

1974 - WOMEN WORKING WITH IMMIGRANT WOMEN - 2002 email:
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28 Years of Community Development and Organizing

- Identifies the educational, health care, labour and social needs of immigrant and refugee women and women of colour and initiates the development of programs and services to meet those needs.
- Pools and facilitates the sharing of community resources that are used to develop programs and services for women from these communities.
- Provides a forum for information sharing and acts as a support group for immigrant and refugee women and women of colour communities.
- Engages in social and political action related to the needs of women in these communities.
- Works in coalition and builds alliance among different women of colour and immigrant and refugee women's communities and between these communities and mainstream organizations and movements.
- Politicizes mainstream organizations and movements on the interests and issues affecting these communities and builds political support for the demands and struggles of women of colour and immigrant and refugee women.

Project Sponsor

Women Working With Immigrant Women

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Canadian Arab Federation
Canadian Auto Workers - Local 40
Canadian Council of Muslim Women
Culturelink
Federation of Muslim Women
Midaynta
Toronto Health and Safety Legal Clinic
United Steelworkers of America
Women Working With Immigrant Women

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Quotes From Participants in the Research Study

“At the beginning, when I started working there, I was not wearing the hijab and everything was fine. But, ever since I started wearing the hijab every one started to harass me. I complained to my supervisor but nothing changed. Even some of my coworkers who profess Islam advised me to abandon the hijab, but I refused to compromise my religious believe for the sake of a job. After nine years of unbearable injustices and pressure I had to leave my job. Now, with great determination I started looking for a job, but every time I apply for one that has been advertised, as soon as they see me I am told that some one else has already been hired. It doesn't matter if I later see that the same job is still being advertised. Once a woman at the front desk of a company that was hiring workers told me that I would be hired on condition that I take of my hijab outfit. My gown or my headdress might be entangled in the machine, she said. What absurdity!”

“They speak of hygiene and health concerns while they let non-Muslim women wear a netlike headscarves that leaves out some of their hair and wear heavy make-up”.

“Although I was wearing pants and a simple headscarf they told me that my outfit was not suitable for the job. Another time after I drove for long hours to get there they told me that they needed a man. That made me so angry and very frustrated, but I am not going to give up”.

“They did that to me too. What they offered me in stead was a night shift job. They always deny us available good jobs and offer us those jobs that no one else is willing to take. Sometimes they tell us that only men workers are needed for available jobs, but then you come to know that the jobs were given to other women. This is pure discrimination”.

“Along an Arab and a Polish girl I applied for a job at a boutique wearing my hijab. I successfully passed the interview and they told me that I should start work the next day. That day when I got there I was told that my work would be at the storeroom. When I protested and told them that that was not what I applied for, they said that they don't have any job other than that”.

“What surprises me is that even if you cover your hijab or talk to them through the phone you still get a negative answer. I wonder how they came to know that I was wearing hijab?”

“They always can tell who you are from your Islamic name then they mark your application and put it away. That is why some times you don't even get a call confirming receipt of your application”.

“One time, recently, when I called them inquiring about my application, the women at the phone asked me my surname. I told her that my name is Arab (a Somali given name). “What? Arab like the Arabs” she said, “ We don't have jobs

for Arabs” .

“What is worse is that some Muslims change their names adopting European first names as a way to avoid discrimination. A Muslim lawyer told me that he adopted a Christian first name to protect his job and that some people have religious names and professional names”.

“A friend of mine who works at one of those agencies that send prospective workers to the companies and factories requesting workers, told me that she often encountered some qualified Muslim women’s applications turned away. She had the sense that the reason is because of their wearing a hijab”.

“It was clear that they did not want us because of our hijab and wanted to get rid of us. They accorded us the worst treatment, always openly making smearing comments about our religion and culture. They said that we are dirty and odd people spilling water all over the place, praying all the time. Deliberately they would stomp over our prayer mats. After we complained about these treatments they discharged all of us without previous notice. We sued the factory and we are now waiting a court judgment in the case”.

“It is because of the prayers that some other sisters and I lost our jobs in another factory”.

“I wear hijab, and when I applied in a company they refused to give me a job. I applied three times while wearing hijab. My friend told me that they are not giving me a job due to my wearing hijab.”

“There were Muslim ladies there who took off their hijab at the factory gate. I kept it on so my supervisor got angry with me and she talked with everyone and greeted everyone but she never talked with me. She doesn’t even answer my hello, which hurts me.”

“First I worked at a food factory where we had a uniform and they allow me to wear hijab under my cap. Then I joined another factory where I worked on a line. There are only 3 Muslim workers, and they object to us very much, that our hijab will come on line. The supervisor made these objections.”

“Once I applied at a store where they told me I needed local experience. I applied at another store where they told me that if I wear hijab I would not get a job, so I took off my hijab for 15 days because I needed experience. Plus I applied in a hotel where they refused to hire me.”

“Once my Italian friend told me that as long as you don’t bring one for me to wear, I have no problem with hijab.”

“Once I saw a job ad in a local newspaper. When I went there they said that they are not hiring, and when I told them I saw their advertisement in the newspaper, they said nothing.”

“Once I applied for a salesperson job in a fashion store where my friend works. When I went there the storeowner refused to give me a job, although there was a need for a salesperson. My friend told me that it is because I wear hijab and that’s why he didn’t hire me.”

“Once I applied at a fast food store. The manager told me that he didn’t think that I could do the job because my dressing is different and in their shop you have to wear shirt and cap. I said okay I’ll wear full sleeves shirt and hijab, but he said no I don’t think you will do this job. Plus several times I applied in another store and they didn’t call me and I think it’s because I gave a photo in which I was wearing hijab. I think that’s why they don’t call me.

I applied for a job at a bank for which I was well qualified- I have a Masters Degree from McGill University. I passed the first interview and the test. However the job was eventually given to someone else, who is less qualified and experienced than me, because I wear hijab.”

“Early on, when I first came to Canada, I attended a Job Search Workshop in an organization I don’t want to name. The facilitator actually told us that with the hijab our chances of finding a job would be limited to none.”

“Wearing the hijab as well as our last names makes it very difficult to find work, especially after September 11. But we must be optimistic and try to convince employers by our good performance and hard work.”

“Before we can show employers how well we can work, we need to be given a chance and have a job appropriate with our qualifications and experience. Employers as well as agencies helping people who are looking for jobs have to be made to see that Muslim women are as good as anybody else. Furthermore that they have to be judged, just like any other applicant, according to their abilities not the way they dress. “

“I graduated as a computer programmer and applied to work at a company and successfully passed both the first interview and the test. The interviewer told me that my qualifications were well suited for the job and he would be recommending me for the second interview. Then he told me that he will be frank and tell me something no body else will- that unless I changed the way I dress, I will never be hired for this job or a similar one in another company. He then went on to say that others would tell me this or that reason for not hiring me but the reality would be that dressed the way I am; no body will hire me as a programmer. “

“Of course the hijab has an effect. Talking on the phone you are all right, but the minute they see you things change. Even volunteering is hard let alone employment. I have applied for a volunteering position at the library of the school I used to go to as well as the library near my home for a year and a half now, and I have not heard from either of them yet.”

“Yes I feel very apprehensive applying for jobs because of the hijab and the way I

dress. Actually, I have given up looking for a job altogether and now I concentrate on upgrading my qualifications.”

“I was driven to completely stop looking for work. Now I simply go from one course to another just to be able to do something and keep myself occupied.”

