Stereotyping Muslim Women in Australia: Perceptions of The Veil.

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between stereotyping and Islamophobia in contemporary Australia, specifically exploring attitudes towards Muslim women who choose to wear the veil. Previous research has found evidence that the veil is a strong predictor for adverse attitudes towards Muslim women, with negative attitudes increasing as facial coverage increases. Previous research has primarily taken place in European countries with little focus on how the veil is perceived in Australia where there have been fewer terrorist attacks and no policies banning head-covering as in France and Belgium. Australia considers itself a multicultural, egalitarian society, thus, it is fundamental to examine if the negative stereotyping of Muslim women is prevalent here. The present study randomly assigned participants into one of three conditions to an online impression-formation task; participants viewed a photographic stimulus of the same woman wearing either no veil, a head-veil or a full-face veil. Participants then rated the woman on two scales comprising the Stereotype Content Model (SCM). Based on the SCM it was predicted that as the amount of head-coving increased, warmth stereotypes would be higher and competency stereotypes lower. Although the means in the different conditions were in the predicted direction they were not statistically significant. Nor were they significant when Islamophobia, Social Dominance Orientation and Religiosity were controlled for. These findings are discussed in relation to the various limitations of the study and how this study could impact future research on perceptions of Muslim women in Australia.

Keywords: Islamophobia, Veil, SCM, Muslim Women, Australia

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no materials previously published except where due reference is made. I give permission for the digital version of this thesis to be made available on the web, via the University of Adelaide's digital thesis repository, the Library Search and through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the School to restrict access for a period of time.

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Acknowledgements

Stereotyping Muslim Women in Australia: Perceptions of The Veil.

Defining Islam and Islamophobia

Islam is the second largest religion in the world with 1.2 billion Muslims or people following the religion worldwide. It is fast-growing and is spread mostly across the Eastern cultures in Asia, India, Africa and the Middle East (Hakim, 2001). Many Muslims have now immigrated into Western society and despite efforts and programs to successfully integrate them into their host countries, research has indicated that these migrants still face a great amount of discrimination, racism and prejudice from the host society. (Cuddy et al., 2009; Pettigrew, 1998; Saroglou, Lamkaddem, Van Pachterbeke & Buxant, 2009).

Following the events of September 11, 2001 in the United States of America and the occurrence of other terrorist attacks worldwide, there has been a significant focus in Western media and political discourse on Islam and its followers. The attention and rise of Islamophobia has been most unfavourable to everyday Muslims as they have been portrayed as a danger to society and thus, been reduced to many undesirable stereotypes. These stereotypes have created a rather ironic dilemma where, whilst people in the West are fearing Muslims living amongst them, those everyday Muslim people in the West are the ones who claim to feel unsafe as they believe that they have been misunderstood, unaccepted and discriminated against by mainstream society (Kanwal, 2015; Hebbani & Wills, 2012; Pedersen & Hartley, 2012).

Prejudice towards Muslims (hereafter referred to as Islamophobia) has been associated with several socio-demographic factors including gender, education and age. It has been found that those who are male, older in age or have lower education are more prone to having Islamophobic beliefs. Other strong predictors for prejudice are those with either

socially dominant orientated (higher levels of SDO) views or right-winged political beliefs (Pedersen & Hartley, 2012; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth & Malle, 1994; Saroglou, Lamkaddem, Van Pachterbeke & Buxant, 2000). Arguably, the media has largely contributed to such adverse perceptions of the Islamic religion. Media discourse surrounding Islam and Muslims has been predominantly negative, inaccurate and often, quite exaggerated (Aly, 2007; Dunn, Klocker & Salabay, 2007). The media often constructs and reinforces stereotypes of Muslims being 'dangerous' by only showing footage of the few radical extremists within the religion, rather than the many peaceful Muslims in society (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017). Gender stereotypes are also commonly presented, where they have portrayed Muslim men as controlling, aggressive alpha males in contrast to Muslim women, who are depicted as being weak, easily controlled and severely oppressed (Aly & Walker, 2007; Hebbani & Wills, 2012; Pedersen & Hartley, 2012; Poynting, Noble & Ang, 2004).

Social Identity theory

Stereotyping is a normal cognitive process by which people are put into specific categories. Tajfel & Turner, (1979) detailed the importance of in-group and out-group categorisation when formulating the Social Identity Theory. The theory suggests that a persons' individual identity is solidified when they feel like they belong to a particular group. This is because their membership within that social group helps them develop a sense of who they are and provides them with higher self-esteem and pride for being a part of that community. This organisation of the world allows for the exaggeration of in-group similarities and out-group differences. This leads to an 'us' and 'them' mentality where to enhance their own self-image, it is likely that in-groups will overemphasise differences with out-groups, focusing on the negative aspects or features of an out-group that conflict with the in-group beliefs, to discriminate against them (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Enhanced in-group affiliations and outgroup dissimilarities is best combatted through intergroup contact. Intergroup contact theory, often credited to Gordon Allport, is the notion that increased interactions between two groups can reduce out-group biases and thus, improve overall group relations. It has been found to be rather effective too, as many studies have reported lower intergroup anxiety and an even greater level of knowledge and understanding (Allport, 1954; Aydogan & Gonsalkorale, 2015; Mansouri & Vergani, 2018).

In fact, out-group knowledge, even without interaction plays an essential role in understanding others. Henceforth, the reason that media is so influential and it is important that minority groups, such as that of Muslims, speak up against their false portrayal. The information communicated about an out-group is an initial resource that can not only function the intergroup contact, but can dictated whether an individual is even willing to interact with an out-group member in the first place (Aydogan & Gonsalkorale, 2015).

