

## **Employment Struggles for Muslims: A Systematic Review**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Muslims commonly encounter struggles in the workplace due to their identity. This systematic literature review encompasses a range of literature about employment struggles for Muslims. After several screening procedures, 134 papers were deemed suitable for further scrutiny. This study comprises three major topics involving employment struggles for Muslims, which are: (1) Islamic identity and practices in the workplace, (2) Employment challenges for Muslims, and (3) The consequences of workplace struggles for Muslims. The present study also suggests pathways for future management studies based on the respective unit of analysis (organizational, group, and individual).

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### Introduction

Aside from being the world's fastest-growing religion (Lipka & Hackett, 2017), Islam is also one of the most misunderstood, marginalized, and disregarded (Bastian, 2019; Pemberton & Takhar, 2021). Consequently, its followers (Muslims) continue to face challenges across societal domains. Especially in the workplace, most of the challenges hinge upon either the identity (the status of an individual as Muslim) or the religious practices a Muslim performs. Muslims have to follow rather strict religious practices, which will be perceived by the majority as peculiar in a Muslim-minority setting. For instance, the principle of praying five times a day where some of the prayer times collide with working hours, dietary requirements that make a Muslim somewhat fastidious, or the necessity to refrain from eating and drinking for hours during Ramadhan.

Muslims' employment struggles surface not only in Muslim-minority countries but also in Muslim-majority countries (for a detailed review, see Linando, 2022b). In Muslim-majority countries, the struggle is rooted in the intersection of Islam as a religious identity and female as a gender identity (Afiouni, 2014; Spierings, 2014b; Syed, 2008a). Meanwhile, in Muslim-minority countries, though the challenges are mainly faced by Muslim women due to their religious visibility (wearing a hijab or veil) (Baldi, 2018; Golesorkhi, 2019; Strabac et al., 2016), Muslim men also face workplace challenges on many occasions (Kaushal et al., 2007; Khattab, 2012; Sav et al., 2010).

The workplace struggle for Muslims happens in various employment phases – not only when Muslims are employed, but also during the pre-employment phase of the recruitment and selection processes (Forstenlechner & Al-Waqfi, 2010; Kabir, 2016; Lindemann & Stolz, 2018). The struggles can also extend into the post-employment stage at court following unresolved workplace conflicts (Baldi, 2018; Ball & Haque, 2003; Frégosi & Kosulu, 2013). Hence, the term 'employment' in this study is a simplification of the broad-ranging phenomenon occurring in reality.

Muslim employment struggles have been explored from various viewpoints, such as the intersectionality of identities (Ali et al., 2017; Tariq & Syed, 2017), the law perspective (Baldi, 2018; Cavico & Mujtaba, 2011; Malos, 2010), societal analysis (Koburtay et al., 2020; Scheitle & Ecklund, 2017; Syed et al., 2009), the form of employment struggles (Cantone & Wiener, 2017; Van Laer & Janssens, 2011), and coping strategies (Achour et al., 2014; Murray & Ali, 2017). Most studies on this subject mainly focus on developing particular discourse points as if they provide puzzle pieces. Meanwhile, thus far, the overall portrayal of Muslims' employment struggles has not yet been understood.

Only a limited amount of research tries to synthesize the extant knowledge on the topic. Among these studies is a literature review by Ghumman et al. (2013) of workplace religious discrimination and a paper on religious struggles in the workplace by Exline & Bright (2011), but those papers do not address Islam in particular. There is also a literature review of employment discrimination by Ahmed & Gorey (2021) that mainly focuses on Muslim women who wear the hijab, and a meta-analysis by Bartkoski et al. (2018) concerns hiring discrimination against Muslims and Arabs. Similar to the two studies mentioned earlier, these two are also arguably inadequate for comprehensively depicting Muslims' negative workplace experiences.

Islam has particular teachings that differ from other religions. Thus, general overviews of workplace religious discrimination will probably not be able to address workplace struggles for Muslims in depth. Furthermore, the existing literature reviews or meta-analyses only focus on cases in Muslim-minority countries within the context of discrimination. The limited focus of those studies leaves unexplored the broad understanding of Muslim employment struggles in Muslim-majority countries and other struggles beyond discrimination.

Accordingly, the present study addresses this question: 'What are the elements that constitute employment struggles for Muslims?'. This study scrutinizes the extant knowledge on employment struggles for Muslims using the systematic literature review (SLR) method. SLR potentially provides a well-established understanding of the research arena; future researchers on this subject can hence start their investigations on a firm basis (Kraus et al., 2020).

On the process of searching for the literature, the present study does not dwell too much on the definitions of 'Islam' and 'Muslim'. As long as the literature employs those terms, regardless of the way it defines and sets boundaries on the terms, that literature will be considered for inclusion. Such a decision is based on a notion that conceptualizing 'Muslim' and 'Islam' as scientific objects is somewhat more complicated than it seems (for a more detailed review, see, for example: Asad, 1996; Rippin, 2016). Though normally it would be

assumed that Muslims are those practicing Islamic teachings, some scholars (e.g., Fadil, 2013; Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2011; Salahshour & Boamah, 2020) suggest that those addressing themselves as Muslims despite not practicing the teachings should not be overlooked in studies concerning Islam and Muslims.

In doing so, this study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it outlines the topic's critical discussion points and clarifies the discourse layers (e.g., gender, employment phase, country setting as it pertains to whether Muslims are the majority or a minority). Second, this paper synthesizes various issues within the topic into three major themes: (1) Islamic identity and practices in the workplace; (2) Employment challenges for Muslims; and (3) The consequences of workplace struggles for Muslims. Third, this paper proposes pathways for upcoming studies to advance the topic. The suggested pathways are arranged based on the analysis units commonly used in management and workplace studies: individual, group, and organizational units of analysis.

### Theoretical perspective

Considering that the workplace is characterized by multifaceted webs of social encounters (Haggard et al., 2011) and that the problems in the workplace are inseparable from societal issues (Syed, 2008b), employment struggles should be comprehended as a social phenomenon. Consequently, the social science framework is appropriate for understanding the topic. The present section will depict the classifications of all main theories, lenses, and perspectives used by all 134 literatures into three streams of social science theoretical blocks and point out this study's theoretical contributions. The expanded list of the main theories, lenses, and perspectives employed by the literature is available in the appendix.

Based on the author's reading of the reviewed literature, there are three out of many social science big streams categorically shaping the comprehension of Muslims' employment struggles. The first block is the feminist viewpoint, as 78 out of 134 papers (58.2%) focus on female Muslim workplace struggles in particular. This branch contains a wide variety of lenses, depending on the cases these women face. For instance, if these women are immigrants to the places they are working, among the lenses that can be used on such papers are resettlement (Casimiro et al., 2007), labor market participation (Guetto & Fellini, 2017), and gender roles (Kershen, 2011; Predelli, 2004). It is also possible to frame the discourse on this branch into particular work industries where inequalities and challenges toward women are apparent, such as boxing (Tjønndal & Hovden, 2020), mining (Behzadi, 2019), and woodworking (Chambers & Ansari, 2018).

Parallel with the notion pointed out by many feminist theorists (e.g., Carastathis, 2014; Davis, 2008; Lykke, 2010), intersectionality as a critical factor embedded in feminist discourses is also ostensible in the present study. The phenomenon of Muslim women working in male-dominated sectors might transform into workplace challenges as women's presence in such sectors threatens the innate masculine image of the sector or contests the gender order that assumes women's subservient position in society (Denissen & Saguy, 2014). Additionally, this study's data that portray the high amount of feminist–related discourses on this topic is pertinent to Mahmood's (2006) assertion that Islam is arguably the religion that embraces the most complexities when it comes to feminist issues.

The second theoretical block on employment struggles for Muslims is represented by the conflict viewpoint. Conflict is a relevant lens, aligned with the negative workplace experiences as this study's main tone. Muslims may be involved in workplace conflicts with many entities, such as work colleagues (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011), potential employers for Muslim job applicants (Forstenlechner & Al-Waqfi, 2010), their bosses (Ball & Haque, 2003), and other organizational stakeholders (Agrawal et al., 2019). Pertinent to a broad conceptualization of organizational conflict as the incompatibility, disagreement, or discord between or within social entities as a result of an interactive process (Rahim, 2002).

In addition, studies on Muslim employment struggles can also apply the work-life conflict framework, as Sav and colleagues did (Sav et al., 2013, 2014; Sav & Harris, 2013). Sav and colleagues propose that religion plays a positive role in deducting the adverse effects of work-life conflict. That notion conveys a fresh insight worth further examination, considering that many other studies cited in this paper imply the opposite - that religion is the main source of workplace conflict. Subsequently, the frameworks applicable to Muslim employment struggles within the conflict streams include social identity, discrimination, prejudice, threat, and work-life conflict.

