

# Global Representations and Local Realities: How does the Veil Shape the Experiences of Muslim Immigrant Women in Public Places of New Zealand?

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## Summary

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) occupies a key position as the main “deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations” (“Functions and powers of the General Assembly”, n.d., para.1). Attaining peace and security, safeguarding human rights and promoting the rule of law are some critical focus areas of the UNGA, and the goals that member states are committed to reach. These goals are formulated in two important instruments of the United Nations; the Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. The UNGA has made a sustained effort to meet those goals and commitments by member states. In line with such efforts, the UNGA expresses a deep concern in resolution 68/169 about the rising number of incidents of religious intolerance, discrimination and related violence, as well as the negative stereotyping of individuals based on religion or belief.

Among the implications of the infamous terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001 in New York were fundamental changes in geographies of fear, anger, risk and racism. Within this climate, there emerged a political rhetoric in the Western world, which was dominated by “terror” and an urge to associate Islam and Muslims with terrorism, (Tolia-Kelly, 2006, p.214; Hopkins, 2007). Such perspectives represent all Muslims and their religion as one homogenous category (Byng, 2010; Yusof, 2013). In recent years, religious signifiers, bodily markers and dress of Muslim people share an association with perceived threats to the Western values, and come to signify ‘otherness’ (Hopkins, 2007). Within the climate of the ‘war on terror’, Muslim women, and their veil, have received much attention from different groups of civil societies in the ‘West’ including politicians, media and (feminist) academics (Byng, 2010).

In the light of the UNGA’s concern, this report starts with a literature review on the representations of Muslim women in dominant ‘Western’<sup>1</sup> mass media in North America, Canada and the United States of America, in the UK and Australia. The aim is to provide a snapshot on the conceptualization/s of Muslim women in the Western media. It then highlights research on Muslim migrant women’s experiences within public spaces in cities of some Western countries including Sweden, UK and New Zealand. In reviewing the latter literature, this report represents how veiled Muslim women experience the public areas of Western cities. Further, through a case study from New Zealand, this policy report examines the everyday experiences of Muslim immigrant women in public places of Hamilton, New Zealand. Hamilton is the fourth most populated city in New Zealand. The findings show that socio-spatial factors - such as the veil worn by Muslim women, the size of Muslim communities, characteristics of city and immigrants’ social class - play crucial roles in shaping Muslim immigrant women experience, and how they feel in or out of place. The report ends with recommendations that target the reduction of discrimination and stereotypes against Muslim migrant women living within ‘Western’ countries.

## Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this report is to provide policy suggestions to disrupt stereotypes concerning Muslim women and acknowledge their heterogeneities. Furthermore, the report highlights considerations that could be useful in: 1) creating the conditions to soothe the Islamophobia-based violence against Muslim immigrant women in the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘The West’ is a contested term which emerged from a socio-political discursive processes mainly originating in the western part of Europe, and later on, in the US (Sharp & McDowell, 2014). Edward Said’s (1978) seminal book, *Orientalism*, shows that the perception of East versus West relates basically to colonial business ventures, trade with the ‘East’ that Enriched and Empowered the ‘West’ (consider for example the East India Trade Company). To that end, Anderson & Said (1977) argue popular ‘western culture’ shaped a contrary space to the west; ‘the East’. In this division, “Europe, the West, us” came to symbolize power, knowledge, logic, modern and superiority. In contrast, ‘the East’ became associated with mysteries, exotic, undeveloped and inferiority (Anderson & Said, 1977, 48). This perspective provides an invitation to ‘the West’ “to control, and govern the other through its knowledge and superiority” (Anderson & Said, 1977, 48).

‘West’; and, 2) develop strategies and measures aiming to promote mutual understanding and acceptance of Muslim groups living in culturally diverse societies in the ‘West’. The objective of this study is to explore how Muslim immigrant women feel about being and moving in public areas of Hamilton. I am interested in hearing from Muslim immigrant women on how they feel in and/or out of in such places.