A study in Perth encapsulates and emphasises these principles of social identity theory when observing Muslim Australians, insinuating that the construction of prejudiced attitudes was in accordance to the theory and thus, the theory is vital in assessing attitudes towards Muslims, as this minority group is one that is majorly stigmatised and faces prejudice. The study found three main reasons for stereotypical behaviour by non-Muslim Australians and these were the internal values and ways people formed their own self-identities where the in-group affiliations and out-group differences were enhanced. A negative intergroup contact, where the study suggests that whilst interactions should reduce prejudice, a negative experience with a Muslim individual is likely to have serious and irreversibly detrimental effects on perception. Lastly, the study focusses on indirect information, or out-group knowledge that is provided from friends, family and most of all currently, the media (Aydogan & Gonsalkorale, 2015; Pedersen & Hartley, 2012)

First Impressions

Psychological research on first impressions reveals how vital they are as first impressions often 'stick' and can be persistent even in the presence of contradictory information. These first impressions frame the way people socially categorise and form stereotypes through the perceptions, feelings, attitudes, expectations and opinions formed about others during daily interactions (Nickerson, 1998; Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Rabin & Schrag, 1999). But how are they created? Upon knowing the impact that first impressions have on perception, it is fundamental to identify which factors influence and form these perceptions. The initial source of information by which a person will accredit certain traits and unearth personal information about another individual is through their outward physical appearance. Some of these observable features include hairstyle, accessories, figure or the clothes that an individual is wearing (Lennon & Miller, 1984). In fact, clothing has been recognised as one of the strongest predictors for that initial mental image formed about another person (Conner, Peters, & Nagasawa, 1975; Davis, 1984; Douty, 1963) and this is because the clothes one wears will not only reflect personal style and interests but it can indicate their gender, social class, ethnicity and religious beliefs too (Everett et al, 2015).

Many studies have explored how even the slightest alterations in clothing can significantly affect what a person communicates about themselves. For example, one study found that men who wore more fitted and properly tailored clothes received greater, positive perceptions than those who did not (Howlett, Pine, Orakçıoğlu & Fletcher, 2013) and another study reported that the texture and colour of a woman's dress could help others perceive her as being more attractive or confident (Forsythe, Drake & Cox, 1985). It was also found by both studies, that such desirable first impressions have serious practical implications, where

these minor clothing modifications can substantially impact the likelihood of how these individuals are treated, specifically in relation to professional work as it was found that the garments worn by both genders influenced the probability that they would get hired at a job interview (Forsythe, Drake, & Cox, 1985; Howlett, Pine, Orakçıoğlu & Fletcher, 2013).

Research has determined that not all members of a minority group are equally at risk of prejudice but that the most vulnerable individuals are those one who can be visibly identified as a member of a particular group. In the current study, that would be someone who is noticeably Muslim. In contemporary society, a woman wearing a veil strongly indicates her belonging to the Islamic religion (Unkelbach, Schneider, Gode & Senft, 2010).

Women in Islam, The Veil and Social Attitudes

The veil is a piece of material covering the head and occasionally the face too. It has been around for many years and linked to various religions, where it is worn as a sign of modesty. In contemporary society, the veil is perceived as a highly symbolic garment of the Islamic religion (King & Ahmad, 2010; Unkelbach, Schneider, Gode & Senft, 2010).

There are very scarce studies exploring the comparisons between religious perceptions. Religions have many things in common, from their belief in a higher power to various rulings on everyday concepts of drinking alcohol or marriage, for example. The veil is no different, as the garment has been associated with several religions such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism, where The Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus, is a prominent figure as she wore the veil and exists in scriptures several of these religions.

It may be primarily perceived as Islamic in contemporary society but many early Christian women veiled their heads in church and anytime they were in public whilst Jewish women thought it customary for married and respectable women to cover their hair. The mention of a head-cover exists in both the Torah and Bible but the practice has been almost negligible where only Nuns in Christianity have a headdress that is as recognisable and comparable to the Islamic veil still worn today (Ahmed Khan, 2015).

There are several types of Islamic veils that vary culturally and historically. Predominantly in the West and for the interest of the current study, the levels of coverage will be discussed for the Hijab (headveil) and the Niqab & Burka (full-face-veils).

The Hijab in Arabic means to cover, whether this is the body with full-clothing, or the eyes from profanity. More recently, however, the hijab connotes a headscarf or a piece of material that shields the head, is wrapped around the neck and covers a women's chest. This is the most common veil worn by Islamic women.

The full-face veils are the Niqab and the Burqa. The only differentiation between the two is that the Niqab is more like a mask, as it is smaller and only shelters the face, whilst the Burqa is a blanket-like material that covers both the face and body figure of woman. These full-face veils hide the hair and face, only leaving a small slit for the eyes. This veil is worn less frequently, as only those who are exceedingly religious tend to wear a full-face covering (Monkebayeva, Baitenova & Mustafayeva, 2012).

The wearing of the Islamic veil has become a controversial issue where the interpretations and symbolic meanings attached to it vary significantly. Feminism in Western society is vastly different to that in most Eastern countries. Whilst women in the West will strip themselves naked in the expression of freedom, Muslim women will cover up completely (Hebbani & Wills, 2012). Therefore, there is a great discrepancy where many

non-Muslims in the West, translate the wearing of the veil as a sign of forced religious modesty, oppression and the implementation of old-fashioned, traditional values as opposed to a majority of Muslim women who claim that wearing the veil is a personal choice, a way of expressing themselves and their devotion to Allah (God) and the overall, religion of Islam (Alvi, Hoodfar, & McDonough, 2003; Dunn, 2009).

These incongruent, adverse beliefs about Muslims and the veil, further fueled by negative media discourse and socio-political agendas has shaped social attitudes of people in the West. People in European countries such as France, Spain, Belgium, Italy and Germany have requested the full-face veil to be banned. Indeed, several European nations have implemented this by prohibiting the veil in governmental, administrative or educational facilities. An example of this is when France approved a new law that banned individuals from wearing any religious outfits or otherwise ostentatious religious signs (accessories etc.) in their public-school settings (McGoldrick, 2006; Welch, 2007).