The last theoretical block pertinent to Muslim employment struggles is the functionalism viewpoint. The functionalism perspective sees society as a system consisting of interconnected parts that position harmonies or accord as the foundation of social order for the sake of reaching equilibrium (Pope, 1975). With functionalism as the theoretical backbone, studies could focus on finding ways to fit Muslims in so that there will be no more religious-based struggles in the workplace for them. Therefore, among the lenses that arguably belong to this theoretical block are those about religious accommodation in the workplace (Adam & Rea, 2018; Zaheer, 2007), affirmative regulations (Lovat et al., 2013; Sekerka & Yacobian, 2018), and the role institutions can play to balance the disparity (Ahmed et al., 2017; O'Connor, 2011).

While acknowledging that the theoretical framing presented in this section is only a simplification of the complex cases of the struggles Muslims encounter in the workplace, the present study claims several theoretical contributions. Primarily, the present study synthesizes the vast range of theories, lenses, and perspectives on the topic into three theoretical blocks. Those three streams encompass the problem (conflict perspective), the main concerned parties (feminist perspective), and the possible solution (functionalism perspective) to Muslim workplace struggles.

Additionally, the extensive list of theories, lenses, and perspectives in the appendix designates areas that particular theories may or may not explain. For instance, social identity theory could be used to examine various issues like those concerning immigrants (Forstenlechner & Al-Waqfi, 2010), discrimination (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011), and organizational atmosphere (Cantone & Wiener, 2017). However, not all studies about immigrants may fit into a social identity framework. Such is the case for studies by Predelli's (2004) and Strabac et al. (2016) about women immigrants, wherein a gender relations lens and stepping stone theory, respectively, are perceived as more suitable than social identity theory for those two studies. As the present study presents a theoretical compass on this

topic, hopefully, such a compass is helpful to guide future studies in deciding the theoretical streams they would like to contribute.

#### **Methods**

In the process of gathering and reviewing the literature, this study encountered various disciplines such as management, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, religious studies, and psychology. The research process started with a systematic literature search on the Scopus database using the Publish or Perish (PoP) software with keyword combinations representing this study's interests. There are three areas of concern: the main object (Islam, Muslim); the context (career, work, workplace, employment, job); and the main issues (struggle, challenge, problem, discrimination).

PoP software has two fields to search for the literature - namely 'Title Words,' i.e., the entered words that appear in the title; and 'Keywords', the words which must exist in the full text. The words from either 'main object' or 'context' were placed into the 'Title Words' search section; and the words from 'main object' / 'context' that were not used in the 'Title Words' field were then joined with the 'main issue' words in the 'Keywords' section. Such combinations were used with the aim of obtaining relevant papers, as the 'Title Words' search section may lock out the main focus of the paper, and the 'Keywords' search section functions as the explanation of the paper's context. The collected articles' publication years range from 1971 to 2020 (the year of the data collection). Table 1 illustrates the search process and the number of articles from each combination.

**Table 1.** Word combinations in the search process.

Title	Keywords	Articles	Title	Keywords	Articles
Words			Words	s	
Islam	career struggle	0	Career	Islam struggle	0
Islam	career challenge	1	Career	Islam challenge	0
Islam	career problem	3	Career	Islam problem	2
Islam	career discrimination	0	Career	Islam discrimination	1
Islam	work struggle	12	Career	Muslim struggle	0
Islam	work challenge	32	Career	Muslim challenge	0
Islam	work problem	37	Career	Muslim problem	0
Islam	work discrimination	4	Career	Muslim discrimination	0
Islam	workplace struggle	0	Work	Muslim struggle	7
Islam	workplace challenge	0	Work	Muslim challenge	35
Islam	workplace problem	0	Work	Muslim problem	14
Islam	workplace discrimination	0	Work	Muslim discrimination	19
Islam	employment struggle	2	Work	Islam struggle	2
Islam	employment challenge	4	Work	Islam challenge	24
Islam	employment problem	5	Work	Islam problem	19
Islam	employment discrimination	0	Work	Islam discrimination	5
Islam	job struggle	0	Workplace	Islam struggle	0

Title	Keywords	Articles	Title	Keywords	Articles
Words			Words		
Islam	job challenge	1	Workplace	Islam challenge	5
Islam	job problem	3	Workplace	Islam problem	2
Islam	job discrimination	0	Workplace	Islam discrimination	5
Muslim	career struggle	1	Workplace	Muslim struggle	0
Muslim	career challenge	8	Workplace	Muslim challenge	3
Muslim	career problem	5	Workplace	Muslim problem	2
Muslim	career discrimination	6	Workplace	Muslim discrimination	10
Muslim	work struggle	24	Employment	Islam struggle	1
Muslim	work challenge	124	Employment	Islam challenge	5
Muslim	work problem	56	Employment	Islam problem	1
Muslim	work discrimination	46	Employment	Islam discrimination	5
Muslim	workplace struggle	1	Employment	Muslim struggle	1
Muslim	workplace challenge	7	Employment	Muslim challenge	11
Muslim	workplace problem	5	Employment	Muslim problem	0
Muslim	workplace discrimination	13	Employment	Muslim discrimination	15
Muslim	employment struggle	6	Job	Islam struggle	0
Muslim	employment challenge	13	Job	Islam challenge	0
Muslim	employment problem	7	Job	Islam problem	1
Muslim	employment discrimination	40	Job	Islam discrimination	0
Muslim	job struggle	3	Job	Muslim struggle	1
Muslim	job challenge	4	Job	Muslim challenge	2
Muslim	job problem	2	Job	Muslim problem	2
Muslim	job discrimination	15	Job	Muslim discrimination	6

**Table 2.** Word combinations in a broader search mechanism.

Title Words	Keywords	Articles	Title Wor
Muslim	workplace	54	Workplac
Muslim	work	157	Workplac
Muslim	career	66	Work
Muslim	employment	152	Work
Muslim	job	63	Career
Islam	workplace	10	Career
Islam	work	126	Employm
Islam	career	33	Employm
Islam	employment	31	job
Islam	job	11	job

Title Words	Keywords	Articles
Workplace	Islam	31
Workplace	Muslim	40
Work	Islam	178
Work	Muslim	190
Career	Islam	13
Career	Muslim	23
Employment	Islam	26
Employment	Muslim	63
job	Islam	17
job	Muslim	33

The first search phase yielded 696 articles. A broader search mechanism was then conducted to ensure no relevant articles were missing, following Siddaway et al.'s (2019) suggestion. Such a mechanism was done by only involving the keywords from the 'main object' and the 'context'. One word from each category was placed in the 'Title Words' field and the other in the 'Keywords' field. Table 2 shows the number of articles found from each search procedure.

In total, including the 696 articles found earlier, this study identified 2,013 articles. After duplicate removal, 1,055 articles remained. The author employed two screening phases: title screening, which cut down the articles from 1,055 to 472; followed by abstract screening and skim reading of some articles that needed thorough consideration. After those screening phases, finally, 134 papers were deemed relevant. Figure 1 depicts the literature search processes.

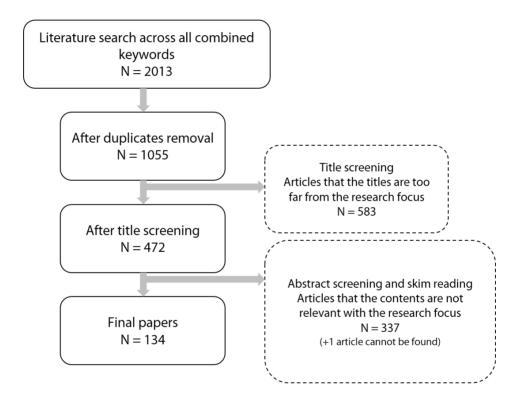


Figure 1. Literature searching procedures.

#### Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The foremost inclusion criterion is the use of the English language. In order to maintain scientific standards, this study only includes peer-reviewed academic articles. During the search process, several books and book chapters appeared in the findings. However, since not all books and book chapters undergo the same editorial procedure before publication, it is difficult to ensure that particular books are peer-reviewed. All books and book chapter documents were hence excluded.

The decision to use the Scopus database as the literature searching plot expounds on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. As a database of peer-reviewed articles, Scopus nestles as one of the most valuable sources for conducting a literature review study (Chadegani et al., 2013; Kraus et al., 2020). There was an option to obtain a broader range of articles through Google Scholar. However, Google Scholar has several weaknesses. Among them is the absence of a guaranteed peer-review process; Google Scholar database also has numerous inconsistencies, potentially covers manipulative articles, and contains too many non-academic sources (Clermont & Dyckhoff, 2012; Kraus et al., 2020; López-Illescas et al., 2008; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016).