“My experience is somewhat different - I think I was lucky. I am trained in computers and applied for and got a job in data entry in a good company. I worked there for three years and never had any problems. In fact there were several other Muslim women and men working for the company. We had a room we could use for prayers and the company celebrated with us in Eid. The company was a good one and really applied non discriminatory policy towards all, not just Muslims.”

“No, never. It is unthinkable, I will never even think of taking off my hijab to find work.”

“Asking us if we would think about removing or taking off the hijab is like asking us if we might be willing to give up our Islamic values and traditions. These Islamic values and traditions represent who we are, and we will never give up who we are to look for work.”

“The hijab is only one among many problems that we face in Canada. There is discrimination, racism, our qualifications not being recognized and much more. Although I will never think of taking off my hijab, I feel if some of these problems are solved, we will be able to find work.”

“I know a friend who is a day care worker and because she wears hijab, she has been stuck in the same position for five years only working four hours a day. Most of those who started with her were upgraded to full time or promoted. Only she, because of the hijab, was told not this time may be next time and this went on year after year and after five years she is still where she started.”

“I know of others who felt they were turned down for a job because they wear hijab. My own experience working as a volunteer also shows the difficulties Muslim women face. I volunteered to work as a supervisor at the computer center in the college where I study. Our job is to see that students do not bring with them any food or drink, or misuse the computers in any way. However my experience is that, because of the hijab, my instructions are always disputed by students and they always give me a very hard time. If another supervisor, who is not a Muslim said the same thing I said, they immediately accept it without even a whisper. “

“Many of my friends were turned down for the jobs they applied for because they wear hijab. What I think would make this problem even more clear is how few Muslim women can actually be seen working in shopping malls or banks or other similar institutions. Until there is a large number of Muslim women who are working and can be our pioneers and help convince employers to give us a

chance, it will be a hard struggle.”

“People use to keep racism quiet, now since September 11, they are more vocal.
“

“People would stay back as if I stank when wearing the hijab. Hijab doesn’t mean I smell.”

“People have their hair long in science class. Even on cooking shows. That is the same thing with respect to danger as the hijab. I can take my hijab off; they can’t take their hair off. People just have this problem with hijab, an excuse.”

“It’s just an excuse to discriminate. It’s not an issue of safety at all, its just ignorance.”

“I did an interview by phone for an office-cleaning job. I got the job. I arrived and asked what I should do. The next day my supervisor talked to me about that thing I was wearing on my head. I corrected her and told her is called hijab. I told her it was my religion; I had to wear it. The supervisor told me that some people feel uncomfortable to ask me about it. I wanted to talk to a higher supervisor. He never talked to me and they never addressed my issue. Then my supervisor followed me around and started harassing me. After a week I quit. It’s not worth it.”

“I worked in a candy store where an agency found me the job. After a week of starting they asked me to take off my hijab. I said no.”

“Interviews on the phone go well; I’m trained in computer programming. As soon as I come to the job site with hijab, I get harassed. Even on the phone they hear the accent and that’s not the problem. I get the job, show up with hijab and then I get harassed.”

“I (a student) want to work in Parliament. I always wanted to wear a hijab but in this area of work I feel uncomfortable. I am the only brown skinned person in the office, so I feel if I had wore the hijab to the interview I wouldn’t have gotten the job.”

“If you don’t wear it to the interview, but then you wear it when you get the job, you get harassed anyways. Which is better? To wear it and not get the job, or don’t wear it to the interview, get the job and then wear it and get harassed later?”

“Some people are desperate for work and need to sacrifice to get the job, it’s not fair.”

“After September 11th, I’ve experienced lots of problems. One guy would follow me in his car slowly, yelling racist words at me. He followed me from the bus station to my job. My co-worker who is also Muslim started coming late so she

would not need to walk with me because she was afraid for her life. He followed me for 2 weeks.”

“I did an interview over the phone for a bakery position. The guy told me to come in and fill in an application. When I came in wearing hijab he told me the position was taken. I went home, called the place again and changed my voice and asked if the bakery position was still open and they said yes. I took this to the labour board and ended up getting the job because they were found to be discriminating. I took it so that I could change their views about women who wear hijab.”

“When applying for a job it’s hard with the name Mohammad. A job agency told me I should change my name because it will be hard to get a job with that name.”

“Employment Agencies should talk to the employers to put pressure on them. Tell them that these are the people applying for the jobs they represent and that their criteria are racist. “

Context

Within the general framework of racialised labour markets, and public and social sectors’ interaction, particular forms of racism have emerged directed at specific racialised communities. Anti-black racism, Anti-Chinese racism, Anti-Asian racism, Anti-Arab racism and gendered racism are examples of forms of racial discrimination and discourses that further differentiate impacts on racialised groups in the workplace and in social settings.

Canada’s Creeping Economic Apartheid

Grace-Edward Galabuzi-The CSJ Foundation for Research and Education, August, 2001

The above study revealed that poverty has a colour and a gender and that immigration status has become a justification for racial discrimination in employment. Each year, Canada receives thousand of immigrants from around the world who bring with them a wealth of experience and skills. Many are selected because they have skills that Canada needs. This wealth is wasted. The experience and skills of immigrants are not utilized because of discriminatory hiring practices and workplace racism, which as the “Muslim Women and Employment” study has documented continue to exist and continue to force minorities into poverty. Also, the findings of the “Muslim Women and Employment” study adds Anti-Muslim racism to the above particular forms of racism that emerged in the labour markets.

According to the Human Rights Commission reports, discrimination in employment continues to be the second largest category of complaints filed with

the Commission. This is despite anti-racist public education, human rights legislation and workplace equity policy that have been initiated over the years. Racism and discrimination in employment, however, is not practiced in a vacuum. Discrimination and racism rises when anti-immigrant sentiments and equity issues are used for political gains. This was demonstrated during the 1995 provincial election when the Ontario Conservative Government gained wide support for promising to repeal Employment Equity. In addition, domestic or global political events can be exploited to render racism and discrimination “acceptable”.

Although this project began long before the September 11 events, the women who participated in the project, as well as representatives from the Muslim communities we consulted with for the study, stated that things got worse since September 11, particularly for Women wearing hijab. As the finger of blame pointed East, these women who were easily identified as Muslims were automatically associated with terrorism. Also, to avoid harassment and for their safety, these women were advised to remove their head cover or stay at home. The effects of racial/religious profiling of Muslims, harassment at work and in the community and harassment of children in schools, as well as the effects of fear for one’s safety on the mental health of individuals, their families and their community as a whole, continue to devastate the Muslim communities.

Background to the Research Project

The Muslim women and Employment Project was initiated in order to document the extend of discrimination experienced by Muslim women who wear hijab when they apply for work in the Manufacturing, Sales and Service sectors and to propose strategies to deal with this issue in order to improve the economic status of Muslim women.

The issue of discrimination experienced by Muslim women who wear hijab when they apply for work was first discussed during a needs assessment workshop which WWIW organized in 1998 for one of its’ member organizations representing African Women. To establish the issue, WWIW conducted consultations with the Council of Muslim Women, Culturelink, Canadian Arab Federation, the Federation of Muslim Women and MIDAYNTA who all agreed that Muslim women who wear hijab experienced discrimination in employment. In addition, WWIW surveyed the Toronto Workers Health and Safety Legal Clinic, the Canadian Auto Workers-Local 40, and the United Steelworkers of America as well as institutions such as the Ontario Human Rights Commission to find out what information these organizations kept on this issue. While everyone was aware that this is an issue, no documentation existed.