Recent research has examined the impact of the veil upon people's attitudes and stereotypes of Muslim women. For example, two studies in Belgium ($N= 166$ and $N= 147$) consistently found that the wearing of the simple head veil, referred to as the 'hijab' was significantly correlated with subtle prejudiced beliefs and behaviour. Individuals with self-enhanced values, that is those who prioritise qualities of power, intellect, achievement and a reluctance to change held more anti-veil attitudes and were likely to conflict against its presence in society (Saroglou et al, 2009, Everett et al, 2015). Furthermore, Mahmud and Swami (2010) found that Muslim, and even more so non-Muslim men both perceived veiled women as being less intellectual and attractive in comparison to unveiled women. Research also suggests that whilst attitudes towards the hijab are not favourable, they are still observed less negatively than the full-face veil, also referred to as the "burqa' or 'niqaab'. Overall,

what these investigations have highlighted is the importance of first impressions in social

interactions and how certain attire, such as the veil, has religious connotations that are

particularly disadvantageous to Muslim women (Allen, 2015; El-Geledi & Bourhis 2012;

Everett et al, 2015).

In fact, the real-world implications of wearing the veil and being subjected to such

prejudice is the increased threat of Islamophobic attacks. A recent investigation on Muslims

in the West revealed that women who wore the head or full-face veil were far more likely to

experience intolerance and discrimination than Muslim men, simply because males are not as

easily identified or affiliated with the religion (Allen, 2015).

In Australia

Australian research on Islamophobia and perceptions of the head veil

To date, much of the literature and research on anti-Islamic attitudes or Islamophobia

more generally has been conducted in Europe. Little research has been specifically

conducted in Australia so it is important to research the degree to which Islamophobia is

prevalent here for several reasons.

First, statistical information signifies that the Muslim community in Australia is

rapidly growing: there has been a 91% increase in the last decade. Thirty-five percent are

Australian-born Muslims and the remaining have immigrated, either by choice or compulsion

from 70 different countries. Also, approximately 100 Mosques (their place of worship) have

been built in Australia (Ata & Windle, 2007). This increase does not support reportings of a

rise in Islamophobia as an increase of Muslim people only insinuates more intergroup

contact, which fundamentally, should reduce prejudiced views (Allport, 1954; Aydogan &

Gonsalkorale, 2015; Hewstone et al, 2014; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Second, Australia differs from other Western countries because it prides itself on

being a multicultural, egalitarian and accepting society. Religious plurality and increasing

cultural diversity has been noted from studies dating back to 1995 (Bouma, 1995). It can also

be presumed that the reported influx of Muslims in Australia over the past few years also

provides strong proof to contradict research that suggests Australia is unaccepting. More

current studies have articulated that some reports of Islamophobia may be exaggerated and

that Australia is still largely a 'tolerant' society. Even so, compared to other minority groups

in Australia, Muslim Australians are reportedly more likely to be rejected and negatively

evaluated, thus bearing the brunt of social exclusion and marginalisation (Mansouri &

Vergani, 2018).

Many studies have expressed immensely strong and undesirable opinions about

Muslims (Dunn, Klocker & Salabay, 2007; Poynting, Noble & Ang, 2004). One paper

describes the 'creeping blight of Islamophobia' and insinuates that this is a relatively new

phenomenon in Australia, attributed to the persistent socio-political associations between

immigrants and terrorism, along with the progressive rise of Muslim's migrating to Australia.

The article suggests that overseas terrorist attacks such as the London bombings,

unfaovurable media constructions and the presence of political figures, such as Pauline

Hanson and her One Nation Party have increased panic through repeated hate speech against

Muslims. That is, despite the fact that no Muslim terrorist attack has taken place in Australia,

the country has still set up a national terrorism hotline, revised anti-terror laws and alerted the

public to be weary that an attack could occur (Briskman, 2015). On the other hand, however, there are empirical studies such as one that was conducted in Brisbane, where it analysed the attitudes of Australian high school students and teachers on Islam. Two suburban schools participated in the study, where students and teachers completed a 24-item questionnaire on stereotyping and Islam. The sample consisted of students around the mean age of 15 and teachers around the mean age of 41, where majority identified as being white and belonging to the Christian faith. The results suggested that more respondents disagreed with the negative stereotypes regularly presented in the media and not only that, it was found that they held a level of anger towards the misrepresentations of Muslims in Australian media. Moreover, teachers acknowledged that the overrepresentations of 'wrong' Muslims in the media consequently impacted Muslim students who encounter many challenges with regards to perceptions of gender equality and social justice. Overall, the study highlighted that both schools have very supportive attitudes towards Muslims and they strongly reject the negative stereotypes of Muslims shown to them in the media (Haque, 2001).

Thus far existing studies have mainly focused on Islamophobia but less on stereotypes and moreover, the stereotyping of Muslim women. One Australian study during 2007-2008 that addressed the veil was a qualitative one that used a number of focus groups to examine this contentious issue. The study was situated in Victoria and participants comprised of one hundred and nineteen people aged 18 and older. The analysis suggested that the issue of the veil and its perceptions was one of the most divisive controversies in society where some participants thought the veil was scary, disgusting, extreme and stated how they did not understand why a woman would chose to cover herself whilst others did not feel uncomfortable and acknowledged that the veil was not forced by men but a religious duty. These people suggested, instead, that Muslim women proudly wearing hijabs in Australia was a sign of freedom and Australia's adaptability and acceptance of culture (Lentini, Halafoff &

Ogru, 2011).

Limited research, along with the mixed findings or contradictions in attitudes about Islam and the veil in Australia highlights the gap in the current literature and accentuates the necessity of the current project.

Stereotype Content Model (SCM)

The "Stereotype Content Model" (SCM), is one of most-reliable and thus, widely used measure to assess stereotypes associated with both majority and minority groups. The scale uses the personal traits or qualities a person associates with another when perceiving or labelling them a certain way to evaluate the amount of stereotypical beliefs an individual possesses. The SCM arranges these characteristics across the two primary dimensions of warmth and competency where traits of warmth reflect the intentions and morals of a person and traits of competency indicate knowledge, drive and ability. These two factors are said to accurately capture social judgement at both group and individual levels, as well as across stimuli, cultures and time. In terms of conclusions made about minority or 'outgroups', the perceived warmth and competency measures, reflect different stereotypical beliefs, also known as "mixed stereotype content".