Wright et al. (2014) suggest that the topic surrounding religion and Islam might largely be present in grey literature; thus, including grey literature in the search pool will likely be fruitful. However, considering the enormous number of articles found in the first and second search phases in the Scopus database, the Scopus database is supposedly adequate for the purposes of this literature review. Detailed information on the articles used in this study, all of which are Scopus-indexed, is provided in Table 7 in the appendix.

In the title screening stage, articles whose titles were outside the organization or management domain were excluded. Among those were articles related to geopolitics, wars, the works of Muslim figures, health matters (like organ donations), terrorism, education systems, adolescent problems, and other topics unrelated to employment or career. Moving to the abstract and skim-reading stage, while there were some articles on the discrimination issue, the narrative only concerned the societal level and did not touch upon employment or workplace issues; such articles were therefore excluded. A few articles discussed employment-struggle matters, yet were based on fictional plots such as the analysis of works of art, music, movies, and other pop cultural activity. Such articles were also excluded.

There were some perplexing articles that discussed workplace struggles, yet it was unclear whether the struggle resulted from Islamic identity or whether the identity was merely used to describe the respondents' characteristics. Some articles highlighted the relationship between Islam and ideologies or systems such as capitalism, secularism, and democracy. Others portrayed employment issues for Muslims, yet the focus was on the agency's perspective rather than the problems Muslims face at work. Some articles discussed Islamic identity at work, but the main foci were not on 'the struggle' but on other topics such as leadership or ethics.

For such articles, the author skimmed through the contents to judge whether the articles should be included or excluded. Among the excluded articles from the skimmed reading mechanism was Tavory & Winchester's (2012) paper whose title is somewhat 'misleading'. The paper has the phrase 'experiential career' in its title, but 'career' here is used to refer to the religious development of newly religious and converted persons as opposed to the definition commonly used in management literature.

### **Findings**

This study synthesizes Muslim employment struggles into three main themes: (1) Islamic identity and practices in the workplace, (2) Employment challenges for Muslims, and (3) The consequences of workplace struggles for Muslims.

### Islamic identity and practices in the workplace

When reading through the literature, one of the foremost apprehensions is that 'Muslim' is understood as a uniform identity. In reality, individual Muslims differ in their ways of expressing and positioning Islam as their belief (Linando, 2022a; Lovat et al., 2013; Syed & Pio, 2010). However, irrespective of the diverse characteristics of Islamic identity, behavior bias toward Muslims -commonly known as the 'Muslim penalty'- continues (Connor & Koenig, 2015; Lindley, 2002; Miaari et al., 2019). Within Muslim diversity, some Muslim women are inclined to wear the hijab as a representation of faith, while others choose not to wear the hijab but firmly hold Islam as their identity (Reeves et al., 2012; Samani, 2013). Even in the same sub-group categories, such as among hijabis (Muslim women who wear hijab) and non-hijabis, Muslims have various motives and Islamic practice expression (Ghasemi, 2013; Reeves et al., 2012).

Among the reasons why Muslim women choose to wear the hijab are to fulfill religious demands, to assert their Muslim identity, and further, as a form of agency to resist negative stereotypes toward Muslims (Ali et al., 2015; Droogsma, 2007; Pasha-Zaidi, 2015; Tariq & Syed, 2017; Warren, 2018). On the other hand, among the motives to not wear the hijab are avoiding threats, discrimination, and violence; uncertainty about whether wearing the hijab is genuinely part of the religious obligation; and other personal reasons such as discomfort while wearing a hijab (Cole & Ahmadi, 2003; Ghumman & Jackson, 2009; Pasha-Zaidi, 2015). However, it is sensible to affirm that hijabis have more negative workplace experiences than non-hijabis (Abdelhadi, 2019; Foroutan, 2008b; Khattab & Modood, 2015; Scheitle & Ecklund, 2017).

In society, Muslim women are typically stereotyped as oppressed, backward, and inferior to non-Muslim women (Casimiro et al., 2007; Golnaraghi & Mills, 2013; Grünenfelder, 2013; Hendriks & van Ewijk, 2017). On the other hand, Muslim men are associated with terrorism, deviance, and aggressiveness (Dwyer et al., 2008; Rabby & Rodgers, 2011; Shah & Shaikh, 2010). In the workplace context, scholars (e.g., Agerström & Rooth, 2009; Bagley & Abubaker, 2017; Salahshour & Boamah, 2020) suggest that both Muslim women and men endure a stereotype of being incapable of working well. An exception are King & Ahmad (2010), who posit that Muslims are stereotyped as lacking in warmth rather than lacking in capability. Regardless, the stigmatization leads to biased human resource management practices like discriminatory hiring decisions and job assignment disparity (Abubaker & Bagley, 2017; Eriksson et al., 2017; Fozdar, 2012) and hinders Muslim career advancement (Latif et al., 2018; Padela et al., 2016).

Aside from being a consequence of Muslim identity, fulfilling Islamic teaching might also generate workplace challenges. Lack of prayer accommodation in the workplace is a major issue for Muslims (Fadil, 2013; Liao et al., 2017; Mogra, 2013; Sekerka & Yacobian, 2018). They also face challenges with halal dietary rules (Adam & Rea, 2018; Cavico & Mujtaba, 2011), alcohol in workplace situations (Arifeen, 2020; Malos, 2010), unrestrained gender interaction at work (Ghasemi, 2020; Nilan, 2012), difficulties in celebrating Islamic holy days (Sav et al., 2010; Zaheer, 2007), workplace practices that are incompatible with Islamic teachings (like abortion and euthanasia) for Muslim healthcare workers (Hendriks & van

Ewijk, 2017; Padela et al., 2008), and workplace bans on religious attributes (Baldi, 2018; Golesorkhi, 2017).

### **Employment challenges for Muslims**

Discrimination is one of the most prominent issues that appears in literature surrounding Muslims' employment struggles. Workplace discrimination reflects societal discrimination (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2011; Foroutan, 2011). In society, factors like hostile media coverage of Islam (Latif et al., 2018; Strabac et al., 2016; Syed & Pio, 2010), provocations by political figures (Croucher, 2013; Frégosi & Kosulu, 2013), and terror attacks in the name of Islam (Barkdull et al., 2011; Rashid, 2016; Wang, 2018) trigger discrimination toward Muslims. These factors conceived *Islamophobia*, a word that describes deleterious sensitivity toward Islam and Muslims (Ali et al., 2015).

Societal discrimination narrows down into certain discrimination forms in the workplace. Religious workplace discrimination typically involves two contrasting forms: subtle and blatant (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011); formal and interpersonal (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013); direct and indirect (Ball & Haque, 2003). Blatant discrimination relates to formal and direct discrimination. These discriminations are typically open, clearly exercised, and have visible impacts (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011).

On the opposite end, subtle, indirect, and interpersonal discrimination forms tend to be obscure, unconsciously practiced, and commonly occur in daily or casual interactions (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013; Park et al., 2009). As empirical studies suggest that subtle discrimination is more damaging than blatant, many researchers have decided to focus on this phenomenon (e.g., Cortina, 2008; Deitch et al., 2003; Shah & Shaikh, 2010; Tariq & Syed, 2018; Van Laer & Janssens, 2011). For Muslims, subtle discrimination involves tendentious questions in the hiring process (Rootham, 2015), greater scrutiny in the workplace (Warren, 2018), hostile comments and racial jokes (Cantone & Wiener, 2017), and unfriendly responses in interactions (King & Ahmad, 2010).

In the context of workplace discrimination toward Muslims, intersectionality phenomena also arise and potentially aggravate the bias. Intersectionality is the interrelated nature of identities that create structural discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). Muslims already have one attached religious identity that is disadvantageous if they live in Muslim-minority countries or secular countries that do not accommodate their religious practices (Adida et al., 2010; Valfort, 2020). The addition of other unfavorable identities (e.g., dark-skinned; immigrant status) will hypothetically intensify workplace struggles for Muslims. Intersectionality is among the most apparent remarks from the data, with 90 out of 134 articles (62.5%) focusing on intersectionality (see Table 7 in the appendix).

Cases of discrimination among Muslim women, who bring their Islamic and female identities into the workplace, are frequent (Achour et al., 2015; Chambers & Ansari, 2018; Foroutan, 2008a; Koburtay et al., 2020; Özbilgin et al., 2012; Priyatna, 2013; Syed & Ali, 2013; Van Laar et al., 2013). The intersection of Muslim and female identities entails different challenges based on country types, depending on whether a country is Muslim-majority or Muslim-minority. In Muslim-majority countries, organizational challenges comprise

unfriendly working environments for Muslim women (Afiouni, 2014; Ali, 2013; Lunn, 2006) and work-life balance enablement from the organization (Achour et al., 2014).