Once the issue was established, WWIW applied for funds to the Canadian Heritage – Multiculturalism and the Access and Equity Program of the City of Toronto to conduct a participatory research study with the objectives to document

the experiences of Muslim women and to develop strategies to deal with the issue. The result of the research is gathered in this report.

Women Working With Immigrant Women sponsored the project in partnership with the Council of Muslim Women, Culturelink, Canadian Auto Workers-Local 40, Canadian Arab Federation, the Federation of Muslim Women, MIDAYNTA, Toronto Workers Health and Safety Legal Clinic and the United Steelworkers of America.

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH

In 1984, Judge Abella wrote in The Royal Commission Report, "Equality in Employment" that "Ignoring differences and refusing to accommodate them is a denial of equal access and opportunity. It is discrimination. To reduce discrimination, we must create and maintain barrier-free environments so that individuals can have genuine access free from arbitrary obstructions to demonstrate and exercise fully their potential". (1)

In the Urban Alliance on Race Relations' and the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto's 1985 Study, "Who Gets The Work? A Test of Racial Discrimination in Employment", its authors, Frances Henry and Effie Ginzberg, state, "At its simplest level, discrimination merely means making a choice, and making choices is an essential part of everyday life for individuals and organizations. These simple choices are governed by a myriad of factors including attitudes, traditions, rules and regulations and combinations of all of these. When these factors have the effect of limiting the opportunities of certain classes or groups of people because of their sex, physical status, race, religion or national origin, the problem of discrimination arises". (2)

This study, through community-based action research, aimed at increasing our understanding of the barriers, types of discrimination and degree of discrimination experienced by Muslim women who wear hijab or a head cover when seeking employment in the manufacturing, sales and services sectors in Toronto.

Women Working with Immigrant Women and its partners chose to utilize various methods of gathering information and sources of information. Research into this issue had not been carried out in Toronto therefore all sources for data needed to be targeted. In addition, collecting data through various methods not only helped to counter the drawbacks of the smaller samples used in this community-based participatory research, but also strengthened the results when similarities in the findings were discovered across methods.

Data was collected using the following five methods, implemented in the order shown:

1. Consultations with community organizations working with Muslim women.
2. Focus Group Discussions with Muslim women.
3. Surveys filled out by Muslim women.
4. Direct in person field-testing at job sites in the targeted sectors.
5. Applications, to Employment Placement Agencies that work with the targeted sectors.

The data collected described the experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab when applying for work or working within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors, looking at the types and degree of discrimination experienced. The data identified the fields of work where women are applying or working within these sectors. In addition, it revealed patterns of differential treatment from employers.

The resulting recommendations for action become the basis for Phase II of this project, to be developed and implemented in 2003.

Finally, throughout the study, Women Working with Immigrant Women worked diligently to protect the identities of individual women who participated in the focus groups, filled out the surveys and visited job sites and employment agencies. The names of these women will not be disclosed in any way, at anytime. In addition, the names and locations of employers and job placement agencies that are visited will not be identified in any way, at any time. There will be no action directed at any employers who discriminated in their treatment of applicants who visited their job site as part of this research. Confidentiality Agreements (Appendix B) were signed to ensure that the real names and identities of participants, and the names of the employers would not be revealed.

METHODOLOGY

The information gathered at each stage of the methodology helped to develop the samples and tools used in succeeding stages. The researchers acknowledge that the samples used in this study are small. This however, was a community-based participatory research project, with limits on time and resources, and we believed that utilizing various sources of data and methods of collecting the data strengthened the methodology and the findings. To be able to show a correlation between the information received from community organizations on the experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab, the experiences reported by individual Muslim women who wear hijab and the data collected through field-testing at job sites offset the drawbacks of smaller samples.

1. Consultations with Community Organizations

The purpose of meeting with community organizations working with Muslim women was to discuss the research with them and find out what their experiences had been with the issue of Muslim women wearing hijab seeking employment.

In addition we wanted to see if they could assist us in locating Muslim women for the focus groups and identifying what languages they felt were appropriate to hold the focus groups in.

A letter (Appendix C) describing the project and requesting some time to meet, and a brochure (Appendix D) describing the research were sent to the Somali Immigrant Women's Association, Afghan Women's Organization, Islamic Social Services and Resource Association, Islamic Information and Dawah Centre International, Canadian Association for Islamic Relations, Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association, Muslim Community Services, Palestine House, Arab Community Centre of Toronto, Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians, Rexdale Women's Centre, South Asian Women Centre, African Training and Employment Centre, Skills for Change, COSTI Employment Services and Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre.

Follow up phone calls were made to the above organizations to set up meetings with them. If a meeting was not possible or needed, a consultation over the phone was conducted. This was a lengthy time-consuming process. We did however, get positive results and meetings and/or phone consultations were conducted with the Islamic Social Services and Resource Association, Canadian Association for Islamic Relations, Rexdale Women's Centre, Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians, Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association, South Asian Women's Centre, Skills for Change, Culturelink and Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre.

Though it was not possible to consult with some organizations, sending them the letter and brochure served to publicize the issue and research on a broad level.

2. Focus Group Discussions with Muslim Women

There were 4 focus groups conducted, one each in Somali, Arabic, Urdu and English. The purpose of having them held in different languages was to make the focus groups accessible, to reach a diverse a group of Muslim women and to have a representative group in our sample. Through the consultations with community organizations, it was determined that holding the focus groups in these four languages would be most appropriate.

Though 60 women registered, there were a total of 50 participants at the four focus groups. Participants were recruited through community organizations that work with Muslim women, and unions. As part of the outreach, a flyer was designed and distributed in Somali, Arabic, Urdu and English. In addition an article was written and released to various community-based media that reach the Muslim communities.

The focus groups included a facilitated discussion on the issues using the following questions as a guide to initiate the discussion (Appendix E):

1. How have Islamic tradition and /or values impacted on your life in Canada?

2. Do you feel nervous or apprehensive about applying for jobs because you wear hijab?
3. Did you ever think of taking hijab off to apply for a job in Canada?
4. Do you know of other individuals who have applied for work and were turned down or felt that they were turned down for the job because they were wearing hijab?

The focus groups provided Muslim women who wear hijab with a forum to share their experiences and feelings in a safe environment, and allowed the researchers to collect and document information on these women's experiences of looking for work in Toronto. The information collected in the focus groups would assist researchers in determining the job areas and sites to be included in the field-testing portion of the research. It would also help to identify the Employment Placement Agencies at which to send an applicant.

3. Surveys

The survey (Appendix F) was translated into Somali, Arabic, Urdu and English, and distributed to Muslim women who wear hijab and who had experience in applying for work within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors in Toronto. Muslim women who were interested in filling out the survey were reached through the focus groups, as well as community organizations.

While the focus group discussions were used to document examples of Muslim women's experiences, the surveys were used to collect very specific data about their experiences that could be analyzed. Many of the survey questions were geared to attaining precise information on the respondent's experiences at specific job sites where they had applied for work within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors.

Four key questions within the survey were questions numbered 10, 11, 12 and 13.

They are:

Number 10: If you were wearing hijab was there anything said to you regarding your wearing of hijab? If your answer is yes, what were you told?

Number 11: If you were wearing hijab were you ever asked if you would take it off?

Number 12: If you were wearing hijab were you ever told that you must take it off if you want a job?

Number 13: If you were turned down and you were wearing hijab, did you get a sense that you were turned down because you were wearing hijab?

The above four questions provided information with regards to the wearing of hijab and the subsequent responses from employers, while the information

collected from other questions in the surveys assisted researchers in determining the job areas and sites, and Employment Placement Agencies to be approached by applicants.