This phenomenon was discovered when the SCM was used to explore stereotypes of several outgroups, finding that mixed stereotypes for some outgroups included low perceived competence but high perceived warmth. This was the case for subordinate ethnic groups such as African Americans, the elderly and women whose intent or goals were inclined towards becoming housewives or mothers. Minority groups with a positive warmth stereotype and a negative competence stereotype are pitied, viewed as soft and incapable of advancing above the more privileged groups. These are referred to as 'paternalistic stereotypes', as they

describe out-groups that are neither motivated nor skilled enough to harm members of the in-group (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 2002).

The SCM has successfully examined stereotypes associated with many outgroups and thus, is suitable for measuring stereotypes of Muslims in the West, specifically those residing within Australia. Despite the media's damaging and dangerous portrayal of Muslims, many of its followers are immigrants escaping war, cannot speak English proficiently and are commonly international students or people working in low-income, jobs (Briskman, 2015; Dunn, Klocker & Salabay, 2007). This thesis however focusses specifically on perceptions of Muslim women, whom much of Western society already views as being oppressed and harmless and therefore, consistent with previous literature regarding other low-status groups, it is expected therefore that Muslim veiled women in Australia, would be perceived as high in warmth, but low in competence (Fiske et al, 2002; Hebbani & Wills, 2012; Poynting, Noble & Ang, 2004).

The Present Research

The main aim of this study is to apply the SCM to Muslim women who choose different levels of coverage. There are three conditions within the study; an image of a woman wearing no veil, a woman wearing a hijab only partially covering her head and lastly, a woman wearing a full-face veil. Given the known effects of background attitudes on stereotyping (Devine, 1989), Islamophobia, social dominance orientation (SDO) and religiosity, were controlled for in the study.

On the basis of previous research, the following hypotheses were proposed.

Main Hypotheses:

According to the mixed SCM:

1. Competence stereotypes will be significantly lower in the full-face veil image than the partially veiled and no veil image of the same Muslim woman

2. Warmth stereotypes will be significantly higher in the full-face veil image than in the partially veiled and no veil image of the same Muslim woman.

Secondary Hypotheses:

3. There will be a direct, positive correlation between Islamophobic beliefs and the paternalistic stereotypes about the veil.

4. There will be a direct, positive correlation between Social Dominance Orientation and paternalistic stereotypes about the veil.

5. There will be a direct, negative correlation between Religiosity and paternalistic stereotypes about the veil.

These hypotheses will be tested by comparing the demographic factors of age, gender, religiosity and culture against participant responses to the Stereotype content model (SCM) as well as the Social Dominance Orientation scale (SDO) and the Islamophobia Scale.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited through the online Research Participation System (RPS) in the School of Psychology, University of Adelaide and through social media advertising. Students who were recruited using the online RPS were first-year Psychology students and were granted 0.5 course credit for their participation. Eligibility criteria for participation

included: being aged 18 years and over and currently living in Australia, and having a

proficiency in written/ verbal English.

The study required approximately sixty-six participants to detect the presence of a

medium effect with an alpha value set to 0.05 (Cohen, 1992). The final sample consisted of

(N=140) participants Overall, there were 33 males, 106 females and one non-binary

individual who volunteered to participate. They ranged in ages from 18 to 62 years

(M=20.98, SD=6.45) and came from several religious backgrounds: 81 participants had no

religious beliefs (57.9%), 41 were Christian (29.3%) and 17 were of various other religious

backgrounds (12.1%). Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups: no- veil

(n= 45), head veil (n= 55) and full face veil (n= 40) conditions.

Materials

The study was conducted online through SurveyMonkey.com and consisted of several

self-reporting questionnaire scales. (See Appendix).

Basic demographic information.

The survey began by requesting participants to indicate their gender, age, ethnicity

and religious beliefs.

Centrality religiosity scale (CRS-5).

The Centrality of Religiosity Scale is one of the most well-established instruments

measuring the importance of religious concepts in everyday life. The scale is used to assess

how religion can shape an individual's life across five different dimensions including: public

practice, private practice, ideology, intellect and religious experience. It has been translated

into nineteen different languages and has several versions, such as the CRS-15, which is the

most in-depth analysis of religiosity, the CRS-10 and the CRS-5, which is the most

economical version of the scale (Huber & Huber, 2012). The CRS-5 has high internal

consistency (a= 0.85) and hence, was used in this study. Participants were asked to rate the

presence of religion in their lives on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5

(very often). An example of an item included was, "How often do you experience situations

in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life?" (See

Appendix 1)

Experimental conditions.

Participants were randomly assigned to three different conditions in which they were

presented with a picture of a Middle Eastern-looking woman. In the first condition, she was

wearing no veil, in the second she was wearing a "hijab" or simple head-cover, and in the

third she wore a "niqab" - a full-face veil. The main independent variable (the photo stimuli)

for this study was obtained from that used by Everett et al. (2015) in their British study.

Although Everett et al. (2015) utilised a fourth condition – the same woman wearing a burqa

- this condition was not included in the present study given that this previous study found no

significant difference between the "niqab" and the "burqa" conditions. - To ensure a minimal

presence of extraneous factors, the woman was photographed with the same background and

she wore the same clothes and neutral expression in all conditions (Everett et al, 2015).

Below are the photo images used in the three conditions (no veil, head veil and full-

face veil) (See Figure 1). While Everett et al, 2015, referred to the woman as a British

Muslim, the current study simply described her as an Australian Woman. Participants were

shown one of the three conditions, then told to click the 'next' button when they had viewed

the image of the Muslim Australian Woman and were ready to respond to the subsequent

questionnaires.

Figure 1 – Veil Stimulus

SCM: Stereotype measures.

Immediately following the presentation of the photograph, participants were asked to

complete stereotype measures taken from the 'Stereotype Content Model' (Fiske et al. 2002).