One may ask whether the challenges emerging for Muslims in Muslim-majority countries should be reckoned with in this study. The present study argues that such inclusions are justifiable. Islam regulates that women play a significant part in household tasks. While Islam does not prohibit them from working, it prescribes several ethical and modesty regulations in the workplace (Achour et al., 2014; Arifeen & Gatrell, 2020; Vidyasagar & Rea, 2004). Thus, when struggles arise from the discrepancy of workplace facilities and the Islamic principles Muslim women adhere to, the struggles are supposedly religion-related.

In Muslim-minority countries, organizational challenges mostly manifest as difficulties accessing employment (Guetto & Fellini, 2017; Khattab, 2012; Khattab et al., 2018), misalignment of organizational and Islamic practices (Arifeen, 2020; Malik et al., 2019), and visual alienation through the wearing of a hijab (Ghumman & Jackson, 2009; Golesorkhi, 2019). Additionally, in Muslim-minority countries, the challenges of maintaining a work-life balance have become a concern not only for Muslim women, but also for Muslim men (Sav et al., 2014; Sav & Harris, 2013).

### The consequences of workplace struggles for Muslims

The implications of workplace struggle for Muslims vary depending on each case. Generally, there are two types of implications of Muslim struggles in the workplace. First are the emotional implications, such as feeling worthless (Casimiro et al., 2007), frightened (Reeves et al., 2012; Shah & Shaikh, 2010), pessimistic (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013), stressed, depressed, isolated and marginalized (Malos, 2010; Salahshour & Boamah, 2020), indignant and humiliated (Barkdull et al., 2011; Malik et al., 2019), and facing an existential dilemma (questioning their own abilities and life choices) (Liao et al., 2017; Tjønndal & Hovden, 2020). Though emotional implications tend to be negative, there are a few instances in which struggles lead to positive emotional implications. Examples of this include stronger self-development and resilience (Tariq & Syed, 2018), a stronger sense of motivating other Muslims (Sakai & Fauzia, 2016), stronger Islamic faith (Scott & Franzmann, 2007), and a stronger sense of agency and autonomy (Warren, 2018).

The second implication relates to the actions taken following the struggles Muslims face by living their Islamic faith at work. These actions include voluntary turnover (Baharudin et al., 2019; Lovat et al., 2013; Rootham, 2015; Tariq & Syed, 2018), involuntary turnover (Baldi, 2018; Ball & Haque, 2003; Frégosi & Kosulu, 2013; Golesorkhi, 2019), and restrained career progression (Arifeen, 2020; Shah & Shaikh, 2010). The practical implications of Muslims' struggles have a timeframe extending beyond the employment term, both before (pre) and after (post).

For instance, before employment, Muslims might have a lower chance of getting hired due to their religious identity (Casimiro et al., 2007; Hou et al., 2020). After the employment term, Muslims might still encounter workplace struggles by filing a complaint to the court if the company mistreated him/her due to religion. These practical implications can be divided into two categories: the employee's decision and the employer's decision. To voluntarily leave

the organization and bring the employer to court are employees' decisions, while rejecting job applications and managing career progression are employers' decisions.

**Table 3.** Employment struggles for Muslims issues compilation.

Category	Issue
The sources of struggles	<ul> <li>Religious identity</li> <li>Muslim Penalty: face adversity just for being a Muslim</li> <li>Negative stereotype: backwardness for women; terrorism for men</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Religious practices and principles</li> <li>Visibility: hijab/veil, beard, Muslim clothes</li> <li>Prayers: may be against time and space regulations in the workplace</li> <li>Halal diet</li> <li>Incompatible workplace practices: euthanasia, abortion, alcohol</li> <li>Mixed-gender relationships at work</li> <li>Non-accommodative work arrangements for Islamic celebration days</li> </ul>
The types of struggles	<ul> <li>Discrimination: mostly occurs in Muslim-minority countries</li> <li>Subtle/interpersonal/indirect</li> <li>Blatant/formal/direct</li> <li>Against societal norms: mainly occurs in Muslim-majority countries for Muslim women</li> <li>Intersectionality: multiple identities create a disadvantageous situation</li> <li>Work-life balance: influenced by religious values</li> </ul>
The consequences of struggles	Emotional     Negative emotions following the struggles: a majority of cases     Positive emotions following the struggles     Practical     Employee's decision     Voluntary turnover     Filing a complaint at the court     Employer's decision     Involuntary turnover     Restraining career progression     Not hiring
Coping strategies	<ul> <li>Problem-focused</li> <li>Active coping: adopt the dress code, downplay achievements</li> <li>Planning: plan the time to be able to perform prayers</li> <li>Seeking instrumental support: court, social workers</li> <li>Emotional-focused</li> <li>Acceptance</li> <li>Turning to religion</li> <li>Seeking emotional support: peers, family, community</li> </ul>
	Venting of emotion     Confronting

Various types of coping strategies also appear in the literature. Some Muslims look for active support from peers and third-party organizations (Ahmed et al., 2017; Kabir, 2016), adapt to the required dress code (Malik et al., 2019; Naseem & Adnan, 2019), develop a strategy to perform prayers while maintaining the work demands (Fadil, 2013), and downplay achievements to avoid catching too much attention at the workplace (Nagra, 2018; Sakai & Fauzia, 2016). Others focus on the more emotive end, like acceptance (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2011; O'Connor, 2011), turning to religion (Etherington, 2019; Scott & Franzmann,

2007), or seeking emotional support from the community (Sakai & Fauzia, 2016; Tariq & Syed, 2017; Warren, 2018). Additionally, some Muslims have reported venting their emotions by confronting their employers about unfavorable workplace policies (Kinnvall & Nesbitt-Larking, 2011).

There are unique cases of religion-based coping strategies in the literature, which are made unique by possible conflicting values between religion and coping decisions. For instance, some Muslim women remove their hijab to assimilate into their workplace situation as a coping strategy, even though such an act contrasts with the religious values they embrace (Naseem & Adnan, 2019; Reeves et al., 2012). While several articles focus on religion and coping strategies, most articles on this topic position religion as the source of the coping strategy (e.g., Hayward & Krause, 2015; Pargament et al., 2011; Raiya et al., 2008) and not as the source of 'the problem'. In a broader societal scope, beyond coping with workplace struggles, researchers often use terms like 'integration', 'acculturation', and 'assimilation' (e.g., Alkhazraji et al., 1997; Foroutan, 2008b; Fozdar, 2012).

#### Discussion

'Visibility' is an essential keyword in the discourse of Muslims' workplace struggles (Agrawal et al., 2019). Islamic rules on appearance and clothing tend to be more lenient for Muslim men than Muslim women. For instance, (in general, most) Muslims deem the hijab for women as obligatory, while Muslim identifiers for men, like beards, are only categorized as *Sunnah* (encouraged to be practiced) (Ball & Haque, 2003). The different manifestations of male and female Islamic identity entail different societal stereotypes, as is elaborated in the findings section.

The different 'visibility' guidelines for women and men also become a primary base on which to claim that Islam is a patriarchal religion, promotes gender inequality, and encompasses male supremacy (Mernissi, 1996). The issue develops into a specific discourse on Islam and identity, wherein several researchers (e.g., Abisaab, 2009; Masood, 2019; Nagra, 2018; Predelli, 2004; Spierings, 2014a; Syed, 2008, 2010; Syed & Van Buren, 2014) present counterarguments toward such unfavorable accusations. As mentioned in the findings, Muslim women interpret the rules and roles of the hijab diversely. These different interpretations involve many factors, such as values in the family, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and degree of spirituality (Robinson, 2016).

The observation that concerns over work-life balance only occur in Muslim-minority countries for both genders is also interesting enough to warrant further discussion. In Muslim-majority countries, the challenges of maintaining a work-life balance only apply to Muslim women. This is possibly due to the rigid division of gender roles in most Muslim societies (Kershen, 2011; Spierings, 2014b). In the social construct of Muslim-majority countries, balancing work and life should not be an issue for men in their role of breadwinner (Alexander & Welzel, 2011). Muslim men in Muslim-majority countries know that their primary task is to work, while managing household matters is mainly the responsibility of Muslim women. Such a rigid gender role division also explains why, in Muslim-majority countries, the work-life balance particularly becomes an issue for Muslim women who have

a job. By working, Muslim women have to play two roles simultaneously: at home and in the office.