## Introduction

In the aftermath of 9/11, there emerged a political rhetorical climate in the Western world, which is dominated by “terror” (Tolia-Kelly, 2006, p. 214). Within this climate, the prevalence of Islamophobia<sup>2</sup> is a mounting concern globally, in particular in Western societies (Jasperse et al., 2012). The urge to associate Islam and (all kinds of) Muslims with terrorism (Byng, 2010; Yusof, Hassan, Hassan & Osman, 2013), however, can be traced back to earlier phenomena: “the 1979 Iran-US hostage crisis”, for instance (Hebbani & Wills, 2012, p. 87). While such associations do not originate from recent history and there is a much longer history at play, going back to the Crusades. Yet terrorist attacks such as 9/11, the attack against the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, and recent terror attacks in Paris on November 13, 2015 were momentous in the social and political lives of current immigrant Muslims in the West. As several studies indicate, constant association of Islam with terrorism extends and encourages discrimination, stereotypes and hatred toward Muslim communities (Yusof, Hassan, Hassan & Osman, 2013; Byng, 2010; Bullock, 2000; Hopkins, 2009).

Following the terrorist atrocity in Paris on November 13, 2015, several media such as Al Jazeera (2015), The Washington Post (2015), The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC News, 2015) and The Guardian (2015) have reported that hate crimes against perceived Muslims are on the rise, in particular, in France and Britain. According to these media articles, the majority of victims are visible Muslim women with veils. Such hate expressions against Muslim women not only undermine their human rights and dignity but also restrict or limit the movement and inclusion of Muslim women in various public spaces.

With intensifying ‘war and terror’ challenges, and several occurrences of terrorist attacks in the ‘West’ in the name of Islam, it is timely to focus on representations of the veil and Muslim women, as well as various dimensions of Muslim women’s identities and their everyday experiences in the ‘West’.

## Media and ‘Women of Cover’

In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack, the veil has increasingly been brought into political debates, security concerns, and mass media (Byng, 2010). In the weeks

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<sup>2</sup> In this study I mainly use the term of Islamophobia to refer to fear that non-Muslims hold toward Islam and Muslims. This term, however, sometimes refers to Muslims who are “frightened by Islam”.

after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President George Bush expressed his sympathy and feelings for the “women of cover” – Afghan women – who cannot leave their homes and are deprived from many basic human rights including right to education (Stabile & Kumar, 2005, p. 765). Later, this statement served as one of many justifications for military intervention in Afghanistan, to liberate “women of cover” (Ibid). The image of the veil and covering of Muslim women has been re-conceptualized as a “symbol of oppression and violence in Islam” in “popular Western media” (Bullock, 2000, p. 22). Subsequently, the coverage of Afghan women and “women of cover” has increased in the Western media, especially in the US and UK (Stabile & Kumar, 2005, p. 765).

Bynne (2010) conducted a critical discourse analysis of veiled Muslim women in two American newspapers - the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* - between 2004 and 2006. Her findings communicate strong support of the “hegemony of the West” through perpetuating concerns around the veil and niqāb as cultural-religious signs that are incompatible with the values and norms of the Western world. She argues that hegemonic media link the veil with concerns around the integration of Muslims in the ‘West’, and with perceived threats to the national identities of Western nations and a global fear of terrorism (Bynne, 2010, Bullock, 2000, Gole, 2002; Abu-lughod, 2002).

Hebbani and Willson (2012) conducted a study on “How Muslim women in Australia navigate through media (mis)representations of hijab/burqa”. By analyzing articles in a period between 2009 and 2011, they highlight that in Australia dominant media coverages of Muslim women, associates them with being oppressed, passive, and a threat to “Western cultural identity and security”, and “therefore in some ways un-Australian” (Hebbani & Willson, 2012, pp. 88-89). These perspectives on the veil are not new and reflect the colonial time (Bullock, 2002) when veils were seen as obstacles to modernization and/or westernization in the colonized nations.