The Stereotype Content Model (SCM) includes two primary scales or dimensions - warmth

and competence. These two dimensions have been widely used and recognised as reliable and

valid measures for the way individuals form their perceptions of others. Warmth is

symbolised by moralistic social behaviour. This is characterised by having attributes such as

those of being a warm, good-natured, sincere, friendly, trustworthy, and a well-intentioned

person. Competence, on the other hand, is signified through motivational and intellectual

qualities where underpinning traits such as that of competency, capability, intelligence,

skilfulness, efficiency and confidence are desired (See Appendix 1). The study by Fiske

(2002), established that the SCM had a high level of internal reliability reporting an overall

Cronbach's alpha of $a= .87$ (Fiske et al, 2002).

The current study used the 12-item assessment tool. Participants were requested to rate the set of trait characteristics they would assign to the image of the woman in the photo. An example of one item is, "After viewing the image, I would perceive this woman as being confident" and each trait was rated accordingly on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). The individual trait scores were then combined to form total competence and warmth scores.

Social dominance orientation measure.

The Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO) is a psychological construct that measures the general desire people have for group-based dominance. This scale has been commonly used to predict hierarchy-enhancing attitudes, Although the results vary from one culture to another, the scale has been deemed a valid and reliable measure for identifying socially dominant views. Studies have specifically found that the scale is unidimensional and has an internal reliability of (a = .91) (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth & Malle, 1994).

The two main dimensions of this scale are group dominance and egalitarianism, where scoring lower on group-dominant views and higher on egalitarianism indicates more democratic and egalitarian values. In this 16-item scale, the first 8 items measure group dominance including items such as, 'In getting what you want, it is sometimes necessary to use force against other groups.' The last 8 items assessed egalitarianism and included items such as, 'We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.'. In this study, responses to such statements were rated against a seven-point Likert type scale that ranged from 1 – Strongly Disagree, to 7 – Strongly Agree. All 16 items were randomly ordered and several of these items were reverse scored to minimise response-set bias. (See Appendix 1).

Islamophobia scale.

A scale adapted from (Uenal, 2016) on Islamophobia was completed. This scale targets two essential aspects of Islamophobia, prejudice against Muslim people and anti-Islamic sentiments. Previous studies suggest that Islamophobia often combines derogatory attitudes towards Muslim people with aversion against Islam and its beliefs as a religion, however not all people will necessarily derogate Muslim people, despite holding negative views of the religion. In other words, this measure treats prejudice towards Muslim people and anti- Islamic beliefs as independent factors. The internal reliability of this scale has been reported to be high ($\alpha = .89$) (Everett et al, 2015, Uenal, 2016).

Participants in the study were required to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with 14 statements including those about Islam "Equality of men and women is compatible with Islam" (reverse scored) and items about Muslims "I am distrustful of people of the Muslim religion". These responses were also rated against a seven-point Likert type scale that ranged from 1 – Strongly Disagree to 7 – Strongly Agree. (See Appendix 1).

Procedure

Participants in this study could volunteer to participate after seeing online social media advertisements for the study or by being recruited via the University of Adelaide's Research Participation System. Interested participants were then directed to the SurveyMonkey website.

Upon opening the survey, participants were directed to read through an information sheet that outlined the study aims, participation requirements and ethics. Participants were

simply informed that the study was a "Person Impression Formation Task" as withholding the research objectives was fundamental to obtain valid, honest responses with the least amount of social-desirability bias.

Participants were instructed that the survey would take a maximum of 20-30 minutes to complete and that if participants chose to contribute, then they would be required to view an image of an Australian woman and then rate their first impressions of her along several self-reporting scales. First-year Psychology students were also told how they could attain 0.5 course credit for their participation. Participants were assured that the study was approved by the Human Resource Ethics Committee and that their contribution was completely voluntary, anonymous, and that they had a right to withdraw at any time. Contact details of the researchers were provided if they were to experience any discomfort by partaking in the study. If an individual then indicated informed consent, they could proceed with the survey.

Firstly, participants were required to provide demographic data such as age, gender, culture and religion, as well as, complete a self-reporting questionnaire on their religiosity. The study, which employed an experimental design, randomly allocated these participants into one of three conditions, a 'no veil' condition, a 'head-veil' condition or a "full-face veil condition (see Figure 1 above). Once participants had viewed the photo of the woman, they were to sequentially complete the three measurement scales: The Stereotype Content Model, The Social Dominance Orientation scale and lastly the Islamophobia rating scale. This precise order was necessary to minimise any potential demand characteristics, whereby the participant may assume the purpose of the study and thus, subconsciously change their behaviour to fit what they think the researcher is expecting to find. At the end of the survey, participants were provided with the option to give their email address for additional

information regarding the study. There was no time limit within which they were required to complete the survey.

Once the data had been collected, the exact research aims of the study were revealed via a participant debriefing sheet. The quantitative data was then analysed using the SPSS statistical analysis software. All data files were kept strictly confidential and were only accessible to the researchers of the study.

Ethics statement.

Ethics approval for this low-risk study was granted by the University of Adelaide's (School of Psychology) Human Research Ethics Committee.

Results

Data Screening, Assumptions and Statistical Overview

In the following section, we assess the influence of the three veil conditions against Warmth and Competency from the Stereotype Content Model. We then explored the existing correlations and consider the impact of Islamophobia, Social Dominance and Religiosity on these results.

The data was downloaded from SurveyMonkey and organised on the program, SPSS Statistics 25, which was used to carry out all analyses. Initially, the descriptive details of each variable within the sample were computed and all missing data was removed. The original sample size consisted of ($N=182$) participants, however, after removing participants who had not completed all sections of the study, this reduced the sample to ($N=156$). Given the main

objectives of the study – to examine majority group members' perceptions of Muslim women, participants who reported their religious background as being Islamic were also removed. These Muslim participants comprised of ($N= 16$) which, after removal, left a final sample that constituted of ($N=140$).