Moving on to the consequences of employment struggles for Muslims, the acculturation process in society differs from that of the workplace, as societal and workplace contexts have different analytical aspects (Adam & Rea, 2018). In a societal context, a person may choose to apply a separation strategy (sticking to his own culture and refusing the majority culture) and still maintain a social life by only associating with people from a similar background. It is somewhat different from the workplace sphere, where the decision to separate may threaten career progress and lead to dismissal. Accordingly, Golesorkhi (2017) invents jargon to portray the dilemma Muslims frequently face in the employment sector: 'unveiled or unemployed'. In the workplace, most -if not all- of the time, it is an 'either or' situation for Muslims. They must either sacrifice their work, or their religion.

Furthermore, the concept of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies from Carver et al. (1989) is arguably adequate to cover Muslims' coping strategies recorded in the literature pool. The problem-focused strategy involves active coping, planning, suppression of competing activities, coping with restraint, and seeking instrumental social support. In contrast, the emotion-focused strategy involves acceptance, denial, turning to religion, seeking emotional social support, and positive reinterpretation (Carver et al., 1989). In general, one can see that what Muslims do to respond to workplace distress, as mentioned in the findings section, belong to either problem-focused or emotion-focused coping. Additionally, Carver et al. (1989) also cover venting emotions in their work, where they consider openly expressing negative emotions a less useful coping strategy.

### Suggestions: Pathways for future research

#### General overview

This section splits the pathways along three units of analysis commonly used in organizational and management topics: organization, group, and individual (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Before that, the present section would like to bring about several potential discussions related to organizational and management topics beyond those three levels. For instance, there is a 'hot' discussion on Muslim women and unemployment (Abdelhadi & England, 2019; Ali, 2013; Brah, 1993). The topic raises questions such as: "What makes Muslim women unemployed?"; "Is that unemployment due to their religious belief or broader cultural factors?"; and "Which among those is the more dominant force?"

Some scholars (e.g., Khattab et al., 2019, 2020) argue that Muslim women's unemployment is neither due to discrimination nor religious and cultural belief, but is primarily caused by a human capital deficit, such as limited access to education. Others argue that the low labor participation among Muslim women is due to regional culture (Korotayev et al., 2015) and religious adherence (Abranches, 2007). The branched-out findings and argumentations to those questions indicate a need to investigate the phenomenon further.

The present study also suggests that future researchers apply a more clustered contextual lens to the topic of Muslims' employment struggles. *Per se*, the phenomenon occurs on multiple contextual grounds; forming a clear context classification is hence pertinent. As

noted earlier, the struggles occur on many different grounds, such as: Muslim minority (Borooah et al., 2007; Sav, 2019) and Muslim-majority (Abu-Hassan, 2003); intersectionality of multiple identities (Di Stasio et al., 2019; Sav et al., 2013); occupational sector differences (Behzadi, 2019; Youssef, 1971); or, even further, involving country and political ideologies (Corekcioglu, 2020; Syed et al., 2009).

Lastly, observing from the extant literature's demographic information, as shown in Table 7 in the appendix, there are many fronts with limited to no exploration. Among the most notable are: (1) employment struggles for Muslims in Muslim-majority countries (only 20.1% of all articles); (2) employment struggles for male Muslims (only 8.2% of all articles); (3) employment struggles for Muslims within timeframe context (only 15.6% of all studies incorporate historical review or future predictions, with most of them merely touching on those contextual time frames); (4) employment struggles for Muslims in specific age categories (4% focus on youth and no study focuses on old Muslims); (5) studies that focus on the post-employment phase (e.g., how Muslims follow up with contract termination; only two out of 134 studies [1.4%] focus on this phase); and (6) studies that emphasize the functionalism perspective so that employment struggles for Muslims could be diminished (only 25 studies [18.65%] apply this perspective).

### **Organizational level**

Organizations are vital in shaping an inclusive climate among employees through diversity policies (Hong & Doz, 2013). Favoring diversity could also send a positive signal to prospective employees (Rynes, 1991; Williams & Bauer, 1994). This similarly applies to Muslims; for instance, employee diversity policies in an organization can fortify the relationship between wearing a hijab and the expectation of progress in the recruitment process (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013). For religious practice requests in the workplace, Cash & Gray (2000) suggest that organizations focus on the employee's work performance, business efficiency, and effectiveness rather than their requests. The organization should grant the requests when the employee performs the duty well and the business runs fine. Once the organization agrees to the principle of inclusion and diversity, the subsequent task is to provide proper education about Muslims, especially for managers (Cash & Gray, 2000; Syed & Pio, 2010).

Adam & Rea (2018) posit that three "i"s characterize workplace accommodation for Muslim religious practices. Three "i"s represent the decision to accept or reject the request, which is based on *instrumental* arguments, regulated *informally*, and determined *internally*. They also stress the call to explore further how and why employers accommodate Muslim religious practices, as the extant literature provides scant empirical and conceptual studies on the topic. Furthermore, the findings of Van Laer & Janssens (2011) show that sometimes the organization pays lip service to diversity management, embracing and complimenting the individual from a minority background while at the same time disregarding his/her group and personal competencies. It is hence relevant to comprehend the acceptable and unacceptable practices within the diversity management frame.

In an earlier section, the present study also explicates that various factors influence a Muslim's coping strategy to deal with stressful work events. For example, the decision to cope

with the problem through instrumental support might be an option if the company provides such a provision (Frey, 2020; Roche et al., 2018). This raises a question about whether the company can better manage religious workplace conflicts if it provides instrumental facilities. Within the diversity management frame, factors determining coping strategies are arguably worth examining.

Table 4. Pathways for future research – Organizational analysis.

Suggested research topics	Phase Focus
Diversity and inclusion policy impact on the organization	Pre, Emp
Acceptable and unacceptable practices in diversity management	Emp, Post
A tradeoff between work performance and religious accommodation requests	Pre, Emp
Diversity management mechanism: training and development strategies	Emp
Organization's motivations for applying diversity and inclusion policy	Pre
Organizational factors that influence Muslims' workplace coping strategy	Emp

Notes: Pre = Pre-employment; Emp = Employment; Post = Post-employment

### Group level

While the law restricts formal discrimination based on identity (King & Ahmad, 2010), the challenges of workplace engagement often come from a composite web of group interfaces (Arifeen, 2020). King & Ahmad (2010) argue that most Muslims are discriminated against due to the perception that they lack warmth. The question then arises of whether non-Muslim colleagues really have that perception of Muslims. One may also ask whether the treatment of Muslims who have warmth will differ from those who lack it. Almost all articles on Muslim employment struggles use Muslims as the study respondents (A few exceptions: King et al., 2014; Van Camp et al., 2016). It would be interesting to understand how the non-Muslim group sees Muslim groups in the workplace. Questions about other groups' perspectives of Muslims linger. For instance, what is their opinion on having a Muslim as a coworker? Some researchers (King et al., 2014; Scheitle & Ecklund, 2017) find that religious identity and the degree of religiosity influence the perceiver's opinion about Muslims. What other factors influence this opinion?

The discourse of Muslim coping strategies is also relevant to the group analysis unit. Coping strategies are heavily influenced by the social context and within-group interplay (Murray & Ali, 2017; Naseem & Adnan, 2019). For instance, seniority status in the group influences coping strategy choices. A senior Muslim worker might openly refuse to participate in a social event involving alcohol (Scott & Franzmann, 2007), while a junior Muslim worker has to remove the headscarf to protect herself from prolonged religious discrimination (Naseem & Adnan, 2019). These different coping responses open the possibility for further investigation of whether coaching and mentoring between senior and junior Muslim employees will become a particular form of coping strategy. It is also noticeable that employment struggle cases for Muslims in Muslim-majority countries rarely discuss coping strategies. This is probably due to a subtle form of discrimination that has been taken for granted as a societal custom, and has therefore not been perceived as a

problem by most (Abisaab, 2009; Ali, 2013). Exploring the coping strategies for stressful work events in Muslim-majority countries might fill the existing void in current literature.

**Table 5.** Pathways for future research – Group analysis.

Suggested research topics	Phase Focus		
Non-Muslim perception toward Muslims as coworkers	Pre, Emp		
Group factors that influence Muslims' workplace coping strategy	Emp, Post		
Senior-junior coaching and mentoring as coping strategies	Pre, Emp		
Muslims' coping strategies in Muslim-majority countries	Emp		

Notes: Pre = Pre-employment; Emp = Employment; Post = Post-employment

### Individual level

At this level, studies set forth a myriad of findings on Muslims' coping strategies for workplace challenges. As explained in the previous section, Muslims respond diversely to the problems they face at work. Researchers (e.g., Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Connor-Smith & Flachsbart, 2007; McCrae & Costa, 1986) have long developed methods to connect personality and coping strategy selection. Nevertheless, the relationship between Muslims' personalities and their coping strategy selection remains an open field. This is because, to date, only a limited number of articles (e.g., see Mirsaleh et al., 2010) try to connect personality, religion, and coping strategies within one frame. It is also interesting to investigate the sensitivity of individuals toward discriminatory actions (Connor & Koenig, 2015; Padela et al., 2016). Scheitle & Ecklund (2017) posit that the more religious the person, the more sensitive he/she is to the perceived discrimination. This suggestion aligns with the nature of subtle discrimination, now widespread, as being frequently ambiguous.

