencing with anti-Islam discrimination can be traumatic or can be seen as very sensitive information, therefore this can affect their psychological stress or negative emotions. This will be taken into consideration as a hand signal will be agreed upon prior to the interviews. With this the participants can indicate when they need a break or are not able to discuss the topic any further.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).
The participants will be anonymous, they will be given a pseudonym and I will not document their names / addresses / any other information that would make it possible to trace it back to them.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.
Discussing of traumatic events could have negative consequences, therefore a hand signal will be discussed beforehand, so that the participants will be able to signal towards me that they either don't want to discuss a certain experience or topic or that they need a break.

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

In the Netherlands.

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

14 participants

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

On a data storage file with password.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I am.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

_____

_____

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

I will not note the names, age, places of resident of the participants, and I will store that data under numbers of participants, i.e. Participant 1, participant 2, ensuring that the participants will be anonymous.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Gresa Gashi   Name (EUR) supervisor:

Date: june 20th, 2021   Date:

APPENDIX I: Informed Consent Form (if applicable)

Thank you for participating in my research on anti-Islam discrimination in the Netherlands and how this is experienced by Muslim women. This purpose of this research is to shed more light unto the everyday lives of Muslim women in the Netherlands and the discrimination faced.

Firstly, some information about me, the researcher. My name is Gresa Gashi and I am a master student at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, Erasmus School of Social and Behaviourial Sciences, department Sociology, master Engaging Public Issues. My student number is 409450 and email is 409450gg@eur.nl

The interviews will be audio recorded, but will be anonymized. I will not name your name, age, place of residence or other information that can be traced back to you. If you do mention any of this information during the conversation, I will anonymize it in my transcripts. You are not obligated to answer my questions and you can stop the interview at any time. In addition, you may withdraw your participation in this study at any time, even after the interview has been completed. You consent to me asking about and processing your data related to your political opinions, religious beliefs, data concerning possible mental health or traumatic experiences. You may contact me at any time to view and rectify, erase or restrict the processing of your personal data. The data will be stored for a maximum of 2,5 months, until my final grade is received. After this the data will be destroyed immediately.

The voice recording and the transcribing of the voice records will only be heard and transcribed by me. No one else has access to this data. Quotes will be extracted from the transcripts which I will analyse and the analysis will be read by two supervisors Dr Maja Hertoghs and Dr Samira van Bohemen.

If you have any complaints you can contact the supervisors or Dr Jennifer A. Holland.

If you agree with this, please fill in the line below with your signature.

I hereby declare that I agree and consent to this form:

signature   date
_____   _____