Inferential Statistical analyses were then conducted. We used one-way ANOVA's to assess the main hypotheses and ANCOVA's to control for Islamophobia, SDO, and Religiosity. The main assumptions for both tests include the independence of cases and normality and homogeneity within the datasets.

Statistical Analyses

Table 1

Demographics' Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Frequency	%	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	140	100	1.75	.45
Males	33	23.6		
Females	106	75.7		
Non-Binary	1	.7		
Race/Ethnicity	140	100	3.73	1.08
Australian	95	67.9		
Asian	25	17.9		
European	9	6.4		
Other	11	7.8		
Religion	139	99.3	4.07	2.44
Christianity	41	29.3		
No-Religion	81	57.9		
Other	17	12.1		
Age	140	100	20.98	1.08
18-25	128	91.4		
26-50	8	5.6		
50+	4	2.8		

Note: Not all equal to 100% due to rounding and missing data.

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for each of the demographic variables within the study.

It reports the frequencies and percentages as well as overall means and standard deviations

for gender, race/ethnicity, religion and age reported by participants (N= 140). The table

highlights important information about our data sample. There were considerably more

female participants (N= 106), than males or non-binary (N= 34, 1 respectively).

More participants self-identified as Australian (N= 95) than any other race/ethnic background

whilst over 50% of participants followed no religion (N=81) and those who did were notably

Christian (N=41). Despite the large difference between the minimum and maximum ages,

ranging between 18-62 years (M= 21, SD= 1.08), 91% of the total sample was aged between

18 and 25, suggesting much of the sample within the present study were young adults.

The study used four self-reporting measures and a check for the internal reliability of each

scale in this project was undertaken. The Cronbach's Alpha reporting for the Stereotype

Content Model (SCM) was (α = .92), it was (α = .92) for the Social Dominance Orientation

Scale (SDO), (α =.91) for the Central Religiosity Scale (CRS-5) and (α = .91) for the

Islamophobia Scale. These are quite high reliabilities and indicate that each of the scales had

a good level of internal consistency for the items within that scale (Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

Table 2

Correlation Matrix for All Variables

Measure	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Veil Condition	-	-.065	.058	-.116	-.134	.036	.074	.126	-.038	.205*
2. Total Competency (SCM)	-.065	-	.616**	-.395**	-.411**	.207*	-.022	-.058	.115	-.072
3. Total Warmth (SCM)	.058	.616**	-	-.512**	-.447**	.098	.118	.052	-.049	.064
4. SDO Scale	-.116	-.395**	-.512**	-	.665**	-.135	-.070	.061	-.023	-.055
5. Islamophobia Scale	-.134	-.411**	-.447**	.665**	-	-.114	.019	-.059	-.062	-.105
6. Gender	.036	.207*	.098	-.135	-.114	-	.155	-.207*	.216*	.018
7. Race/Ethnicity	.074	-.022	.118	-.070	.019	.155	-	-.023	-.138	.168*
8. Religion	.126	-.058	.052	.061	-.059	-.207*	-.023	-	-.555**	-.114
9. CRS - 5	-.038	.115	-.049	-.023	-.062	.216*	-.138	-.555**	-	.165
10. Age	.205*	-.072	.064	-.055	-.105	.018	.168*	-.114	.165	-

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 is a correlation matrix displaying the Pearson's Correlation coefficients to indicate

the strength and linear direction of relationships between all variables in the study. It is

noteworthy that the strongest relationship within the dataset, is the significantly positive and

moderate, correlation found between Social Dominant Orientation and Islamophobia where

$r = .67$ $p = < .01$. This reflects previous research that finds SDO to be positively correlated

with SDO (hierarchy-enhancing beliefs).

Negative, moderate correlations were found between the SDO scale and Warmth, $r = -$

$.51, p = < .01$ and Competency stereotypes, $r = -.40, p = < .01$. Negative correlations were also

evident between Islamophobia with Warmth $r = -.45, p = < .01$ and Competency scores $r = -$

$.41, p = < .01$. This is to be expected, as Islamophobic and Socially Dominant views are

likely to be associated with lower warmth and competency of outgroups.

Main hypotheses.

The first main hypothesis stated that Competence stereotypes would be significantly

lower in the full-face veil image than the partially veiled and no veil image condition. This

main hypothesis was tested using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The assumptions

were met as a Levenes Test was used to examine the homogeneity of variance and Shapiro-

Wilk tests were utilised to explore the normality of data.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Scales in Each Condition

	Total Warmth (SCM)			Total Competency (SCM)			SDO Scale			Islamophobia Scale			CRS – 5		
	n	M (SD)	95% CI	n	M (SD)	95% CI	n	M (SD)	95% CI	n	M (SD)	95% CI	n	M (SD)	95% CI
No Veil	45	19.07 (4.25)	[19.27, 21.05]	45	20.16 (2.96)	[17.79, 20.34]	45	37.27 (16.77)	[32.23, 42.30]	45	45.62 (15.19)	[41.06, 50.19]	45	10.42 (4.11)	[9.19, 11.66]
Head Veil	55	19.67 (3.20)	[19.04, 20.99]	55	20.02 (3.61)	[18.61, 20.73]	55	35.07 (16.92)	[30.50, 39.65]	55	41.07 (14.17)	[37.21, 44.90]	55	12.06 (5.88)	[10.46, 13.65]
Full-Face Veil	40	19.68 (4.57)	[18.21, 20.89]	40	19.55 (4.19)	[18.21, 21.14]	40	32.45 (14.59)	[27.78, 37.12]	40	40.68 (14.62)	[36.00, 45.35]	40	9.83 (5.06)	[8.21, 11.44]
Total	140	19.48 (4.20)		140	19.93 (3.58)		140	35.03 (16.23)		140	42.42 (14.69)		140	10.90 (5.19)	

The analysis revealed no significant differences in competency scores for the three conditions $F(2, 137) = .33$, $p = >.05$. However, the overall mean competencies for the no veil ($M= 20.16$, $SD= 2.96$), head-veil ($M= 20.02$, $SD= 3.61$) and full-face veil ($M= 19.55$, $SD= 4.19$) conditions were in the expected direction (See Table 3).