Not all media, however, represent the veil negatively. A small space in some media is devoted to Muslim women explaining their choice and how they feel positive about wearing the veil, and those who support the right of Muslim women to wear headscarves or even burqa (Hebbani, & Willson, 2012; Bullock, 2000). All in all, in the hegemonic Western media, the veil has generally been represented extensively as a symbol of oppression and a perceived threat to Western democratic values (Navarro, 2010; Hebbani, & Wills, 2012; Bullock, 2000; Bynne, 2010). These approaches are very reductionist, and do not tell “the whole story of covering” (Bullock, 2000, p. 22). It can be seen that Muslim women have been portrayed as being in a “contradictory position” in the ‘West’ (Listerborn, 2015, p. 96). On the one hand, they are perceived as oppressed and subordinated within their community and families. On the other hand, they are considered as a perceived security threat to Western nations. The consequences of these representations make Muslim women and their bodies

subjected to regulation and political actions within public spaces in some Western countries. For example, France bans wearing burqa and niqāb in public spaces (Listerborn, 2015). These attitudes towards Muslim women often create an uncomfortable to hostile environment for Muslim women living in the 'West' (Bullock, 2002).

### **Western Public Places and Muslim Women with the Veil**

Within this visual rhetoric in the 'West', the bodies of women with the veil carry certain ideas that may prompt feelings such as fear, docileness, or oppression (Tolia-Kelly, 2006). These feelings affect Muslim women's everyday lives particularly in 'the West'. Therefore, their marked bodies are affected, and affect others, in a different way than an unmarked body (Tolia-Kelly, 2006, p. 215). Such representations can lead to exclusion of veiled Muslim women from places and social spaces, i.e. the labour market and public spaces (Acosta-Licea, 2012) where negativity may affect the dignities and self-confidence of Muslim women.

Listerborn (2015), in her study of experiences of Muslim women in Sweden's public places, shows that most Muslim women consider the veil as the reason for receiving negative comments in public spheres in Malmo, Sweden. Her empirical data shows that almost all of the 19 Muslim women in her study experienced violence in a range of forms from verbal and bodily abuse to physical violence. These women reported the veil as a source of discrimination against them in the Swedish labor market.

McMichael (2002), in her research on 'Everyday Life of Somali Women in Melbourne, Australia' indicates that Muslim women tend to experience discrimination more frequently compared to their male counterparts. Another study conducted in Sydney, Australia by Poynting (2002) reveals that Muslim girls and women, especially those with the veil, are regular targets of abuse and threats in most public places in Sydney. In the latter study, some cases involved attackers trying to rip Muslim women's veils off (Poynting, 2002).

Studies on Muslim communities in New Zealand suggest that "even in a generally tolerant society like New Zealand", Muslim women may be more subject to prejudice, discrimination and verbal abuse, in part prompted by their distinctive dress (Jasperse et al., 2012, p. 255; Kolig, 2009; Ministry of Social Development, 2008). To illustrate, in 2011, two Saudi Arabian student women were refused transport on a public bus by drivers in Auckland because of their Muslim veils; after that, several newspapers reported the Muslim women's concerns over their veils and facing prejudice in public (Fisher, 2011; Fisher & Torrie, 2011; Cronin, 2014).

In the following sections, I argue that Muslim women's identities are far more complex than the popular Western culture allows for, and they have agency and are active in

expressing their religion and seeking to change the dominant view on Islam and the veil.