4. Field-Testing at Job Sites

Consultations with Unions, Community Organizations and Individuals

Consultations were held with various unions to discuss the research with them, and to see if they could assist us in identifying: (a) job sites to be included as part of the field-testing; (b) what was involved in various jobs within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors; (c) the process of hiring within these sectors; and (d) references to be used as part of constructed resumes for applicants who will be going to job sites. In addition, unions assisted in accessing resource persons who trained the applicants going to job sites. Community organizations working with the Muslim community assisted in identifying individual women to be a part of the teams of applicants going to the job sites. Various individuals also provided valuable information on what particular jobs entailed, and participated as resource persons in the training of applicants

Collecting Data

Three different methods were used to collect information and record data. They were:

1. Research into Employers Recording Form: Initial Contact (Appendix G), to be filled out immediately following the job site visit.
2. Research into Employers Recording Form: Follow-Up Contact (Appendix H), to be filled out in the weeks following their initial job site visit.
3. Reporting Back Sessions where experiences were discussed within a group of other applicants and researchers.

Job Sites

Using the information collected from Muslim women in the focus group discussions and surveys, it was determined necessary to include as part of the field-testing, job sites identified as Fast Food Outlets, Retail Stores, Garment Factories and General Factories (factories other than garment factories).

Some of the Fast Food and Retail Stores were selected because they were either named by women in the focus group discussions or listed in the surveys as companies where women had applied for work or had worked. Other sites were chosen randomly.

The Garment Factories and General Factories were selected from a list of factory sites provided by various union and community organizations. Half of the factory sites visited are unionized.

A total of 16 job sites were chosen for the teams of applicants to visit - 3 Fast Food Outlets (Service Sector), 5 Retail Stores (Sales Sector), 4 Garment Factories (Manufacturing Sector), and 4 General Factories (Manufacturing Sector). The job sites are not identified by name, only by type of workplace.

It was very difficult to find out if the companies chosen had jobs available. We were told through consultations with unions and individuals who had worked in factories that these companies rarely advertise and applicants should just go to the factory and see if they could fill out an application form. The Fast Food companies selected were always accepting applications because there was a fast turnover of staff. The Retail Stores selected, were also hiring very often, and always accepting resumes.

Identifying Teams of Applicants

Three teams of matched applicants were created. Each team consisted of one female applicant wearing hijab and one female applicant not wearing hijab. The teams were matched with respect to race, age, accent, Country of birth, experience in Canada, education and work history. It was necessary to control all of these factors, making the wearing or not wearing of hijab the only difference between the two applicants. In this sense, any difference in treatment by employers could not be attributed to differences such as race, colour of skin and accent. It was also necessary to include teams of women who were both White and Black, and varied in age, to demonstrate even more strongly that the wearing or not wearing of hijab was the key factor.

The descriptions of the three teams were as follows:

Team 1: White, 24 – 29 years of age, Canadian born, non-Muslim

Team 2: Black, 38 – 45 years of age, Somali, Muslim

Team 3: Black, 38 – 45 years of age, Sudanese, Muslim

Developing Identities and Resumes for Applicants

Personal Identities (Appendix I) and Resumes (Appendix J) were developed for each of the six applicants. The identities and resumes included Muslim first and last names, made-up addresses and a work experience, relevant to the job the applicant, was applying for. The names of companies that had been closed for two to five years were used to create the applicant's work history. The phone numbers of two community organizations involved in the research were used as contact numbers for the employers to reach the applicants.

Training Teams of Applicants

The training of the teams of applicants was carried out in two sessions – one for the teams that would be visiting Garment Factories and General Factories, and

one for the team that would be visiting the Fast Food and Retail Stores. The training sessions were 3 – 4 hours in length. The Agenda (Appendix K) covered the logistics of visiting the job sites, the names and locations of the job sites to be visited, the constructed identities and resumes of the applicants, the description of the jobs which they would be applying for, the process of applying for the jobs, what information to provide and not provide to the employer, the Recording Forms, the follow-up process and the Reporting Back Sessions.

Applicants were carefully instructed on their approach to the employer. They were to state that they would like to apply for a job and would like to speak with the person responsible for hiring. Applicants to the factories specifically stated that they wanted to apply for a “General Labour” position. This avoided the need for testing in the operating of machines. Applicants were also instructed on what process to follow if there were no jobs, if they did not receive an application form or if they were not asked to leave their resume. We tried to cover different scenarios which could arise, however it was impossible to predict all likely scenarios, therefore the applicants had to be ready and willing to improvise, keeping in mind that the goal was to make all attempts to apply for a job.

Visiting Job Sites

A resource person, from the project team, accompanied the teams of applicants to the job sites. The Applicants who were wearing hijab were sent in first to apply for a job. The Applicants who were not wearing hijab followed between 30 – 60 minutes after the first Applicant exited the site.

Team 1 visited three Fast Food sites on a weekday evening from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm, and five Retail Store sites on a Saturday from 10:00 am – 6:00 pm.

Team 2 visited four Garment Factory sites over two mornings from 8:30 am – 1:00 pm each day.

Team 3 visited four General Factory sites over two mornings from 8:30 am – 1:00 pm each day.

The visits to the Garment Factories and General Factories were scheduled during the morning in order to arrive when the persons in charge of hiring would be at the site.

5. Application to Employment Placement Agencies

The objective of this part of the study was to document how Muslim women wearing hijab were treated by the Employment Placement Agency, and if any references were made to the hijab.

Part A

Three Employment Placement Agencies that refer women to companies within

the manufacturing, sales and services sectors were selected to be a part of this study. One woman wearing hijab was chosen to register, as herself, with these Employment Placement Agencies.

The applicant was instructed to call the Agency, give her name and ask what was required to register with the Agency. She then faxed a cover letter and resume, called within two days to inquire if they had received it, and called again in seven days, to inquire about her prospects. She then waited for an in-person interview with the Agency, calling once a week for further inquiry.

The Applicant documented what she did, what was said to her by the Agency, how she was treated and if any reference was made about her wearing hijab on an Employment Placement Agency Recording Form (Appendix L).

Note: This part of the methodology was revised after one month of implementation, as a result of the applicant's interaction over the phone with the Employment Placement Agencies.

Part B

(Note: This section is to be revised / added to. We are still in the process of receiving information)

FINDINGS

1. Consultations with Community Organizations

With the exception of two job placement agencies who stated that they are unaware that there is a problem, or they have never had clients who wear hijab, the community organizations consulted with in this study stated that Muslim women who wear hijab face discrimination when applying for work. Interestingly, there were agencies, which assist women with settlement and finding employment, cited as being places where Muslim women wearing hijab experience barriers.

Rexdale Women's Centre

The Rexdale Women's Centre stated that there is no existing research on the discrimination which women who wear hijab experience when searching for employment, but everyone says that the problem exists. The added, that most job search workshops recommended to women that they not cover their heads and to "dress professionally" in order to find employment.

Canadian Association for Islamic Relations

The Canadian Association for Islamic Relations' representative consulted with

stated that it is a problem. “Women wearing hijab are discriminated against when looking for work because they are wearing hijab. All women of colour face discrimination in employment, however, the discrimination is more poignant for the woman who is wearing a scarf or hijab. The reaction to them is instant. A wall immediately goes up and the woman feels the response”.