Sav et al. (2014) find that work-life balance is an issue for Muslim men in Muslim-minority countries. For Muslim-majority countries, work-life balance might not be a problem for Muslim men due to a clear gender role division. However, it would be intriguing to elaborate further on whether, in Muslim-majority countries, the interplay of work, life, and religious practices generates a conflict for both men and women. Future researchers may also consider the influence that degree of religiosity has on work-life balance in Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority countries (Sav, 2019; Sav & Harris, 2013).

Many studies (e.g., Abubaker & Bagley, 2017; Agerström & Rooth, 2009; King & Ahmad, 2010) report that Islamic names frequently lead to negative prejudice during the application process. Such a 'halo effect' is understandable since, generally, prejudices toward Muslims are mainly due to the perception of a person being Muslim rather than actual religious affiliation (Braakmann, 2009). It is intriguing to examine whether that 'halo effect' will dissolve if a Muslim uses an alternative, non-Islamic-sounding name when applying for a job. More important to consider is if Muslims are willing to have and use alternative names. Changing one's name is often considered a successful means of assimilation and acculturation, which might benefit the ethnic minority in the job application process (Forstenlechner & Al-Waqfi, 2010; Gerhards & Hans, 2009; Kang, 1971).

It is likewise intriguing to elaborate on the knowledge of positive workplace experiences for Muslims. The author strongly advises future scholars to conduct a similar work as this study, from a positive-experiences angle, as it might immensely contribute to the knowledge of this topic. This suggestion is also in line with the spirit of extending the discourse of acculturation strategies that is more preventive in nature (incline to positive experiences) than coping strategy discourses, which tend to have a curative tone (represent negative experiences).

**Table 6.** Pathways for future research – Individual analysis.

Suggested research topics	Phase Focus
Individual factors that influence Muslims' workplace coping strategy	Emp, Post
<ul> <li>Factors influencing sensitivity to perceived discrimination</li> </ul>	Emp, Post
Workplace acculturation strategy model for Muslims	Emp
• An alternative name to resolve the negative 'halo effect' on the recruitment	Pre, Emp
<ul> <li>Work-life-religion balance across gender in Muslim-majority countries</li> </ul>	Emp
<ul> <li>Positive workplace experiences for Muslims</li> </ul>	Pre, Emp, Post

Notes: Pre = Pre-employment; Emp = Employment; Post = Post-employment

#### Limitations

The most notable limitation is the keyword choice. Some might argue that this study should have added more keywords; others might suggest lessening the amount of chosen keywords. There are numerous synonyms to express negative experiences in the workplace - 'distress', 'racism', 'hardship', 'adversity', and 'obstacle', to name a few. Other keyword options represent the work or workplace context, such as 'occupation', 'job', and 'office'. The present study acknowledges the possibility of using alternative keywords but argues that the chosen keywords should be enough to cover the projected articles, as the selections already included basic words such as 'struggle' and 'problem,' 'work' and 'workplace.'

To anticipate missed articles from the search processes, as mentioned earlier, a broader search mechanism was conducted which only involved the 'main object' (Islam, Muslim) and the 'context' (career, work, workplace, employment, job). Ultimately, the word choice used to represent negative workplace experiences should not be an issue. The present study also prudently managed the word selection for the main object. There was consideration in choosing between 'Muslim' or 'Moslem' in the search stage. 'Muslim' was finally picked over 'Moslem', as the latter is old-fashioned and, to some extent, rather offensive (Fogarty, 2020).

The screening stages also bear limitations. Siddaway et al. (2019) suggest a systematic literature review to employ inter-rater reliability, in which two or more people perform identical procedural stages separately; then, their results are compared and quantified. Since this study has only one author, the suggestion is not viable. However, the overall methodology section of this study was presented to a group of peers consisting of experts on methodology, organizational behavior, and human resource management fields. Apart from one method-related question about grievance bias in article selection (which was intentional

so that the author could profoundly comprehend the phenomenon), the participants did not raise any other concerns about the data and methodology.

Limitations might exist in the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Generally, employment struggles for Muslims are closely tied to struggles in social settings, and separating societal factors from employment struggles can be difficult. In this study, articles that merely bring up workplace context as an example of society's problems were omitted. However, it is understandable that other researchers might prefer to include such papers; it may be argued that, though the impacts are indirect, the workplace struggle keywords are still present. This shortcoming was compensated for by the skim-reading screening procedure that allowed the author to carefully investigate articles of questionable relevance before making a verdict.

#### Conclusion

This paper synthesizes existing studies on various discourse points of employment struggles for Muslims. The existing literature points out that Muslim employment struggles are a multifaceted phenomenon of which a thorough study is needed to extricate the issues. The author hopes this compilation serves as a basis for both scholars and practitioners to better understand workplace struggles based on religious identity. Hopefully, future researchers can develop the knowledge surrounding diversity management, discrimination, and religious-based employment struggles. Finally, it is a collective aim to eradicate, or at least minimize, the occurrence of identity-based struggles in the workplace and their negative consequences.