### **Local Realities: A Case Study in Hamilton, New Zealand**

In New Zealand, the Muslim population is the most rapidly growing religious group, increasing six-fold between 1991 and 2006 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). The Ministry of Social Development promulgates that discriminatory attitudes toward “particular immigrant groups” and communities are observed in New Zealand (Masgoret et al., 2011, p. 2). Muslim immigrants from “predominately Muslim countries” in Asia e.g. Malaysia, Africa e.g. Somalia, and the Middle East e.g. Iran and Iraq, are generally not perceived as positively as immigrants from non-Muslim countries in Asia e.g. Philippines, Africa, South Africa and immigrants from Europe (Jasperse et al., 2012, p. 255).

I conducted this research in Hamilton, located in the Waikato region. Hamilton is the fourth largest city in New Zealand, and comprises 3.3 percent of the country’s population (Statistics New Zealand, 2013) (see appendices 1 & 2). The city’s population composition has been changing recently as the country receives residents from “non-traditional source countries in Asia, Africa and in the Middle East” (Longhurst, Johnston, & Ho, 2009, p. 334). There are variety of services available to different types of migrants in Hamilton, such as the Waikato Migrant Resource Centre (WMRC) and Hamilton’s Ethnic Women’s Centre (SHAMA). There are several tertiary providers including a university, and around 145 parks and gardens in the city (Hamilton City Council website). Yet, Muslim women comprise just a small part of the city’s population and are very much a minority group. They face considerable prejudice and discrimination (Guerin, Elmi, & Guerin, 2006).

I make use of qualitative methodologies informed by feminism and post-structuralism. The findings were identified based on 28 in-depth semi-structured interviews with Muslim immigrant women and visual methods such as emotional-mapping<sup>3</sup> and self-directed photography.

All but four participants in this research wear the veil. All have university degrees and speak English fluently. They can each speak at least two different languages. Most of the participants of this study wear fashionable and westernized clothing (i.e. jeans, shirts, tops). Their attitudes resonate with one of the contemporary groups of Muslims that Gole (2002) describes as women who “blend into modern urban spaces” (Gole

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<sup>3</sup> This method was created in sociological studies to investigate family relationships (Gabb & Reenee, 2014). Drawing a map has much to do with the background of the mapmaker, and reflects the cultural background and the worldview of him/her (Soini, 2001). These maps have the potential to depict different emotional interactions, processes as well as gendered-power relationship in everyday life of people (Gabb & Reenee, 2014).

2002 p. 174). These Muslim women actively adopt parts of these values and reflect them upon their everyday practices (Gole, 2002). This could challenge hegemonic views of Muslim women, which are represented via mass media and show Muslim women as either oppressed or threats to Western culture (Gole 2002).

### **Meanings of the Veil for Muslim Immigrant Women in Hamilton**

Veil wearing has been practiced in a wide range of societies in different parts of world, and socio-political and cultural processes have always had much to do with shaping and reshaping it and its meanings (Siraj, 2011). Accordingly, meanings of the veil shift over space and time (Siraj, 2011).

Similar to Bullock (2002), I am not claiming that coverings and the veil are free from oppressive regimes or patriarchy. My empirical data, however, show for some women, the veil is not simply an oppressive tool, but at times also empowering and associated with positive experiences. To illustrate, a psychological study on experiences of veiled Muslim women in New Zealand shows that wearing the veil can also be associated with enhanced “belonging and pride” for some of Muslim women participated in that research (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012, p. 264). This study suggests that such feelings of belonging to certain religious community and associated pride could, in effect, moderates the negative influences of “perceived discriminations” for those Muslim women (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012).

Not all interviewed Muslim women wear the veil simply because they feel obliged by their families and religious culture. Several of the participants started covering themselves in New Zealand even though they were aware that dominant view on the veil is not positive in the society (Bullock, 2000). Their reasons for this choice were various including modesty, complying with Allah’s orders, and strengthening ties to other Muslim people. The meanings and styles of the veil, however, are not homogenous nor have the participants’ choices regarding wearing the veil been constructed through similar discursive procedures and implications.