The person consulted with wears hijab and said that people immediately assumes she does not speak English. She stated, “That it is disturbing that the discrimination continues, because there are increasing numbers of women wearing scarves”. She also gave an example of a settlement worker who told a woman to go ahead and take her hijab off in order to assimilate and be more culturally accepted.

Islamic Social Services and Resource Association

The person we spoke with stated that “it is a given” that women who wear hijab do face discrimination when applying for work.

Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians

The representative from the Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians stated that it is difficult for women to make the connection between wearing hijab and not getting jobs. If you are wearing hijab you will have a problem in all areas of your life.

An Immigrant and Refugee Settlement Services Organization

The representative from this agency stated that women are experiencing discrimination when wearing hijab, and are having a hard time finding a job.

They provided examples of discrimination, which their clients experienced when looking for work. One example is of two Afghani women wearing hijab, who were having a very hard time finding work. An employment counselor told them that they could not be helped unless they take off hijab. Another example is of two Somali women wearing hijab, who were laid off and told to go on Employment Insurance and that everyone was getting laid off. However later the two women saw other workers still working at the company and realized that they were the only ones laid off.

2. Focus Group Discussions with Muslim Women

Experiences of Participants

The following are examples of experiences reported by Muslim women wearing hijab while working in or applying for work within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors:

- Asked by employer to remove hijab

- Told by employer that she should remove “head cap”
- Told over the phone by employer to go to the company to fill out an application form, however when she arrived soon after at the company, wearing hijab, she was told the position was taken
- She applied for a job not wearing hijab, and was offered the position. When she showed up for work wearing hijab she was told that the position was not available
- Verbal harassment on the job against religion and culture
- Harassment and yelling from supervisor around prayers
- Physical harassment by stomping on prayer mats; when she complained of this treatment, she was fired
- Given a back room or store room job when she understood she was being hired for a sales job
- Told by employer that she would be hired on condition of removing her hijab
- Told by employment agency that she should change her name from Mohammed to something else because it will be hard to get a job with that last name
- Told by job search facilitator that her chances are limited at finding a job when she is wearing hijab
- While wearing hijab she was told by employer that there was not a job available. Then she went back to the same workplace without hijab and was told to wait five minutes, and then she was hired on the spot. She showed up at work wearing hijab and was fired without a reason
- Told by employer that hijab will get caught on the line
- Told by the company that they were not hiring, however the advertisement for the position was still in the paper
- Not getting promoted or upgraded
- Received bad looks from interviewer
- Hygiene and health concerns were used against her because of wearing hijab
- Given night shifts which no one else was willing to take
- Told by company “we don’t have jobs for Arabs”; this woman’s last name was “Arab”
- Told by employer that pants and headscarf outfit was not suitable, yet company had no dress code
- Told by employer that the available job need male workers; she later found out that women were hired for the position
- Supervisor made demeaning references about her hijab
- She had to quit job as a result of harassment by Supervisor

The above examples represent a broad spectrum of the experiences which Muslim women wearing hijab went through while applying for work or working within the studied sectors. They clearly illustrate the barriers and types of discrimination, which women have experienced. They are denied jobs, told they must remove their hijab, harassed in the workplace and fired from jobs because they are wearing hijab.

Places Participants Approached for Employment

The following is a list of various places where the participants reported having approached for work:

- Factories
- Retail Stores
- Fast Food and Restaurant Outlets
- Hotels
- Health Care Organizations
- Community Organizations
- Banks
- Employment Placement Agencies

The examples of places listed above helped to identify the job sites, which were selected for the field-testing portion of this research. In addition, since Employment Placement Agencies were reported, both through the consultations and focus group discussions, to be a place where women approached and where barriers were experienced, it was necessary, if time and resources allowed, that visits to these agencies be included in the study.

Types of Jobs for which Participants Applied

The following is a list of the types of jobs for which the participants reported having applied:

- General Labour
- Sales
- Office Cleaners
- Food Preparation/Food Serving
- Customer Service
- Cashier
- Telemarketing
- Market Research
- Nursing
- Clerical
- Marketing Assistant
- Administrative Assistant

Sectors other than Manufacturing, Sales and Services Sectors

The following are examples of other sectors or types of jobs for which participants reported having applied:

- Computer Circuit
- Data Entry
- Computer Programming
- Software Development

3. Surveys

A total of 50 surveys were returned to the researchers. However, 18 of the

surveys were incomplete. What this indicated to us was that even though the surveys were translated into Somali, Arabic and Urdu, some respondents might have had difficulty with filling out the survey. A total of 32 surveys were included in the analysis.

Survey Questions Analyzed

The following four questions numbered 10, 11, 12 and 13 in the survey aimed at attaining precise information on the respondent’s experiences at specific job sites where they had applied for work within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors. Table I illustrates the frequency in which the respondents in our sample reported the different experiences.

Number 10: If you were wearing hijab was there anything said to you regarding your wearing of hijab? If your answer is yes, what were you told?

Note: The responses to the second part of this question follow this section

Number 11: If you were wearing hijab were you ever asked if you would take it off?

Number 12: If you were wearing hijab were you ever told that you must take it off if you want a job?

Number 13: If you were turned down and you were wearing hijab, did you get a sense that you were turned down because you were wearing hijab?

Table I: Experiences of Respondents

EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENTS
<p>Answered YES to Question # 10: “If you were wearing hijab was there anything said to you regarding your wearing hijab? “</p>
<p>Answered YES to Question # 11: “If you were wearing hijab were you ever asked if you would take it off?”</p>
<p>Answered YES to Question # 12: “If you were wearing hijab were you ever told that you must take it off if you want a job?”</p>
<p>Answered YES to Question # 13: “If you were turned down and you were wearing hijab, did you get a sense that you</p>

were turned down because you were wearing hijab?"	
Answered YES to one or more of the 4 questions	9
<p>This data shows that a high percentage (90.6%) of the Muslim women in our sample had an employer make a reference to their hijab while applying for work within the studied sectors. It is also significant that 40.6% of the women were told that they MUST take off the hijab if they wanted a job. It is clear that these Muslim women have experienced discrimination from employers.</p> <p>Though the data received from Question # 13 is subjective, it is an important finding that 78.1% of the women in our survey had a sense that they were turned down because they were wearing hijab. When it comes to discrimination it is important to acknowledge and accept a person subjective experiences. What they experience from their perspective, affects their future decisions and actions. Discrimination cannot only be objectively measured.</p> <p>What Survey Respondents Were Told By Employers</p> <p>The following are examples of what Muslim women who filled out the survey, reported they were told by employers when applying for work with the manufacturing, sales and services sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ “You will make dirty the foods that you handle” ◦ “You cannot work wearing that thing” ◦ “Do you wear that all the time” ◦ “Can you work with hijab” ◦ “Are you planning on taking that thing off your head while working” ◦ “Do not want women who wear hijab for safety reasons” ◦ “No hijab is permitted here” ◦ “Do not wear Islamic head scarf” ◦ “You cannot work in a factory while wearing hijab” <p>These examples illustrate some of the barriers Muslim women wearing hijab experience, and demonstrate the misconceptions and discriminatory attitudes about the wearing of hijab.</p> <p>The Argument of “Health and Safety”</p> <p>The example of an employer using “health and safety reasons” for not wanting to hire a Muslim woman wearing hijab is worth examining. This was identified as an issue in both focus group discussions and surveys. Some may believe that this is a legitimate concern, especially when it comes to working with machinery or on assembly lines. However, the hijab can be tied back in such a way that it cannot compromise the worker’s safety. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not it was an honest expression of such a concern from an employer, or it is used as an excuse to discriminate against Muslim women.</p>	

4. Field Testing at Job Sites

Table II documents the experiences of the teams of applicants who visited the 16 job sites to apply for a job. The sites included 3 Fast Food Outlets, 5 Retail Stores, 4 Garment Factories, and 4 General Factories. What is evident are the different ways in which both applicants are treated at many sites, with applicants wearing hijab facing numerous barriers that was not experienced by the applicant not wearing hijab. This differential treatment clearly indicates that with the majority of employers visited in the study, the applicant wearing hijab experienced discrimination as a result of her wearing hijab.