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# **Appendix**

**Table 7.** Descriptive information of the articles used in this study.

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Youssef (1971)	Middle Eastern countries	Social structure	Non-agricultural labor force	Feminist	Explorative	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Brah (1993)	The UK	Racialized gendering	Asian British	Feminist	Qualitative	55	Pre	F	Pakistan	Yes
Basit (1996)	The UK	Career aspiration	Upward social mobility; Migrant	Feminist	Qualitative	24	Pre	F	Asian	Yes
Alkhazraji et al. (1997)	The USA	Acculturation	Immigrant	Functionalism	Quantitative	277	Emp			Yes
Lindley (2002)	The UK	Human capital	Employment penalty	Conflict	Explorative	2495	Pre			No
Ball & Haque (2003)	The USA	Court cases review	Public sector	Conflict	Law review	33 (cases)	Emp			No
Abu-Hassan (2003)	Jordan	National legal system	Jordan	Feminist	Law review	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Predelli (2004)	Norway	Gender relations	Immigrant	Feminist	Qualitative	37	Emp	F	Pakistan & Morocco	Yes
Vidyasagar & Rea (2004)	Saudi Arabia	Feminist	Doctor; Wahhabism	Feminist	Qualitative	28	Emp	F		Yes
Lunn (2006)	Malaysia	Career	Academia	Feminist	Qualitative	16	Emp	F		Yes
Kaushal et al. (2007)	The USA	Discriminatory effects	Post-9/11	Conflict	Quantitative	NS	Pre		Arab	Yes
Borooah et al. (2007)	India	Job reservation	India's castes; India's tribes	Conflict	Quantitative	77535	Pre	М		No
Scott & Franzmann (2007)	Australia	Career aspiration	Secular workplace	Feminist	Explorative	50	Emp	F		No
Zaheer (2007)	The USA	Religious practices accommodation	Post-9/11	Functionalism	Law review	NS	Emp			No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Casimiro et al. (2007)	Australia	Resettlement	Refugees	Feminist	Qualitative	80	Emp	F	Iraqi, Afghan, Sudanese	Yes
Abranches (2007)	Portugal	Identity reconstruction	Immigrant; Generational differences	Feminist	Qualitative	26	Pre	F	Guinean & Indian	Yes
Dwyer et al. (2008)	The UK	Muslim masculinities	Negative stereotype	Conflict	Qualitative	58	Pre	М	Pakistan	Yes
Foroutan (2008a)	Australia	Human capital	Women's employment; Migrant	Feminist	Quantitative	> 5 million	Pre	F		Yes
Foroutan (2008b)	Australia	Assimilation	Second generation	Feminist	Quantitative	> 3 million	Pre	F		Yes
Padela et al. (2008)	The USA	Islam in the workplace	Physician; Immigrant	Functionalism	Qualitative	10	Emp			No
Syed (2008)	Muslim- majority countries	Equal employment opportunity	Gender equality	Feminist	Conceptual	NS	Pre	F		Yes
Agerström & Rooth (2009)	Sweden	Implicit prejudice	Negative stereotype; Implicit Association Test	Functionalism	Experiment	351	Pre		Arab	Yes
Braakmann (2009)	Germany	Discrimination	Post-9/11	Conflict	Quantitative	> 1 million	Pre	М	Arab	Yes
Park et al. (2009)	The USA	Prejudice	Subtle bias	Conflict	Experiment	149	Pre			No
Syed et al. (2009)	Turkey & Pakistan	Institutional	Macro-national perspective; Gender equality	Feminist	Mix method	NS (case study) & 10 (qual)	Emp	F		Yes
Abisaab (2009)	Middle East	Women and work	Factory work; Arab- Middle Eastern	Feminist	Historiography	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Shah & Shaikh (2010)	The UK	Career progression	Teacher; Post 9/11	Conflict	Qualitative	6	Emp	М	Asian	Yes
Malos (2010)	The USA	Discrimination	Post-9/11; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	Conflict	Law review	NS	Post		Arab	No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
King & Ahmad (2010)	The USA	Prejudice	Muslim attire; Muslim identity	Conflict	Experiment	225	Pre			No
Adida et al. (2010)	France	Anti-Muslim discrimination	Second generation	Conflict	Quantitative	>2000	Pre			No
Syed & Pio (2010)	Australia	Relational	Migrant; Diversity management	Feminist	Qualitative	25	Emp	F		Yes
Sav et al. (2010)	Australia	Workplace experiences	Low-skill occupation	Conflict	Qualitative	13	Emp	М		Yes
Ghumman & Jackson (2009)	The USA	Stereotype Threat	Religious attire; Employment expectation	Feminist	Quantitative	219	Pre	F		Yes
Forstenlechner & Al-Waqfi (2010)	Austria & Germany	Social identity	Immigrant	Conflict	Qualitative	40	Emp			No
Syed (2010)	Muslim- majority countries	Islamic modesty	Equal opportunity; Gender equality	Feminist	Conceptual	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Van Laer & Janssens (2011)	Belgium	Social identity	Subtle discrimination; Second generation	Conflict	Qualitative	26	Emp		Turkey & Morocco	Yes
Rabby & Rodgers (2011)	The USA	Discrimination	Post 9/11	Conflict	Quantitative	>9000	Post	М	Arab	Yes
Foroutan (2011)	Australia	Discrimination	Migrant	Feminist	Quantitative	>5 million	Pre	F		Yes
Kershen (2011)	The UK	Gender role	Immigrant; Wives	Feminist	Conceptual	2	Pre	F	Bangla- desh	Yes
O'Connor (2011)	Hong Kong	Hybridity	Youth	Functionalism	Qualitative	16	Emp			No
Kinnvall & Nesbitt- Larking (2011)	Western Countries	Securitization	Globalization; Youth	Functionalism	Qualitative	>100	Emp			No
Barkdull et al. (2011)	Western Countries	Intersectionality	Post 9/11	Conflict	Qualitative	34	Emp			Yes
Cavico & Mujtaba (2011)	The USA	Disparate impact	Civil rights; Reasonable accommodation	Functionalism	Law review	NS	Emp			No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Khattab (2012)	The UK	Employment	Ethnic penalty	Conflict	Quantitative	27603	Pre			No
Fozdar (2012)	Australia	Integration	Social cohesion; Skilled refugee	Functionalism	Quantitative	142	Pre			No
Kulik (2012)	Israel	Resource	Work-home conflict; Dual-earner family	Feminist	Quantitative	189	Emp	F		Yes
Nilan (2012)	Australia	Labor market	Youth	Functionalism	Qualitative	18	Pre			No
Özbilgin et al. (2012)	Turkey & Pakistan	Institutional	Gender equality; Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO)	Feminist	Mix method	NS (case study) & 10 (qual)	Emp	F		Yes
Van Laar et al. (2013)	The Netherlands	Identity	Motivation; Youth	Feminist	Mix method	328 (quan) & 122 (exp)	Emp	F		Yes
Golnaraghi & Mills (2013)	Canada	Postcolonial feminism	Niqab; Bill 94	Feminist	Critical discourse analysis	217 (articles)	Pre	F		Yes
Samani (2013)	Australia	Human capital	Tertiary (post- secondary) qualifications; Diversity	Feminist	Qualitative	40	Pre	F		Yes
Croucher (2013)	European Countries	Integrated threat	Immigrant	Conflict	Quantitative	432	Emp			No
Ghumman & Ryan (2013)	The USA	Relational demography	Headscarf; Diversity	Feminist	Experiment	112	Pre	F		Yes
Reeves et al. (2012)	The USA	Discrimination	Healthcare professional; Hijab	Feminist	Qualitative	79	Emp	F		Yes
Ghasemi (2013)	Iran	Workplace experiences	Motivation; Broadcast media	Feminist	Qualitative	30	Emp	F		Yes
Frégosi & Kosulu (2013)	France	Discrimination	laïcité; Labor union	Functionalism	Qualitative	10	Emp			No
Lovat et al. (2013)	Australia	Labor market	Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	Functionalism	Qualitative	104	Pre			No
Fadil (2013)	Belgium	Islam in the workplace	Second generation; Secularism	Functionalism	Qualitative	65	Emp		Morocco	No
Sav & Harris (2013)	Australia	Role	Work-life conflict	Conflict	Quantitative	403	Emp	М		Yes

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Mogra (2013)	The UK	Career	Teacher	Conflict	Qualitative	13	Emp			No
Ali (2013)	Pakistan	Relational	Equal Employment Opportunity; Formal employment sector	Functionalism	Qualitative	30	Emp	F		Yes
Syed & Ali (2013)	Pakistan	Emotional labor	Emotional labor; Textile industry	Feminist	Qualitative	24	Emp	F		Yes
Grünenfelder (2013)	Pakistan	Discourse	Rural development sector; Social organization	Feminist	Qualitative	7	Emp	F		Yes
Sav et al. (2013)	Australia	Conservation of Resources	Work-life conflict	Feminist	Qualitative	20	Emp	М		Yes
Priyatna (2013)	Indonesia	Higher education	Local culture	Feminist	Qualitative	19	Emp	F		Yes
King et al. (2014)	The USA	Social identity	Religious bias; Muslim co-worker	Functionalism	Quantitative	93	Emp			No
Achour et al. (2014)	Malaysia	Role	Academicians; Religious coping strategy	Feminist	Qualitative	5	Emp	F		Yes
Sav et al. (2014)	Australia	Role scarcity	Work-life conflict; Work-life balance	Conflict	Qualitative	20	Emp	М		Yes
Spierings (2014a)	Indonesia & Nigeria	Message/messenger	Non-farm employment; Women's employment	Feminist	Quantitative	36019	Pre	F		Yes
Spierings (2014b)	Muslim- majority countries	Patriarchy	Women's employment	Feminist	Quantitative	250410	Pre	F		Yes
Afiouni (2014)	Middle Eastern countries	Boundaryless career	Academia	Feminist	Qualitative	23	Emp	F		Yes
Syed & Van Buren (2014)	Muslim- majority countries	Preference	Women's employment; Gender equality	Feminist	Conceptual	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Rootham (2015)	France	Racialization	Youth; laïcité	Feminist	Qualitative	6	Emp	F		Yes
Connor & Koenig (2015)	European Countries	Employment gap	Ethno-religious penalty	Conflict	Quantitative	77327	Pre			No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Ali et al. (2015)	The USA	Workplace discrimination	Hijab; Job satisfaction	Feminist	Quantitative	129	Emp	F		Yes
Khattab & Modood (2015)	The UK	Labor market	Employment penalty; Ethno- religious penalty	Conflict	Quantitative	755791	Pre			Yes
Achour et al. (2015)	Malaysia	Role	Academicians; Work-family demand	Feminist	Quantitative	300	Emp	F		Yes
Korotayev et al. (2015)	Muslim- majority countries	Labor force participation	Cross-cultural	Feminist	Quantitative	183 (country)	Pre	F		Yes
Pasha-Zaidi (2015)	The USA & UAE	Self-categorization	Subtle discrimination; Hijab	Feminist	Quantitative	341	Emp	F	South Asian	Yes
Rashid (2016)	The UK	Intersectionality	Youth; Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) agenda	Feminist	Qualitative	25	Pre	F		Yes
Strabac et al. (2016)	Norway	Stepping stone	Hijab; Immigrant	Feminist	Experiment	1258	Pre	F	Lebanon	Yes
Padela et al. (2016)	The USA	Religious identity	Physician	Functionalism	Quantitative	255	Emp			No
Robinson (2016)	The USA	Discrimination	Hijab; Online Collective Action (OCA)	Feminist	Case study	2 (cases)	Emp	F		Yes
Kabir (2016)	The USA	Transculturation	Hijab	Feminist	Qualitative	3	Pre	F	Bangla- desh	Yes
Van Camp et al. (2016)	The USA	Social identity	Religious group relations; Religious bias	Feminist	Experiment	175	Pre	F		No
Sakai & Fauzia (2016)	Indonesia	Muslim womanhood	Middle class; Small and medium enterprises (SMEs)	Feminist	Case study	3	Emp	F		Yes
Golesorkhi (2017)	Germany	Integration	Headscarf	Feminist	Conceptual	NS	Pre	F		Yes
Guetto & Fellini (2017)	Italy	Labor market participation	Immigrant	Feminist	Quantitative	8212	Pre	F		Yes

