



TRANSPARENCY

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Documentary
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Study Guide

Hijab Facts:

- Translated to English, Hijab means Veil.
- The word **Hijab** is derived from the Arabic root **Hajaba**, which means to hide from view or to conceal. The term Hijab is generally used among Muslims in reference to the head-scarf and long garments that Muslim women wear and is viewed as a complete way of dressing and even living.
- The Hijab varies in style and practice from one country to another depending on the customs and traditions of that country. Veils can be different in color, fabric and in the extent to which it covers the hair, face or the rest of the body. Other terms that often refer to a form or type of Hijab include: Shadour, Khimaar and Jilbab.
- The Hijab or Veil originated in pre-Islamic societies often signifying an upper class status. The veil also exists in other cultures and religions including Judaism and Christianity even to this day.
- Most Arab and Muslim countries allow women the freedom of choosing whether to practice wearing the Hijab or not. However, social and family pressures often lead to some degree of enforcing the Hijab.
- France, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia have various bans on the Hijab especially in Schools, Universities and Public Offices, while Iran and Saudi Arabia prohibit women from being without a veil in public.
- Non-Muslim Countries that do not restrict the wearing of the Hijab and prohibit any discrimination against Women who wear it include: The United States, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Poland. However, cases of Hijab discrimination in these countries are not uncommon.



- The most common areas where Hijab discrimination tends to take place are in employment, public facilities and education.

Hijab references in the Quran:

"O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw their outer garments around them (when they go out or are among men). That is better in order that they may be known (to be Muslims) and not annoyed..." (Quran 33:59)

"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that will make for greater purity for them; and Allah (swt) is well acquainted with all that they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; and they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what must ordinarily appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons ..." (Quran 24:30-31)

Discussion Guide:

This guide will help students and educators further explore the topic of the Veil.

- Is there a difference between a dress code and a policy requiring uniforms? Give examples of a dress code and others of uniforms.
- How does a dress code or uniform affect our perception of the person wearing it?
- How has women's attire evolved throughout the ages? What are some reasons for such change?
- What role did religion play in influencing how women dress? Give Examples.
- What role did the secular state play in transforming ideas about women's clothing?



- Give some examples that show how women dress differently from one culture to another.
- What are some examples of the Veil in the Judeo-Christian traditions?
- Identify other religions or cultures where women wear veils or other types of covering.
- Identify times when men have been compelled to dress in a certain way. Find out Islamic requirements for men's appearance and clothing, today.
- Identify arguments that defend the Hijab as a symbol of liberation and others that see it as a symbol of repression.
- Does wearing a veil limit women from pursuing certain careers or activities?
- Should the veil be banned from schools, universities and public offices?
- Does wearing the Hijab protect women from rape or other similar attacks?
- What do you think women will wear in the future? Will the Hijab still exist?

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