Most of my participants said the veil is a personal choice for them. For some Muslim women, Islamic dress, the veil or the headscarf function as a strong “signifier of identity” (Dwyer, 2008, p. 145). In a self-portrait drawing exercise, several drew themselves with the veil on their heads, which communicates the idea that the veil is a strong element of their identity, values and beliefs (see self-portraits in Appendix 3). Twenty-five of the interviewed Muslim women asserted that the veil is a sign of modesty and associated with the “sanctity of women” (Abu-Lughod, 2002, p. 785; Siraj, 2011, p. 716). Nevertheless, for Najme, a PhD student from Indonesia, wearing the veil is an “obligatory religious duty” (Bullock, 2002, p. 28). She explained that there is a strong need to assert obedience and belief in Allah (God) in bodily and material ways.

For two of the participants, wearing the veil is a strategy to compromise with parents, husbands or a wider community in order to pave their way in the public sphere, i.e. participating in the labor market, creating social supporting networks and so on (Abu-Lughod, 2002; Dwyer, 2008). Neda is a single, young woman from Malaysia. She studies at the University and lives by herself in Hamilton. She explained that she started to don the veil in New Zealand due to the strong influence of her Muslim friends in Hamilton. Neda also emphasized the veil as practical toll to integrate in Muslim community and to create supporting network in a country that is not one's home country.

Abu-Lughod (2002) and Siraj (2011) make the crucial point that various styles of veils and coverings coexist, each carrying different meanings in different communities, as well as in the social and temporal contexts in which they are exercised. To illustrate this point, I wish to share a memory of Shohreh. She came to New Zealand with her family when she was young, just two or three years old. Nevertheless, when she finished grade one, her family decided to move back to the United Arab Emirates. She explained how she felt 'out of place' there because of the way she looked and spoke, even though she was born there and it is an Islamic country. This highlights how various socio-spatial contexts make a difference in relation to the veil.

## **Bittersweet: Everyday Socio-spatial Interactions of Muslim Immigrant Women in Hamilton**

### **Public Places**

The Hamilton participants indicated that their veil had little or no effect on their entry into the labour market. This could be because these women are educated and rather fluent at speaking English. Also, the New Zealand labour market has a shortage of qualified and skilled workers. This lack, in turn, could create a space that accommodates qualified professionals from outside the country regardless of their religions. Once at work, however, Muslims wearing the veil, could affect the socio-spatial interactions of Muslim women in work places. For instance, Goli, a kindergarten teacher, assumed that the children's parents avoided looking at and talking to her since she wore a headscarf. Moreover, some participants stated that there are some jobs, such as in the fashion industry or in sales, where Muslim women with the veil are seen as 'out of place'.

The geography of mobility and leisure consumption of Muslim immigrant women in the Waikato region is highly dependent upon their positive and negative socio-spatial interactions with places and people. Moreover, religious identity and culture are crucial in defining where and with whom to relax. All of these Muslim women except one have never been to a bar or disco in New Zealand. To explain this, they cited



religious restrictions about alcoholic drinks and feeling uncomfortable (or 'out of place') among drunken people.

Alternatively, recognition is another process that makes these women feel 'in place'. Goli, a teacher from Malaysia, explained that she feels welcome in places where there are lots of Muslims, such as the University of Waikato, the Waikato Migrant Resource Centre, and at the childcare services which have been tailored to Muslims' needs such as by providing Halal food or a place to pray.

### **Socio-spatial Attributes of Place**

The participants in this study consider Hamilton as a welcoming place for Muslim families. This group of Muslim women indicated that living in New Zealand contributed to improving their emotional well-being, i.e. helping them feel serenity and peace and being closer to Allah (God), due to availability and free access to many green areas and natural parks. Yet, they have not found it to be a lively urban area that is inclusive for a diverse range of groups of different cultures, genders and ages.