In the Urban Alliance on Race Relations' and the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto's 1985 Study, "Who Gets The Work? A Test of Racial Discrimination in Employment", the researchers used the technique of field-testing to examine the differences in treatment of Black and White applicants when applying for jobs. They discovered "patterns of treatment" where the White applicant was treated courteously while the Black applicant was treated rudely, negatively or, with hostility. They used the term "differential treatment" to include these patterns of treatment, which included "treating the White applicant courteously as evidenced by hand shaking, making small talk, offering an application form, seeing the applicant to the door, speaking to the applicant in a warm and friendly manner while the Black applicant receives none of the courtesies" and "when the White applicant is told that the job is available and asked to fill out an application and/or leave a resume or, is given an interview on the spot ... while the Black applicant has already been told, usually by the same employer or contact person, that the same job has been filled". (3)

In our study, patterns are evident in the data collected using the Recording Forms. At most of the sites, applicants without hijab were treated courteously while applicants with hijab were treated in a dismissive and rude manner. There are examples where the applicant without hijab is given an application form to fill out, while the applicant with hijab is told that there are no application forms, or where the applicant without hijab is allowed to apply for a job, while the applicant with hijab is told that there are no jobs available. Table II describes the experiences of applicants at the job sites.

Following Table II will be a number of additional tables, each focusing on and analyzing a different aspect of the treatment the applicants received. These Tables will be looking at the differences and similarities in treatment with regards to the following:

- Being immediately asked to fill out an application form and/or leave a resume
- Information on the availability of jobs
- Being allowed to leave an application form and/or resume by the end of the visit
- Gaining access to persons in charge of hiring
- Friendliness

◦ Being given information with ease
 In addition to analyzing the sample as a whole, i.e. total job sites, a breakdown by sectors will also be given. This data is useful when implementing the strategies to address the discrimination. It is also vital because it illustrates that the differential treatment occurred in all sectors and therefore with all three teams of applicants. Differential Treatment occurred regardless of skin colour, accents, mannerisms, education, age or experience in Canada. The key was the wearing or not wearing of hijab.

Table II: **Experiences of Applicants at Job Sites**

SECTOR/ SITE NUMBER	APPLICANT WITH HIJAB	APPLICANT WITHOUT HIJAB
Fast Food: Site 1	Applicant was asked for her resume; was told that she would have to work at all times because they are open 24 hours, and if there would be a problem; received unfriendly treatment; felt that they had a problem with hijab	Applicant had to ask if she could leave her resume; was not told about working at all hours and asked if that would be a problem; received friendly treatment; person was helpful
Fast Food: Site 2	Applicant received friendly treatment by young Somali man	Applicant received friendly treatment by young Somali man
Fast Food: Site 3	Applicant had to ask if she could leave her resume; no eye contact was made with applicant; person speaking with seemed confused, uncomfortable, and was not helpful; applicant felt that they had a problem with hijab	Applicant was asked for her resume; eye contact was made with applicant; person speaking with was helpful; applicant obtained information with ease
Retail Store: Site 1	Applicant had to ask for application form; received unfriendly treatment; felt ignored; person speaking with was not helpful; sent to sales associate; person would not take resume from applicant's hand, so she had to push it to person; applicant felt that they had a problem with hijab	Applicant was given an application form without having to ask for it; received friendly treatment; person was helpful, welcoming of application; called Supervisor over the P.A. system to come to speak with applicant

Retail Store: Site 2	After applicant said what she was there for and asked if a job was available, the person walked away; applicant had to ask for information; treatment of applicant was dismissive, not friendly or courteous; felt that they had a problem with hijab	After applicant said what she was there for and asked if a job was available, the person directed her on who to speak with; treatment was very attentive and friendly and welcoming of applicant
Retail Store: Site 3	Applicant was asked for her resume, but the treatment was unfriendly and rude; sensed staff was whispering about her; information not given easily to applicant, and was very vague; applicant felt that the staff did not want her to work there; felt that they did have a problem with hijab; applicant did not get to speak with Supervisor	Applicant had to ask to give in her resume, however she was treated in a friendly manner; person was helpful; applicant obtained information with ease; person engaged in conversation with applicant asking her about her preference for full or part time work; applicant got to speak with Supervisor
Retail Store: Site 4	Applicant was told that there were no application forms available; not to leave her resume; and that there was a freeze on hiring	Applicant was asked to fill out an application form; her resume was welcomed; told that the company will be hiring at Christmas; and welcomed her application
Retail Store: Site 5	Applicant felt that she was being stared at by staff; when she asked to speak with the person in charge of hiring, she was not told whether or not the person was in; applicant did not feel that they had a problem with hijab	Applicant was treated in friendly manner; when she asked to speak with the person in charge of hiring, she was told that the manager was not in at the time
Garment Factory: Site 1	Applicant was told that there were no jobs; applicant then pointed out that there was a sign outside advertising jobs, and was still told that there were no jobs; applicant told that there were no application forms, and that she cannot leave her resume; body language of person was very unfriendly; applicant treated in a rude manner; applicant had to insist that she leaves her name	Applicant was told that there were job openings; when she said that she had a resume, the person responded by saying "that's super"; applicant treated in friendly manner and was told that she would be called for an interview; she was left with the impression that they were hiring

	and phone number at the company; she felt that they had a problem with hijab	
Garment Factory: Site 2	Applicant spoke with receptionist only, and was told that she cannot speak with the person in charge of hiring; applicant had to ask if she could leave her resume, and was then told that she could leave her resume but it doesn't really matter because there are no jobs	Applicant got to speak with the Human Resources person; was told that there were no jobs, but was asked for her resume; was given a card of the person in charge of hiring and was told to call back
Garment Factory: Site 3	Applicant was not asked for her resume; when she asked if she could leave her resume, she was told "no"; applicant was treated in an unfriendly and angry manner; at the end the applicant was asked for her name and phone number but no resume; applicant did not feel welcomed and felt that they had a problem with hijab	Applicant was asked for her resume and given the name and phone number of the person in charge of hiring; she was treated in a friendly manner; person stopped her work to speak with applicant
Garment Factory: Site 4	Applicant was told there were no application forms; no jobs available; was treated in an unfriendly manner; person stared at applicant's hijab; applicant had to ask to leave her resume	Applicant was asked to fill out application form, and for her resume; treated in friendly, welcoming manner; given tour of workplace; person seemed interested on applicant; given information on hours and pay
General Factory: Site 1	Applicant was told that she could not speak with the person in charge of hiring; the secretary was not giving information easily and did not automatically give an application form to applicant; applicant felt that the person was not willing to give information and answer questions	Applicant was told that she could speak with the person in charge of hiring, and was immediately given an application form to fill out; person checked and then told applicant that the person in charge of hiring was not there
General Factory:	Applicant spoke with manager; was told that they are hiring at	Applicant could not speak with manager because they were

Site 2	Christmas; sensed Manager was looking at her hijab	busy; was told they are hiring at Christmas; person showed interest
General Factory: Site 3	Applicant had to ask for an application form; was treated in a rude, unwelcoming manner; person refused to let applicant speak with person in charge of hiring; person ignored applicant's goodbye	Applicant was asked to fill out an application form; and was given two extra forms for her friends; person paged person in charge of hiring; person said "good luck" when applicant said goodbye
General Factory: Site 4	Applicant was told that they cannot promise her when she will get a job; she was stared at from top to bottom; was told to fill out the application form at home; did not feel welcomed	Applicant told that they are "always hiring"; she was treated in a friendly manner; was offered a place to sit and fill out the application form; felt welcomed

The experiences of the applicants clearly indicate that at most job sites, women wearing hijab were treated differently; women wearing hijab experienced discrimination. Not only are there differences with regards to friendly and courteous treatment, but there are also examples where there was a clear difference in the information given out regarding the availability of application forms and jobs, and whether or not one is able to leave an application form or resume.