The second main hypothesis that Warmth stereotypes will be significantly higher in the full-face veil image than in the partially veiled and no veil image of the same Muslim was also not supported: there were no significant differences in warmth scores between the three conditions $F(2, 137) = .32$, $p = >.05$. However, the overall means of warmth for the no veil ($M= 19.07$, $SD= 4.25$), head-veil ($M= 19.67$, $SD= 3.92$) and full-face veil ($M= 19.68$, $SD= 4.57$) conditions were in the expected direction (See Table 3).

Secondary hypotheses.

One-way ANCOVA's were conducted to compare the warmth and competence scores of the three conditions whilst controlling for Islamophobia, Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) and Religiosity. Levene's test and normality checks were carried out where the homogeneity assumptions were met for all analyses and normality was found for the Islamophobia scale, but not for SDO or Religiosity.

Islamophobia

Controlling for Islamophobia did not produce significant differences in competency $F(2,136)=1.23$, $p>.05$, and warmth $F(2,136)=.002$, $p>.05$ scores.

Social Dominance Orientation

Likewise, controlling for SDO did not produce significant differences in competency $F(2,136)=1.07$, p>.05, and warmth $F(2,136)=0.14$, p>.05 scores between the three conditions.

Religiosity

Despite controlling for religiosity, there were no significant differences for competency $F(2,136)=.26$, p>.05, and warmth $F(2,136)=.35$, p>.05 scores between the different veil conditions.

Discussion

Summary/Explanation of Results

      Research hypotheses.

      Main hypotheses.

The present study applied the SCM to perceptions of Muslim women with varying levels of veil coverage. Based on previous research applying the SCM to minority outgroups it was predicted that levels of perceived competence would significantly decline with increased levels of face coverage. The first hypothesis stated that competence stereotypes would be significantly lower in the full-face veil image than the partially veiled and no veil image of the same Muslim woman and this was not supported. It was found that although the means were in the predicted direction the differences were not significant. Also based on the SCM, it was

hypothesised that levels of warmth would increase with increased levels of face coverage. The second hypothesis stated warmth stereotypes would be significantly higher in the full-face veil image than in the partially veiled and no veil image of the same Muslim woman and this was not supported. Again, these differences were just not significant despite the means being in the predicted direction.

As such this study found no statistical support for the main hypotheses of the study: that Muslim women would be perceived as significantly less competent and more warm in the full face veil condition compared to the hijab and no veil conditions. This is inconsistent with the view that Muslim women wearing a full-face veil would be perceived as more of an outgroup member, a finding that was supported by Everett et al. (2015) in their British study. However, it should be emphasised that Everett et al. did not use the SCM as in the present study which may account for the differences in results. The SCM proposed by Fiske et al. (2002) stresses the contradictory nature of stereotypes towards minority outgroups – although they are perceived as less competent, they are also evaluated positively on warmth traits. There is some evidence of this paternalism in the present study given the means across the three conditions though these differences were very small. It is possible, of course, that such small differences are due to the fact that Australians are less likely to stereotype Muslim women according to their head-dress compared to people in other Western nations and therefore they are more accepting of both the head and full-face veil.

Secondary hypotheses.

The present study also examined the extent to which levels of Islamophobia, SDO, and Religiosity had any bearing on the stereotyping of the Muslim women in the different veil conditions. However, controlling for these variables again did not produce any significant differences.

The hypothesis predicted a direct, positive correlation between Islamophobic beliefs and the paternalistic stereotypes about the veil. Although the differences between conditions were not significant when controlling for Islamophobia, when comparing the original means with the adjusted means, there were lower competencies and higher warmth perceptions for the head veil and full face veil conditions and the exact opposite for the no veil condition. This provides some support albeit minimal that those who are more Islamophobic, by definition, are more likely to stereotype Muslim women who wear a veil (Fiske et al, 2002).

When controlling for SDO, the hypothesis estimated a direct, positive correlation between Social Dominance Orientation and paternalistic stereotypes about the veil and this was not supported as it did not produce any significant difference in stereotyping. Despite this lack of significance, however, the findings were interesting as the mean competencies and warmth scores both increased slightly for the no veil conditions, decreased for the full-face veil condition and remained approximately the same for the head veil condition. This tentatively suggests that people high on SDO perceive those wearing a full-face veil as both low in competence and warmth so unlike most minority outgroups, they are viewed in less paternalistic terms. Fiske et al. (2002) has argued that people viewed as low in warmth are associated with negative intentions towards society. Indeed, this is plausible, as studies have found that the full-face veils are more likely to be perceived negatively than any other form

of coverage as it is typically the head-wear that is most commonly associated with Islamic terrorism (Everett et al, 2012, REF4terrorism).

When controlling for Religiosity, it was hypothesised that there would be a direct, negative correlation between Religiosity and paternalistic stereotypes about the veil and again, this was not supported as no significant differences were found. However, there was a small increase in competence for the head and full-face veil conditions, and also an increase in warmth for the full-face veil. According to Fiske et al (2002), positive warmth and competency is associated with in-group favouritism. It could be presumed that people high on Religiosity are more sympathetic towards others who are also so inclined, regardless of their faith. Thus, Muslim women who follow strict religious dress codes are likely to be seen as close allies to anyone with a strong religious background (Ahmed Khan, 2015; Fiske et al, 2002).

Research aim and final summary

The aim of this study was to question whether there are negative stereotypes in contemporary Australia towards Muslim women who choose to wear differing levels of the veil. The present study cannot make any concrete conclusions, as the results did not significantly support the hypotheses. There may be various reasons as to why the findings were statistically not significant and these limitations of the research are discussed below.

Strengths and Limitations

Muslims are a salient minority group in Australian society who have received considerable negative media and political attention in recent years. It is possible that once participants ascertained that they would be making evaluative judgements about a Muslim woman participants responded in a socially desirable way. Social desirability bias denotes the tendency of participants to respond as they would think is appropriate to form a positive self-image. When data observes socially sensitive issues and it is self-reported, as it was in the current study, then likelihood of social desirability response bias significantly increases. A strength was how the main aims of the research were initially disguised as an attempt to combat such biased responding; however, this may have been rather ineffective when participants were making judgements for the two veil conditions as the presence of a head cover would have potentially primed these participants to the true nature of the study (King & Brunner 2000).