In Hamilton there is a visible population of Muslim women. Several interviewees indicated that the presence of a rather big community of Somalian Muslims in Hamilton makes 'Kiwis' eyes' familiar with the veil. Therefore, these Muslim women speculated that a woman with the veil is not seen as strange (or 'out of place') in this context. Some Muslim women, however, received negative comments or attitudes in public places in Hamilton. Mina, the previously mentioned dentist, was asked whether she was Osama Bin Laden's daughter; and Rose, a postgraduate student, faced an encounter with a classmate who had assumed that all Muslims are a threat, just like ISIS.

The "racially tolerant attitude" of New Zealanders towards multiculturalism (Masgoret, Ward, & Vauclair, 2011, p. 2) is reflected in the narratives of all the interviewed Muslim women, except three. In particular, they compare their situations with other Muslims in Europe and Australia, and enjoy more democratic and unbiased environments in New Zealand. Some associated this climate of acceptance with the 'Kiwi way' of being generally polite and politically correct. Thus, they are content with Muslim women wearing the veil and expressing their religious identities in public. There are incidents that show the social climate of New Zealand, however, has not been immune to the global wave of Islamophobia. Several women in this study pointed out that they have received insults and abuse in public places. Naseem, a mother of three children, shared one of her experiences about prejudiced attitudes towards Muslims in small towns of New Zealand in which a man asked if she had a gun hidden in her hijab.

Spaces of consumption such as shops precincts, malls and restaurants in Hamilton is one area where this group of Muslim women is not satisfied. Ways in which this

shortage has been expressed by my participants is through complaints of early closing hours of retail spaces, the lack of diverse and halal food in restaurants, as well as the lack of a gender-segregated environment in which to practice sport and hobbies. These unmet needs make the Muslim women feel partially 'out of place' (Listerborn, 2015, p. 108).

The socio-spatial characteristics of Hamilton seem to influence and shape the everyday experiences of these Muslim women. It is crucial to emphasize that marked members of society - like veiled Muslim women - should not be considered as passive agents who willingly receive the aforementioned prejudicial verbal or physical abuses. These women actively apply various measures in order to challenge and address the negative perceptions on Islam and Muslims.

### **Muslim Women as Agents of Change**

Huang and Yeoh (1997) note that women deploy "multiple and resourceful ways to exercise their agency" (1997, p. 110). They usually do so through everyday negotiations with their surroundings to redefine and reform their positions and lives to promote the security of themselves and their families (Huang & Yeoh, 1997). To contest the Western (negative) hegemonic images of Muslim women, these 'middle class' Muslim women develop strategies to challenge and address those dominant stereotypes.

In Hamilton, middle class educated Muslim women also use clothing and different veil styles, as well as their socio-spatial interactions, to declare their position in the social hierarchy and distinguish themselves from specific other groups of Muslims (Bullock, 2000, p. 38). Several interviewees stated that they manage their bodies, mobility and socio-spatial interactions within the city in ways they feel define who they are and to which types of Muslim group they belong. For example, Susan a researcher and Marjan a university student explained how they wears fashionable/westernized clothes with light colors to signal their position as middle-class Muslim women. Susan also 'avoids' interactions with the Somali community, because they hold different (what she perceives to be extremist) interpretations of Islam.

The proliferation of digital social media and technologies provide opportunities for these women to engage with a wider society and to express themselves beyond their limited physical spaces, as well as the 'Western' image of Muslim women. These Muslim women, especially younger ones, use these spaces to raise knowledge about 'real' Islam, and Muslim identities. They also use virtual social spaces to increase their own information about Islam; they also use appropriate modes of behaviors to educate their children about Islamic principles. Young Muslim women spend a considerable amount of their time on Facebook and Instagram to display and explore contemporary styles of Muslim women's dress (See appendix 3).

Not all of these immigrant women see Islam and its specific gendered corporeal principles as opposed to the 'Western' regulating system and public spaces. These examples demonstrate how they negotiate their identities and develop strategies to pave their ways in various public places in the 'West'.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Geopolitical events and international politics are interconnected with local lives, and influence Muslim individuals' and communities' everyday lives (Hopkins, 2009). Ongoing discourses on 'war and terror' play a role in constructing fears around Muslim women (Pain, 2001).