Table III: Was Applicant Immediately Asked to Fill Out Application Form and/or Leave Resume

APPLICANT WAS IMMEDIATELY ASKED / WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY ASKED TO FILL OUT APPLICATION FORM AND/OR LEAVE RESUME	
Applicant without hijab immediately asked; Applicant with hijab not immediately asked	6
Applicant without hijab not immediately asked; Applicant with hijab immediately asked	1
Both Applicants immediately asked/not asked	2

FF = Fast Food Sites RS = Retail Store Sites

GTF = Garment Factories GLF = General Factories

Table III demonstrates that a discrepancy in treatment occurred with regards to applicants being asked to fill out an application form or leave a resume when they go in to a company to apply for a job. A difference in treatment was noted at 75% of the total sites (62.5% plus 12.5%).

However, at 62.5% of the total sites the applicant not wearing hijab was asked to fill out an application form or leave a resume, while the applicant wearing hijab was not asked to fill out an application form or leave a resume, as opposed to 12.5% the other way around. This large difference is significant.

The breakdown into job areas shows that 100% of Garment Factories and 75% the General Factories, treated the two applicants differently by asking the applicant not wearing hijab, and not asking the applicant wearing hijab to fill out an application form or leave a resume.

Table IV: What was Applicant Told about the Availability of Jobs?

APPLICANT WAS TOLD A JOB IS AVAILABLE / IS NOT AVAILABLE	TOTAL
Applicant without hijab told job is available; Applicant with hijab told job is not available	12.5%
Applicant without hijab told job is not available; Applicant with hijab told job is available	62.5%
Both Applicants told job is / is not available	87.5%

FF = Fast Food Sites

RS = Retail Store Sites

GTF = Garment Factories GLF = General Factories

Table IV shows there were examples where at the same job site, the applicant not wearing hijab was told that there were jobs available, while the applicant wearing hijab was told that there were no jobs available. What clearer example of discrimination against the applicant wearing hijab could there be? At 12.5% of the total sites, this discrimination occurred.

Again, in the breakdown by job areas, it is the Garment Factories and General Factories that practiced this discriminatory practice.

Table V: Did Applicant Get the Opportunity to Leave an Application Form and/or Resume by End of Visit?

APPLICANT DID GET / DID NOT GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE AN APPLICATION FORM AND/OR RESUME
--

Applicant without hijab did get opportunity; Applicant with hijab did not get opportunity	25%	
Applicant without hijab did not get opportunity Applicant with hijab did get opportunity	0%	
Both Applicants did get / did not get opportunity	75%	1

FF = Fast Food Sites RS = Retail Store Sites
GTF = Garment Factories GLF = General Factories

Table V shows, that by the end of an applicant’s visit to a job site, at 25% of the total sites, applicants not wearing hijab were allowed to leave an application form and/or resume, while applicants wearing hijab were not allowed to leave an application form and/or resume. Applicants wearing hijab experienced this discrimination at 75% of the Garment Factories and 20% of the Retail Stores.

Table VI: Did Applicant Get Access to Person In Charge of Hiring?

APPLICANT DID GET / DID NOT GET ACCESS TO PERSON IN CHARGE OF HIRING

Applicant without hijab did get access; Applicant with hijab did not get access
Applicant without hijab did not get access; Applicant with hijab did get access
Both Applicants did / did not get access

FF = Fast Food Sites RS = Retail Store Sites
GTF = Garment Factories GLF = General Factories

The measurement of the difference in treatment with regards to the applicants’ access to the person in charge of hiring, on its own is not strongly indicative of discrimination. However, when viewed in conjunction with the other aspects of differential treatment included in this study, it does support the conclusion that applicants wearing hijab did experience discrimination when applying for jobs. Table VI shows that at 25% of the total job sites the applicant not wearing hijab was given access, while the applicant wearing hijab was not given access

to the person in charge of hiring. This difference in treatment occurred when visiting Retail Stores, Garment Factories and General Factories.

The findings in Tables VII and VIII, which follow, are somewhat similar, and supportive of each other. At 62.5% of the total sites, the applicant not wearing hijab was treated in a friendly and welcoming manner, while the applicant wearing hijab clearly was treated in an unfriendly, rude and dismissive manner. Similarly, at 62.5% of the total sites, the applicant not wearing hijab received information with ease, while the applicant wearing hijab had difficulty getting information from the company.

In both sets of findings, we see the difference in treatment occurred in all job areas, with high percentages in the Garment Factories (75%) and General Factories (75%).

Table VII: Was Applicant Treated in a Friendly or Unfriendly Manner?

WAS APPLICANT TREATED IN FRIENDLY / UNFRIENDLY MANNER	TOTAL SITES	FF	RS	GTF	GLF
Applicant without hijab treated friendly; Applicant with hijab treated unfriendly	62.5%	66.7%	40%	75%	75%
Applicant without hijab treated unfriendly; Applicant with hijab treated friendly	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Both Applicants treated friendly / unfriendly	37.5%	33.3%	60%	25%	25%

FF = Fast Food Sites

RS = Retail Store Sites

GTF = Garment Factories

GLF = General Factories

Table VIII: Did Applicant Receive Information with Ease?

APPLICANT DID RECEIVE / DID NOT RECEIVE INFORMATION WITH EASE
Applicant without hijab did receive with ease
Applicant with hijab did not receive with ease
Applicant without hijab did not receive with ease

Applicant with hijab did receive with ease		0'
Both Applicants did receive / did not receive with ease		37.
<p>FF = Fast Food Sites RS = Retail Store Sites</p> <p>GTF = Garment Factories GLF = General Factories</p> <p>Follow-Up Contact with Job Sites</p> <p>Employers did not contact the applicants who visited the job sites, after the initial visit. However the data shows that the applicants wearing hijab experienced discrimination at the initial contact with employers, therefore eliminating any chance of them getting further in the job application process. As a result, there were no follow-up calls made by applicants, to employers.</p> <p>Reporting Back Sessions on Job Site Visits</p> <p>These sessions were extremely important for the women who participate as job site applicants, especially for those who wore hijab. These women felt disappointed and discouraged. From these reporting back sessions we saw commonalities among applicants.</p> <p>The women who wore hijab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Had a difficult time getting information ◦ Received vague information with regards to job availability ◦ Felt dismissed ◦ Felt invisible ◦ Sensed that the person they spoke with was not interested in their questions ◦ Were treated in a rude manner ◦ Sensed, by the person's body language, that they were not welcomed ◦ Had a sense that they were stared at or looked at up and down ◦ Rarely had eye contact with the persons when they were speaking with them <p>In addition, the Black applicants wearing hijab experienced an intense feeling of disappointment and sadness. They expressed that they felt they did not have a chance of getting a job wearing hijab. They felt that this form of discrimination (discrimination against women wearing hijab), in addition to racism makes it impossible for them to succeed when it comes to employment.</p> <p>The women who did not wear hijab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Would be asked to fill out application forms and their resumes were welcomed ◦ Received information with ease ◦ Experienced normal comfort levels ◦ Felt welcomed 		