Other limitations of the study included the limited sample size in each of the three conditions. The a priori power analysis suggested that significance would be viable, if the sample size included sixty-six participants per condition. Due to missing data, and a final decision to remove responses from participants who self-identified as Muslim, the sample size was reduced and each condition had only 40-55 participants. Furthermore, the sample was skewed, where there were substantially more females and young adults. The research suggests that both females and younger members of society are more accepting of outgroups and this lack of prejudice in younger people is often attributed to education whilst females are simply perceived to be more empathic than males (Saroglou et al, 2009). A more representative sample of the Australian population would therefore be necessary before any solid conclusions could be drawn about stereotypes associated with Muslim women.

Furthermore, it must be recognised that this was an online survey, and whilst this is a very cost and time efficient methodology, it cannot be ensured that the survey was completed alone, that the information provided is accurately given or whether the location and time of day participants responded to the survey influenced their efforts and attention span. It was believed that the random assignment of participants would compensate for the influence of such extraneous variables within the study. Despite this, however, there is still a possibility that such uncontrollable variables may have influenced the validity of the final results presented (Street, 1995).

Lastly, a relevant limitation to consider may be the violation of normality when conducting ANCOVA's for the Social Dominance Orientation and the Religiosity scales. The violation of this assumption was not instantly rectified as many studies have reported that the ANOVA and ANCOVA are robust measures and a deviation from normality can be manageable, especially if the deviation is not too small, the degrees of freedom allocated for residual variation are not too small or if a Levenes test found homogeneity for the variances, as they did in this analysis (Blanca, Alarcón, Arnau, Bono & Bendayan, 2017). However, it is possible that computing a new variable and running non-parametric tests may generate a more valid result.

Future Research and Social implications

There is a large scope for future research, where first and foremost, it would be recommended to replicate the current study with a larger and more representative sample

size: one that can capture the perceptions from the entire population of Australia. When replicating the study, if an increased sample size yields significance, then post-hoc tests, such as pairwise comparisons would be essential as they would indicate the size of effects between each of the conditions. Furthermore, many of the variables correlated with stereotypical behaviour and whilst it was not within the capacity of this research to do so, it may be of interest for future researchers to conduct multiple regression analyses that uncover which variables are significant predictors and moreover to discover which is the strongest predictor.

Methodologically speaking, future research should administer follow-up interviews to obtain qualitative results. Qualitative research in psychology is crucial as it can delve deeper into an issue, such as that of stereotyping. Perhaps this could then unearth the various underlying reasons as to why some people may be more prejudiced against Muslims and henceforth, discover what their insights, motivations and influences are (Duffy, Smith, Terhanian & Bremer, 2005).

Alternatively, and especially in order to reduce the impact of socially desirable responses, future studies could produce implicit association tests (IAT) to establish a person's stereotypical beliefs. IATs are commonly used within social psychology as they are able to reveal the automatic associations or the social judgements a person makes outside of their conscious awareness or control (Srivastav, 2014).

These advancements could improve the overall validity by finding significant differences, being more representative of the population and by explaining the rationale behind participants' responses.

The study has critical social implications too, where by identifying existing prejudice, steps can be taken to reduce it in society. This could be done through various social and professional interventions that provide and improve knowledge as well as increase direct intergroup contact (El-Geledi, & Bourhis, 2012; Mansouri & Vergani, 2018). Not only is it exceedingly important to reduce prejudice for the health of everyday Australian Muslims who may be suffering with psychological distress from such mistreatment but it is also vital for society as a whole to get along peacefully (Pederson & Hartley, 2012).

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Figure 1 – *Veil Stimulus*

Appendix 1 – All Scales

Central Religiosity Scale - CRS-5

01: How often do you think about religious issues?

02: To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists?

03: How often do you take part in religious services?

04: How often do you pray?

05: How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life?

Stereotype Content Model (SCM)

Competent

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Confident

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Capable

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Efficient

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Intelligent

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Skilful

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Friendly

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Warm

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Well intentioned

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Good natured

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Trustworthy

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Sincere

(1= not at all, 5= extremely)

Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO)

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1)	Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2)	In getting what you want, it is sometimes necessary to use force against other groups.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
3)	It's OK if some groups have more of a chance in life than others.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
4)	To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on other groups.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
5)	If certain groups stayed in their	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

place, we would have fewer problems.							
6) It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
7) Inferior groups should stay in their place.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
8) Sometimes other groups must be kept in their place.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
9) It would be good if groups could be equal.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
10) Group equality should be our ideal.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
11) All groups should be given an equal chance in life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
12) We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
13) Increased social equality.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
14) We would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
15) We should strive to make incomes as equal as possible.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
16) No one group should dominate in society.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Note: Items 9-16 are Reverse Scored.

Islamophobia Scale

1. Islam has created an admirable culture *(R)*.

2. The Muslim culture fits perfectly well into our Western world *(R)*.

3. I am distrustful of people of Muslim religion.

4. Muslims in Australia should have the right to live according to their own religious rules *(R)*.

5. It's their own affair if Muslims call the faithful to prayers by loudspeakers *(R)*.

6. I like it that Muslims can live in Australia too *(R)*.

7. Islam is a backward religion.

8. Islam is actually a peaceful religion *(R)*.

9. Equality of men and women is compatible with Islam *(R)*.

10. Muslims who promote their religion in Australia should be deported.

11. I am open to Muslims in the same way as to members of other religions *(R)*.

12. Immigration to Australia should be forbidden to Muslims.

13. With so many Muslims here in Australia, sometimes I feel like a stranger in my own country.

14. The number of Muslims in Australia shows that Islam will increase its power in this country.

Note: (R). indicates items that are Reverse Scored.