From several researchers' studies, it can be seen that the popular media culture of the 'West' portrays Muslim women as either oppressed or a perceived security threat (Bullock, 2002). My findings confirm what Lila Abu-Lughod (2002) said about the experience of Muslim women in Western Sahara of Egypt - that is, that the everyday experiences of Muslim women reflect their multiple socio-spatial interactions. Therefore, one cannot create just one category of veiled Muslim women (Siraj, 2011). As Abu-Lughod (2002 p. 787) points out, the meaning of "living a good life" varies from individual to individual and also from cultures to culture, so to reduce conflicts in societies, one important step is to develop understanding and to learn to accept "the possibility of difference".

The representations of Muslim women as either oppressed or a perceived security threat, as empirical data shows, have led to discriminations and negative reactions against Muslim women in public areas of Western nations. The findings of this study illustrate power relations in the public spaces of Hamilton, New Zealand. Although the experiences of Muslim immigrant women have been influenced by the global discourses about Muslim women, the empirical materials of this research also show a specific framing based on the socio-spatial environment of Hamilton. The findings communicate that the social class of Muslim women has a great effect on the experience/feeling of discrimination against Muslim women, and whether or not they see themselves 'in' or 'out' of place.

Consequently, the following policy recommendations are made:

- It is not possible to typify all Muslim women within one broad social category. In light of this, more specific time and place-bound studies should be conducted to in order gather data that reflects Muslim women well beyond generic or stereotypic categories.

- Muslim women should be recognized and understood beyond the constructed binary of 'oppressed' or 'security threat' in the Western countries. This involves governmental supports and collaboration with Muslim communities and local organizations with the aim to change stereotypes about Muslim women. In light of this, there is a dire need to analyze very carefully the rhetorical and visual representations of Muslim women.
- To give the public in the 'West' a more realistic image of Muslim women, more spaces in popular western Media should be given over to recognize that some women choose to wear a veil, and in the process it helps them to establish their own voice.
- Governments in the 'West' should pay particular attention to recording hate crimes against Muslims. The victims should be ensured that they will be taken seriously and it would be useful to train experts and officials for community safety dedicated to investigate hate crimes and creating online websites. Police should work with NGOs in case victims cannot report directly to police, instead, they would be able to report through these channels.

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## Appendix 1- Map of the Waikato region





## Appendix 2-Muslim Population in Hamilton

**Dataset: Religious affiliation (total responses) by age group and sex, for the census usually resident population count, 2001, 2006, and 2013**  
**Censuses (RC, TA, AU)**

Religious affiliation	Total people, religious affiliation						Islam/Muslim											
	Total people, age group																	
Age group																		
Sex	Total people, sex			Male			Female			Total people, sex			Male			Female		
Year	2001	2006	2013	2001	2006	2013	2001	2006	2013	2001	2006	2013	2001	2006	2013	2001	2006	2013
Area																		
Total, New Zealand by regional council/area unit	3737277	4027947	4242048	1823007	1965618	2064015	1914273	2062326	2178033	23628	36072	46146	12759	19173	23871	10869	16896	22275
Waikato Region	356349	380823	403641	175287	186891	198863	181059	193932	206778	1512	2166	2937	825	1140	1542	687	1026	1395
Hamilton City	116807	129591	141612	55802	62247	67812	60702	67341	73800	1200	1758	2448	642	900	1251	558	858	1194

data extracted on 21 Jan 2016 05:28 UTC (GMT) from NZ.Stat

## Appendix 3- Emotional mapping and photographs

Figure 1-Emotional mapping: Self-portraits of Muslim women in Hamilton



Figure 2- Images and self-directed photography on Facebook and Instagram by Muslim women