- Were treated in a friendly manner

Conclusions from Job Site Visits

- Women wearing hijab, regardless of age, skin colour, experience in Canada, accent, mannerisms and education, experienced discrimination. This can be concluded because the applicant wearing hijab in all three teams of applicants, experienced discrimination. Team 1 was comprised of two applicants who were White, 24 – 29 years of age, Canadian born and non-Muslim women.
- The women wearing hijab experienced differential treatment in all sectors that the study focused upon.
- The women wearing hijab experienced barriers and resistance at the initial contact with a job site, i.e., at the stages of obtaining an application form and receiving correct information regarding job availability. This eliminates their chances of getting any further in the application process.
- The women wearing hijab experienced discrimination in both unionized and non-unionized job sites. This can be concluded because 50% of the Factory sites (Garment and General) were unionized.

Applicants in this study were instructed during the training to push for information, an opportunity to fill out a job application and to ask to speak with a person in charge of hiring. One wonders what the chances are for a Muslim woman wearing hijab (who has not been trained/instructed in this manner) who just walks into a workplace to apply for work. Most likely she will accept the initial response and leave without applying. In addition, she will feel intimidated, dismissed and invisible, and leave without getting any information. One of the applicants wearing hijab in this portion of the study, stated that she felt so afraid for her safety by the way she was treated, that she tried to get out of the job site as quickly as possible. Ironically, the same person gave the applicant not wearing hijab who went in to apply after her, a tour of the workplace.

5. Application to Employment Placement Agencies

(Note: This section will be written when we receive all data from applicants)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

In this study, information was collected through the consultations with various organizations working with the Muslim communities, the four focus groups, the surveys and the visits to job sites. The data collected through each of these methods illustrates that women who wear hijab do experience problems and barriers when applying for work within the manufacturing, sales and services sectors. They do experience discrimination as a result of wearing hijab.

Throughout the discussions with individual women and organizations, there was a common sentiment that this form of discrimination cannot be separated from anti-Muslim, discrimination. The wearing of hijab makes one identifiably

“Muslim”. Strategies must take this connection into consideration. It is also necessary to keep at the forefront of any discussions on this issue, the current political environment and the existence of extreme anti-Muslim attitudes, policies and actions.

A troubling aspect disclosed in this study, is the idea of accommodating discrimination. Muslim women spoke off this. Employment counselors told women, that they should consider not wearing hijab so their search for employment would be less difficult. This suggestion is given so easily, as if wearing hijab is a fashion statement, and not part of their religious and cultural identity. Women spoke of examples where individuals had to compromise their values to comply with employers requirements, such as changing the manner in which hijab is worn. What is even worst is the recommendation to change their names and adopt Christian – European names as a way to avoid discrimination, or to protect their jobs.

Discrimination is not to be accommodated, but eliminated. Though some individuals who are Muslim may feel the necessity to make changes to their names or appearance as a way of surviving, it is society’s responsibility to address and eliminate the discrimination. It is necessary for the governments and institutions to develop strategies and programs to educate and ensure that discrimination is not encouraged and does not continue.

Recommendations For Action

1. Develop tools to disseminate accessible information on this study, its findings and recommendations to individuals and organizations within the Muslim communities.
2. Muslim communities should work collectively to highlight the problems Muslim women face, and document and build cases focusing on the discrimination experienced by Muslim women wearing hijab.
3. Canadians should be educated about Islam, especially after September 11th, and that the religion has nothing to do with terrorism.
4. Muslim women wearing hijab need to be empowered, through skills development workshops focusing on the building of leadership skills and self-confidence.
5. Train Muslim women wearing hijab on the process of looking for work, their rights, racism and systemic discrimination and their available options if they are to experience discrimination at work or when looking for work.
6. Train a group of Muslim women to go out into their communities and educate other Muslim women on human rights, health and safety issues, the job search process, their rights and options if they experience discrimination.
7. Labour organizations need to become aware of the struggles of Muslim communities, and support these communities in addressing the discrimination they experience. They need to reach out to Muslim communities and encourage workers from these communities to actively participate within unions.

8. Unions need to raise and focus on the issues of Muslim communities and particularly the problems Muslim women wearing hijab experience when applying for work and in the workplace. This needs to be done through joint anti-racism and anti-harassment training in the workplace with employers, managers and workers. Women's, human rights and health and safety committees need to be involved in raising these issues within their organizations.
9. Educate employers that wearing hijab has no impact on a woman's ability to carry out her job. In addition that Muslim women should be judged on the basis of their qualifications, experience and how well they do the job, not according to how they dress. This education can be done through seminars, workshops and television programs.
10. There is a need for employers to ensure that the employees in their companies, particularly those who are the first contact for job applicants, do not discriminate against applicants from Muslim communities and specifically Muslim women wearing hijab.
11. There is a need for employers to carry out their responsibility of providing a harassment free working environment and ensuring that managers and other company employees do not discriminate against Muslim Women wearing hijab.
12. Identify companies that hire Muslim women who wear hijab. These companies can be used in a pro-active advertising campaign targeting employers.
13. Explore the possibility of working with various employers associations and coordinating bodies related to the manufacturing, sales and service sectors, to inform them of the existing barriers which Muslim women wearing hijab experience in the workplace and when seeking employment, and invite their input on how they think the problem can be addressed.
14. Work with colleges and universities which have programs in labour studies, immigration and settlement and human resource management to develop and include in their curriculum information and training which focuses on the experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab when applying for work and in the workplace. Programs in human resource management need to include information on what constitutes discrimination in hiring and harassment to employees.
15. Work with community-based and mainstream Job Placement Agencies to educate their staff on the experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab when seeking employment and in the workplace, and to encourage them to implement strategies to address the problem, including putting pressure on employers they work with; encourage these agencies to keep documentation of the experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab who are referred to employers through their agency.
16. Sensitize settlement workers and facilitators of job search workshops on the experiences of Muslim women wearing hijab, and what they may face when looking for employment.
17. Initiate a working relationship with various government bodies to share the

- findings of this study, and to discuss strategies on how they can contribute to a greater awareness of the issues and resolution to the problem.
18. Even though much anti-racism work has been done, the problem of racism and systemic discrimination still exists. Governments of all levels should support and implement a mainstream campaign on the issues of racism and discrimination against Muslim communities and the September 11th aftermath as part of 'The Day for the Elimination of Racism' on March 21st.
 19. There is a greater need for documentation of cases of discrimination against Muslim women. All levels of governments need to initiate, encourage and support projects with this objective.
 20. The Ontario Human Rights Commission needs to play a more public and active role in educating the general population on discrimination and the Human Rights Code. They also need to reach out to Muslim communities, in order to educate these communities on their rights under the Human Rights Code. Information needs to be made available in the languages spoken by the various Muslim communities.
 21. The Ministry of Labour, particularly the Ontario Labour Relations Board, needs to work with Muslim communities to educate people within these communities on their rights, and to encourage them to report on their experiences of discrimination by employers.
 22. Muslim communities and unions should discuss the findings of this study, and develop more specific recommendations for various government bodies and strategies to implement them.
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