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Ali et al. (2017)	Western Countries	Relational	Migrant; Work-life balance	Feminist	Conceptual	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Tariq & Syed (2017)	The UK	Intersectionality	Leadership; Managerial position	Feminist	Qualitative	20	Emp	F	South Asian	Yes
Ahmed et al. (2017)	The USA	Ecosystem	Social work	Functionalism	Conceptual	NS	Emp			No
Bagley & Abubaker (2017)	The UK	Discrimination	Accounting vacancy	Feminist	Experiment	1043 (JA)	Pre	F		Yes
Hendriks & van Ewijk (2017)	The Netherlands	Capability approach	Social work; second generation	Feminist	Qualitative	40	Emp	F	Turkey & Morocco	Yes
Murray & Ali (2017)	Australia & The UK	Human agency	Coping strategy; Professional worker	Feminist	Qualitative	20	Emp	F		Yes
Cantone & Wiener (2017)	The USA	Social identity	Hostile work environment; self- referencing	Conflict	Experiment	491	Emp			No
Liao et al. (2017)	Taiwan	Institutional	Internationally staffed organization; Negative stereotype	Functionalism	Qualitative	48	Emp			No
Scheitle & Ecklund (2017)	The US	Perceived discrimination	Religious expression	Functionalism	Quantitative	9723	Emp			No
Abubaker & Bagley (2017)	The Netherlands & The UK	Net discrimination	Correspondence testing	Conflict	Experiment	1453 (JA)	Pre			No
Eriksson et al. (2017)	Sweden	Discrimination	Stated choice experiment	Conflict	Experiment	162 (JA)	Pre			No
Khattab et al. (2018)	The UK	Labor market participation	Unemployment; Religious penalty	Feminist	Quantitative	3636	Pre	F		Yes
Lindemann & Stolz (2018)	Switzerland	Human capital	Employment penalty; Religious penalty	Functionalism	Quantitative	11012	Pre			No
Chambers & Ansari (2018)	India	Coopted domestic labor	Woodworking industry; Purdah	Feminist	Ethnography	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Wang (2018)	The USA	Self-employment	Post 9/11	Functionalism	Quantitative	NS	Pre		Arab	No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Tariq & Syed (2018)	The UK	Intersectionality	Second generation	Feminist	Qualitative	20	Emp	F	Pakistan	Yes
Nagra (2018)	Canada	Muslim identity	Stereotype; Gender inequality	Feminist	Qualitative	56	Emp	F		Yes
Warren (2018)	The UK	Identity reconstruction	Creative labor; Supra-national identification	Feminist	Qualitative	15	Emp	F		Yes
Latif et al. (2018)	Canada	Intersectionality	Professional worker	Feminist	Qualitative	23	Emp	F		Yes
Baldi (2018)	European Countries	Equality	Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU); Veiled Muslim women	Feminist	Law review	NS	Emp	F		Yes
Sekerka & Yacobian (2018)	The USA	Islamophobia	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); Balanced Experiential Inquiry (BEI)	Functionalism	Case study	66 (cases)	Emp			No
Adam & Rea (2018)	Belgium	Religious practices accommodation	Private sector	Functionalism	Qualitative	102	Emp			No
Golesorkhi (2019)	Western Countries	Integration	Islamic garb ban	Feminist	Conceptual	NS	Emp	F		No
Miaari et al. (2019)	The UK	Intersectionality	Ethnic penalty; Muslim penalty	Feminist	Quantitative	506065	Pre	F		Yes
Abdelhadi (2019)	The USA	Employment gap	The hijab effect	Feminist	Explorative	2969	Pre	F		Yes
Di Stasio et al. (2019)	European Countries	Hiring discrimination	European countries; Ethnic penalty	Conflict	Experiment	7284 (JA)	Pre			No
Malik et al. (2019)	The UK	Workplace dress code policies	Bare below the elbows (BBE); Healthcare professionals	Feminist	Quantitative	84	Emp	F		Yes
Baharudin et al. (2019)	Malaysia	Mental health	Creative media	Functionalism	Qualitative	7	Emp			No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Naseem & Adnan (2019)	France	Labor market	Second generation; visibility of religion	Feminist	Mix method	5234 (quan) & 12 (qual)	Pre	F	Algeria & Pakistan	Yes
Agrawal et al. (2019)	The USA	Hate crime	Negative media coverage; 2016 presidential election	Conflict	Qualitative	37	Emp			No
Etherington (2019)	Canada & Australia	Religious identity	Work-religion intersection	Functionalism	Qualitative	2	Emp	М		No
Sav (2019)	Australia	Conservation of Resources	Work-life interface	Functionalism	Quantitative	301	Emp	М		Yes
Behzadi (2019)	Tajikistan	Muslim masculinities	Miner; Male- dominated sector	Feminist	Ethnography	74	Emp	F		Yes
Masood (2019)	Pakistan	Inequality regimes	Doctor; Purdah	Feminist	Ethnography	60	Emp	F		Yes
Khattab et al. (2019)	Canada	Labor market	Unemployment	Feminist	Quantitative	192652	Pre	F		Yes
Abdelhadi & England (2019)	47 countries	Employment gap	Women's employment	Feminist	Quantitative	25741	Pre	F		Yes
Khattab et al. (2020)	Australia	Human capital	Muslim penalty	Feminist	Quantitative	215597	Pre	F		Yes
Arifeen & Gatrell (2020)	The UK	Glass chains	Senior-level; Ethical self	Feminist	Qualitative	37	Emp	F	Pakistan	Yes
Koburtay et al. (2020)	Jordan	Feminist	Interpretations of Islam; Hospitality industry	Feminist	Qualitative	178	Emp	F		Yes
Arifeen (2020)	The UK	Inequality regimes	"Happy hours" networking practices	Feminist	Qualitative	37	Emp	F		Yes
Valfort (2020)	France	Anti-Muslim discrimination	Religiosity penalty	Conflict	Experiment	3331 (JA)	Pre		Lebanon	No
Tjønndal & Hovden (2020)	Norway	Intersectionality	Boxer; Male- dominated sector	Feminist	Qualitative	2	Emp	F		Yes
Salahshour & Boamah (2020)	New Zealand	Perceived discrimination	University; Christchurch mosque attack	Conflict	Explorative	38	Emp			No

Author(s)	Country /Region	Main Theory/ Perspective/ Framework/Lens	Specific contexts	Main discourse stream	Paper's Type /Method	N	Phase Focus	Gender Focus	Place of Origin Focus	Focus on Inter- sectionality?
Ghasemi (2020)	Iran	Gendered organization	Broadcasting media	Feminist	Qualitative	30	Emp	F		Yes
Corekcioglu (2020)	Turkey	Institutional	Secularism; Headscarf ban	Feminist	Estimation	12570 (observati ons)	Pre	F		Yes
Hou et al. (2020)	China	Labor market	Anti-Muslim bias	Conflict	Experiment	> 4000 (JA)	Pre			No

Sorted by year. Data collection was conducted in October 2020.

- \* Each paper may have more than one Theory/Perspective/Framework/Lens The author chooses one of the most apparent to avoid complications.
- \* Each paper may belong to more than one social science discourse category. The author made the classification based on each paper's most apparent emphasis.
- \* Pre = before/pre-employment; Emp = during employment; Post = after/post-employment.
- \* Each paper may interweave more than one employment phase. The selected phase is the main phase emphasized in each paper.
- \* N = unless stated otherwise, refers to the number of respondents. In qualitative cases, the number stated there is the number of main respondents, the additional informants (e.g., the family, co-workers, religious leaders) were not included. For experimental papers, N refers to the total number of respondents (the accumulation of all studies/experiments included) within the published papers. NS = Not Specified. Qual = Qualitative. Quan = Quantitative. Exp = Experiment. JA = Job applications.
- \* What is meant by 'focus on intersectionality' is whether the paper focuses on discussing multiple disadvantageous identities as the source of employment struggles within their analysis.
- \* Though some papers focus on a particular gender/place of origin, that does not automatically make those papers focus on intersectionality. The gender/place of origin may only serve as a research context, not as the research's focus
- \* It is also possible for a paper to focus on intersectionality without focusing on a particular gender or place of origin. That means the paper portrays intersectionality from a broader perspective (e.g., comparative; compilation)